From 1993 to 1997, law enforcement agencies across the United States responded to 13,510 various types of bombing incidents. During this same time, more than 300 people were killed in explosive incidents. (From the 1997 Arson and Explosives Incident Report, U.S. Department of the Treasury.)

The task of dealing with a bomb or terrorist device is, to say the least, a dangerous and complex undertaking. As devices become more advanced, the need for in-depth training of bomb technicians greatly increases. While training is possible on “sterile” ranges and in classrooms, it becomes more effective when bomb technicians are able to actually use both their knowledge and new technologies in realistic scenarios. So was born “Operation Riverside.”

Held last August in Riverside, California, Operation Riverside brought together 160 bomb experts from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, all branches of the U.S. military, as well as a number of U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies, to exchange information about tools and techniques available to make bomb disablement safer. It was sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Sandia National Laboratories (SNL), and the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC)–Rocky Mountain, in cooperation with the Riverside Police Department.

During the 10-day event, experts practiced with new technologies on nearly 150 mock bombs. The teams of hand-picked bomb technicians had the opportunity to react to several complex scenarios that tested their ingenuity. After completing the scenarios, instructors offered evaluations and input to team members.

“We operated under the philosophy of ‘train-the-trainers’ at Operation Riverside,” says Jim Keller, director of NLECTC–Rocky Mountain, which assisted with the event. “It was our intention that the participants return to their locations and train other technicians in the new tools and techniques.”

According to Chris Cherry, explosives engineer at SNL, this type of training prepares bomb technicians for the potential explosive-related incidents they may face in the next century.

Although much of the technology used during the conference is still classified, Cherry estimates that most of it will become available to bomb squads over the next several months.

In the future, Cherry says that bomb technicians will employ...
is, what is the threat? We have to look at the probability of escape, as well as preventing and containing violence and detecting contraband that might be smuggled in.”

With funding from NIJ, SNL security experts have looked at several correctional facilities in Pennsylvania and Texas, as well as the blueprints for a Nebraska prison and a Michigan jail. Spencer says that SNL scrutinizes the physical facility and learns about all areas of prison life, from education, recreation, and inmate movement to staffing, existing security systems, and the nature of the surrounding community. “We analyze everything and then assess where the weaknesses are,” she says. “It’s a great partnership because we look at things from a system perspective and we combine that with the prison staff’s knowledge of their own facility.”

Superintendent Jim Morgan, who heads the State Correctional Institution at Smithfield (Huntingdon, Pennsylvania), agrees. “We are SNL’s prison experts, and they are our vulnerability analysis experts. It’s a wonderful marriage of those two disciplines, and we’re very excited about it.”

Morgan serves as the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) liaison with SNL to develop corrections-specific vulnerability assessments with an emphasis on video surveillance cameras at Huntingdon. However, Horn says, because of appropriation and procurement constraints, the fixes had not been made at the time of the escape. “This was a case of being ‘a day late and a dollar short,’” he says. “Had we the benefit of SNL’s assessment 12 months earlier, this escape might have been prevented.”

In its assessment, the SNL team pointed out things prison officials had not considered, or in some cases, had not noticed. “We had a secure exercise yard that was next to a wall with a doorway in it. Although the door was secure, it was still a door,” Horn says. “The assessment team found a means of egress and ingress that had not been used for years and was not sufficiently secured. They also gave us a lot of advice with respect to our perimeter intrusion detection and the use of cameras and lights.”

In one Pennsylvania facility, SNL recommended that prison officials cut trees along a fenceline and staff one of its posts full-time, instead of staffing it only at night. SNL also noted that while one unit’s 25 perimeter cameras were effective, there were problems relating to the internal monitoring of inmate movements through the facility and in the dining hall that had to be addressed. The team also recommended that staff change some of the locks and locking systems, as well as upgrade camera units and rethink where the cameras were placed.

The use of surveillance cameras was of particular interest to Pennsylvania prison officials. Five years ago such a technology was rarely used in a prison setting. In recent years, however, it has become a popular security alternative. “In their rush to use surveillance cameras, everyone has perhaps not used them to their optimum or has put in more cameras than their staff can even look at,” Horn says. “This assessment gave us a lot of advice with respect to how we can use cameras effectively while preventing an information overload, which is a security system that is more than we can staff.”

The vulnerability analysis gave prison officials a fresh perspective on security and on the use of security technologies. It also offered them a way to extend the life of an older prison unit by employing new types of technology. The ultimate goal of the project, however, is to create a methodology that corrections officials can use to conduct their own vulnerability analyses.

“This has been a pilot program that looked to refine the methodology of vulnerability analysis so we could teach the methodology to prison and jail personnel,” says Nick Nicholson, Ph.D., a security systems analyst at SNL. “It is not something we want to be the sole owner of. With the funding from NIJ, we’ll have a publication and a training program that administrators can send their personnel to. We hope that they’ll become self-sufficient after that.”

For more information about Sandia National Laboratories’ vulnerability analysis project for prisons, contact Steve Morrison at the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC)–Southeast, 800–292–4384, or Joe Russo at NLECTC–Rocky Mountain, 800–416–8086.

[Editor’s note: In addition to serving as Secretary of Corrections for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Martin Horn is vice chair of the Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Advisory Council, which serves as an advisory body to the NLECTC system.]
Although these systems are strong on access because sources, can contribute data and can access it directly. Centralized database to “warehouse” information. In of “mining,” or retrieving, data. Other systems use a method to keep their databases. The software instead provides users a “single-searching method” that acts as a translator between the investigator’s query and each database’s specific access method. An investigator in any given jurisdiction, therefore, will be able to access databases in many other jurisdictions, but has to learn only one search method. For example, Monroe and Broward Counties have different database systems, and access to either requires different ways of requesting information. Infotech offers a user-friendly interface that can be tailored to the needs of a particular user, but will retrieve data quickly regardless of the design of the information source. Thus, information compatibility between multiple law enforcement agencies is achieved without incurring the enormous expense of replacing existing systems with a common system.

Infotech also solves the privacy and security issues that are of concern to police agencies. These issues are addressed through several layers of protection mechanisms, depending on the level of risk. Encryption features that are commercially available in Internet World Wide Web browsers are available and provide a minimal level of access control. For very sensitive data, such as ongoing law enforcement investigations, informant or witness case folders, and juvenile information, much greater security restrictions can be employed, including personnel identification numbers, smart cards, or even biometric identification devices.

Of fundamental importance, however, is the fact that local agencies continue to maintain and control their own data in the same way they do now. Infotech operates as an add-on layer to the agency’s existing infrastructure without interfering with current operations.

Infotech is built with open standards using Internet technologies. Consequently, there are no per user fees or restrictions on number of users. All that is required is access to the Internet and a Web browser. Each Infotech server is owned by the agency where it is installed.

The Florida Infotech project uses the FDLE’s Criminal Justice Network (CJ-Net), a statewide network that is the backbone for communications among approximately 500 Florida agencies. CJ-Net is managed and maintained by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and provides open access and privileges to any criminal justice agency, including the State’s court and penitentiary systems.

The Infotech program originated in 1995 as part of a multimillion-dollar collaborative technology development effort by the Joint Program Steering Group of the U.S. Departments of Defense and Justice. Integration of advanced information systems, software mediation, security, and communications technologies has been performed by the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center (SPAWAR), a U.S. Navy engineering activity in Charleston, South Carolina.

For more information concerning the Infotech initiative, contact John Hoyt, Joint Program Steering Group, 783-351-8487.
“smart” disablement systems. These technologies, which operate in real time, will not only keep bomb squads at safe distances, but will enable technicians to make split-second decisions, a crucial element when time may be running out. As disablement technology becomes increasingly smarter, it will require technicians to work more with their heads than their hands, he says. “They will need to be more academic in their approaches.”

Cherry is no stranger to the world of bombs and explosives. His skills were put to use a few years ago when the FBI requested his assistance with a live bomb found inside Ted Kaczynski’s cabin in Montana. Cherry, his co-worker Rod Owenby, and Riverside Police bomb technician Vic Poinson flew to Montana during the middle of the night.

Sgt. Steve Conner, an 18-year veteran of Houston’s bomb squad and many bomb-squad conferences, says that he and three of his bomb technicians have been using the tools and knowledge obtained at Operation Albuquerque, the predecessor to Operation Riverside, which was held in 1997. His team considers Operation Riverside and Operation Albuquerque invaluable training resources.

“Operation Riverside is the best training available for advanced render-safe operations. . . It is a very realistic training environment, and there are several new techniques and technology applications that we tested and will implement into our program.”

“Operation Riverside is the best training available for advanced render-safe operations,” Conner says. “It is a very realistic training environment, and there are several new techniques and technology applications that we tested and will implement into our program.”

Also a member of the Houston squad, 13-year veteran Officer Charles Berryman says that the intense training scenarios are very beneficial. He says that he also was impressed with the new technologies that were introduced and the inventions he saw in action.

“There was a lot of technology that I was unaware of,” Berryman says. “It was an honor to be invited and to participate in this training. All of the information that we have learned helps to make render-safe operations much easier and safer for all of our bomb techs.”

According to Cherry, NIJ’s assistance keeps the program at the front of the latest advances in technology and techniques. He says that it is important to continue to provide training like Operation Riverside to bomb squads. “They serve us, so why can’t we serve them for a change and help to make their jobs a little safer.”

For more information about Operation Riverside, please contact Jim Keller, National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center–Rocky Mountain, 300–416–8856.

Law enforcement, courts, and corrections officials and officers working in the field know how crucial technology is to their day-to-day operations. In some circumstances, having the right tool can even mean the difference between life and death.

The technological revolution that has swept society as a whole in recent years has also affected the criminal justice system. Some technologies that not long ago seemed advanced—vests that can stop bullets and electronic monitoring of probationers—today seem commonplace. But the revolution continues apace, with ever more spectacular advances now being made, or in the testing stages, or on the drawing board.

As the research arm of the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has, since its founding 30 years ago, been in the forefront in sponsoring the development, testing, and demonstration of technology to improve the justice system. The development of DNA testing standards, soft body armor, and improved fingerprint evidence collection are some of the many areas in which NIJ has played a leading role.

More recently, with strong support from the Administration and the Congress, NIJ has accelerated the pace of its efforts. Less-than-lethal technologies to minimize the use of force, computerized mapping to pinpoint and analyze crime patterns, concealed weapons detection to prevent violence, methods of stopping fleeing vehicles to apprehend suspects, and improvements in DNA laboratories to aid in evidence testing—all these capabilities, and others, are now being explored by NIJ. Their application can mean even greater transformations in law enforcement operations.

TechBeat plays an important role as an essential link communicating the latest information about these developing technologies from the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center. By keeping law enforcement, courts, and corrections personnel current about the tools they can use, the newsletter makes a difference in controlling crime and ensuring justice.

Jeremy Travis
Director
National Institute of Justice

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The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Office for Victims of Crime.
The ‘Center System’

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), responding to recommendations by the law enforcement and corrections community, converted its Technology Assessment Program Information Center (TAPIC) into the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) system. Created in 1994 as a component of NIJ’s Office of Science and Technology, NLECTC’s goal, like that of NIJ, is to offer the best support, research findings, and technological expertise to help State and local law enforcement and corrections personnel do their jobs more safely and efficiently.

NIJ’s NLECTC system consists of facilities located across the country that are colocated with an organization or agency that specializes in one or more specific areas of research and development. Although each NLECTC facility has a different technology focus, they work together to form a seamless web of support, technology development, and information.

NLECTC–National
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Phone: 800–416–8086 or 303–871–2522 in the Denver area • Fax: 310–336–4315 • E-mail: nlectc@du.edu

The National Center, located just 30 minutes north of Washington, D.C., is the hub of the NLECTC system. It provides information and referral services to anyone with a question about law enforcement and corrections equipment or technology. Its staff manage the voluntary equipment standards and testing program that tests and verifies the performance of body armor, metallic handcuffs, shotguns, and police vehicles and tires. This office produces consumer product lists of equipment that meets a specific set of performance standards and also operates JUSTNET ( Justiça Technology Information Network), an Internet Wide Web site that provides links to the entire NLECTC system and other appropriate sites, as well as assistance to those seeking information about equipment, technology, or research findings.

NLECTC–Northeast
28 Electronic Parkway • Ronkonkoma, NY 11779
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Supported by NIJ, the Office of Law Enforcement Standards applies science and technology to the needs of the police community. One of its major objectives is to develop minimum performance standards for equipment and technology, which NIJ promulgates as voluntary national standards. OLES also undertakes studies leading to the publication of technical reports and user guides. Its areas of research include clothing, communications systems, emergency equipment, investigative aids, protective equipment, security systems, vehicles, and weapons. It also develops measurement methods for analytical techniques and reference materials for forensic science and crime labs. Since the program began in 1971, OLES has coordinated the development of nearly 200 standards, user guides, and advisory reports. Housed at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, OLES works closely with NLECTC–National to conduct tests to identify technologies that will stop fleeing vehicles and is currently participating in a project to detect the heartbeats of people concealed in vehicles or other containers.

Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization (OLETC)
Wheeling Jesuit University • 316 Washington Avenue • Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: 304–395–6340 • Fax: 304–395–4623 • E-mail: oletc@wvu.edu

The Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization, a program of NIJ, is located at Wheeling Jesuit University. OLET C’s mission is to work with industry, manufacturers, and laboratories to facilitate the commercialization of technologies for the law enforcement and corrections marketplace. OLET C provides special services and assistance to innovators, entrepreneurs, universities, Federal and other laboratories, and U.S. manufacturers nationwide in commercializing technologies that will enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement and corrections practitioners. A national partnership is being developed to provide a continual pipeline of innovative products, concepts, and technology reference materials to expedite the commercialization of new products and services needed for State and local law enforcement and corrections communities. OLET C has directly assisted in commercializing several innovative products, including the RoadSpike®, a novel vehicle-stopping device; Tiger Vision®, a special low-cost, handheld night vision device; an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician Training Kit; and the Counterpoint Stab and Slash Protective Vest. OLET C has identified more than 70 additional emerging technologies and concepts that are currently being evaluated for possible commercialization.

Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization (OLETC)
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ROCKET, a nonprofit corporation that provides technical oversight and engineering expertise to the Air Force and the U.S. Government on space technology and space security systems. ROCKET’s West

The Aerospace Corporation’s depth of knowledge and scientific expertise to offer law enforcement and corrections the ability to analyze and enhance audio, video, and photographic evidence. In cooperation with The Aerospace Corporation, this NLECTC facility also has an extensive array of analytic instrumentation to aid in criminal investigations, such as a scanning electron microscope, an x-ray microscope, and a mass spectrometer, all of which are used to process trace evidence. It also serves as a research hub for collaborative projects involving space observing architectures, data processing, communications, space systems, and identifying technologies to stop fleeing vehicles.

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Two of the focus areas of NLECTC–Southeast are corrections technologies and surplus property acquisition and disposition for law enforcement and corrections. The center facilitates the acquisition and redistribution of Federal surplus/excess property to State and local law enforcement and corrections agencies. The equipment is used for law enforcement purposes only. Utilizing the JUSTNET Web site, the center educates law enforcement and corrections professionals about Federal surplus and purchasing programs. The efforts of NLECTC–Southeast have resulted in agencies receiving equipment that would not otherwise have access to or might not have been able to afford due to budgetary constraints. This facility also studies the needs of correctional agencies. It is guided in this mission by a committee of criminal justice, law enforcement, and corrections practitioners that identifies needs and sets priorities for research and development.

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NLECTC–Rocky Mountain
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Located at the University of Denver, NLECTC–Rocky Mountain focuses on communications interoperability and the difficulties that often occur when different agencies and jurisdictions try to communicate with one another. This facility works with law enforcement agencies, private industry, and national organizations to implement projects that will identify and field test new technologies to help solve the problem of interoperability. NLECTC–Rocky Mountain also houses the newly created Crime Mapping Technology Center, the training and practical application arm of NIJ’s Crime Mapping Research Center, which is staffed by NIJ social scientists and scholars who use crime analysis research to improve police field operations and develop crime-mapping software for small, medium, and large departments. The Rocky Mountain facility also conducts research into ballistic identification, as well as technology development. Sandia National Laboratories has been designated as a satellite of NLECTC–Rocky Mountain.

The laboratory works in partnership with NLECTC–Rocky Mountain and focuses on technology for detecting and neutralizing explosive devices (Operation Albatross).
Concealed Weapons and Contraband Detection

Body Cavity Screening System. Funded by NIJ, this stationary screen system will help police and corrections officers detect nonmetallic weapons and contraband hidden in lower body cavities. The only current methods of detecting such weapons and contraband are through conducting an invasive physical inspection, which can place the officer at risk, or by taking x-rays of the individual, which is expensive and can pose health risks. The system uses simplified magnetic resonance imaging (or MRI, which was developed for the medical community) as a noninvasive alternative to x-rays and physical body cavity searches. Plans for testing the device on human subjects are underway; an operational system suitable for demonstration and assessment is slated for this year. For additional information, contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821.

Handheld Acoustic System. NIJ is funding the development of an inexpensive, handheld device that alerts officers to the potential presence of a weapon at a greater distance than metal detectors currently in use. The device will use acoustic technology to detect metallic and nonmetallic weapons concealed under an individual’s clothing. A preliminary model has been demonstrated. It successfully detected a plastic knife concealed under a heavy sweatshirt at a distance of 7 feet. Prototypes have been delivered to NIJ for assessment prior to demonstration to law enforcement agencies. For more information, contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821.

Handheld Wide-Band Radar. With sponsorship from NIJ, this concealed weapons detection project focuses on using low-power, wide-band radar, combined with an artificial neural network, to detect both metallic and nonmetallic weapons. The radar used in this project is of such low power that it poses no health hazard to those being scanned or to the individual doing the scanning. The advantages of using low-power, wide-band radar are that it has twice the range of other technologies currently in development and is one of the least expensive. It does, however, have a lower resolution that may result in a less accurate picture. A preliminary system is being tested; development of a prototype system and demonstration is planned for early 2000. Contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821, for additional information.

Portable Millimeter Wave Radar. NIJ is sponsoring the development of a handheld portable concealed weapon detector that uses a short-range, 94GHz, active millimeter wave radar to detect both metallic and nonmetallic weapons. While this technology has a shorter detection range than the wide-band radar technology and is more expensive, it has the potential for higher resolution and greater accuracy. The developer has successfully demonstrated a preliminary system and is currently adapting it for a portable configuration. Originally, the detector was to be capable of scanning at a distance of up to 4 feet; it now appears to be accurate up to about 20 feet. For more information, contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821.

Vehicle-Mounted Weapons Detector. This NIJ project focuses on development of a magnetic detector that can be mounted to the front of a patrol car. The detector would enable an officer to determine whether a subject is carrying a weapon without leaving his or her vehicle. The detector will allow officers to screen individuals for concealed weapons made of metal, such as handguns and knives. The detector will utilize a five-axis magnetic gradiometer to scan a subject at a range of about 15 feet. A successful proof-of-principle demonstration has been conducted, showing that the technology can detect metallic objects at a range of 10 to 15 feet from the system in a magnetically cluttered environment. For additional information, contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821.

Less-Than-Lethal UPDATE: Laser Dazzler™. Ten prototypes of the Laser Dazzler have been delivered to the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory (USAFRL) for eye safety and effectiveness assessment. This project ultimately will yield a device that uses random, flashing, green laser light to disorient and distract a subject. The prototypes resemble a flashlight, with an overall length of 24 inches and a weight of 4.8 pounds. USAFRL testing will determine whether the device is safe to use on humans. Data derived from the assessment will go to NIJ, which will determine whether funding modifications to the device or to fund demonstration and evaluation by police and corrections agencies. This project is being funded through a joint partnership of NIJ and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Contact Sandy Newett, project manager, 202–616–1471, for more information.

Counterterrorism

Bomb Robots. In collaboration with the Technical Support Working Group (TSWG), NIJ is sponsoring an assessment and demonstration of the state-of-the-art in bomb robots. The results of this effort will be used to develop a research and development plan that addresses current technology shortfalls. For additional information, contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821.

Explosive Diagnostics and Disruption. This project joins NIJ, TSWG, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in a nationwide demonstration and evaluation of improved diagnostic systems for explosive devices. The first technology being evaluated is the RTR-3, developed under TSWG auspices. The RTR-3 is a computer-based, portable x-ray system that enables the diagnosis of explosive devices in real time. It also enables the transmission of x-ray images of those devices, via modem, to remote experts for analysis. The Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head Division, and the Naval Office of Special Technology are also supporting the project. The FBI has distributed the RTR-3 to 28 State and local agencies throughout the Nation; training is ongoing. Contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821, for more information.

Officer Protection

Chem-Bio Exposure. One of the needs identified in a 1997 NIJ study was the development of a wearable device that would indicate exposure to a variety of chemical and biological hazards. In response to this need, NIJ has undertaken an effort to develop and demonstrate a wearable device that will alert an individual of his/her exposure to hazardous chemical and biological agents with sufficient warning that protective measures can be taken. The initial result will be a number of prototypes for practitioner evaluation. NIJ currently is working with the developer to add a visual alert feature. A prototype personal alarm monitor is expected to be available for evaluation this year. For more information, contact Dr. Peter Nacci, project manager, 703–351–8821.
Making Information Technology Work

How do law enforcement agencies know when their computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems are outdated or their records management systems need upgrading?

When progress is sometimes measured in inches, how do law enforcement and corrections keep up when technology is progressing at the speed of light?

Some departments are lucky. Some have that guy, that “techie” on staff with the right experience and knowledge. But more often than not, there is no such qualified person.

Because law enforcement and corrections officers do not have the luxury of a staff skilled in selecting and applying information technology, the National Institute of Justice’s National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC)–Southeast has undertaken a project to develop a set of recommendations to help agencies assess where they are in information management, where they want to be, and how to get there.

According to Bill Deck, project manager at NLECTC–Southeast, in order to establish the knowledge base on which this set of recommendations is to be built, Center staff conducted indepth studies at several agencies—receiving a thorough education in the varied ways information flows through the criminal justice system. Technical experts from NLECTC–Southeast assessed the systems of the Aiken County, South Carolina, Sheriff’s Department, as well as those of police departments in Normal, Illinois; Mount Pleasant and Charleston, South Carolina; and Utica, New York.

“Our first task was to get a clear understanding of each agency’s operations,” Deck says. “This meant we interviewed everyone involved in processing information, from records personnel and patrol officers to telecommunicators, supervisors, investigators, and the chief. Technologists should never work in a vacuum. They have to understand what law enforcement needs. And only after extensive listening and observing, Southeast Center personnel were able to produce process maps showing the current state of information flow and how it could be streamlined and improved.”

“We turned the department completely over to them. We invited them to talk to anyone they wanted to,” Maj. Coleman Knight of South Carolina’s Mount Pleasant Police Department (MPPD) says. “When they were done, the charts they gave us showed how cumbersome our system really was.”

MPPD’s information system ran on a computer with programming that dated back to 1987. Although the department gradually updated the system and added software modules, it bogged down when the department tried to implement a field-reporting program.

“It was too complicated, the transfer took too long, the receiver program got bogged, and it could take an hour for the system to import information,” Knight says. “But a wholesale upgrade would have been enormously expensive.”

Instead, MPPD called in NLECTC–Southeast, which suggested replacing the CAD and records management systems. Center staff also gave the department recommendations on network infrastructure, minimum configurations for mobile computing, and a step-by-step process for putting a new system in place.

“They showed us how we could start with a base system and go forward from there,” Knight says. “Instead of trying to get it all done at one time— we’re talking about a $2 million price tag on a $500,000 budget—they gave us general system and software requirements that would get us started.”

The assessment for Illinois’ Normal Police Department (NPD) involved tying the agency’s CAD system into an ongoing countywide project to link the databases of public safety, courts, and corrections. One goal of the project was to cut the 16 to 18 separate entries required for one case to a single point of entry. That information would then link to every facet of the Mclean County, Illinois, criminal justice system.

By bringing in outside experts, the project received an objectivity that typically is not available when agencies rely solely on vendor information, says NPD’s Assistant Chief Gary Speers. “Several years ago we did not have technical people on staff. Consequently we had to rely on the experts supplied by the vendor, who really wanted to sell us the vendor’s products. But they [NLECTC–Southeast] had no ties to vendors, no ties to local businesses, and no political axes to grind. They gave us an outside opinion about what we already thought was the case.”

“It’s one thing for us as practitioners to say something isn’t working right. It’s another for an expert to show us specifically what our problems are and to confirm that our current system is never going to do what we want it to do,” Speers adds.

According to Capt. Bryan Oliver of the Aiken County, South Carolina, Sheriff’s Department, his agency was struggling with separate CAD and records management systems that could not talk to each other. Processing information was a tedious, awkward task. The systems also did not convert legacy data and were not National Incident-Based Reporting System compliant.

Oliver says that although NLECTC–Southeast personnel came in after the county’s communications upgrade project was already underway, their assessment and recommendations put the language of technology in simple, uncomplicated terms. “With their assistance, even those of us who did not have any technical knowledge were able to understand the process. They made it easy for us to see which tasks would be more efficient with a computer and which ones should be done manually. It helped us see how we could make a computer work for us, instead of us working for the computer.”

According to Deck, the final result of the assessment project will be a set of recommendations for selecting and applying information technology. “Any agency,” he says, “will be able to use these recommendations to better understand interoperability issues, new technologies and what these technologies will and won’t do, and how they can begin to plan for an upgrade.”

Deck, who has been involved in every step of the information technology assessment project, adds, “Will the recommendations be a cure-all? No. But will they give agencies a starting point? Absolutely. That’s all we’re trying to do, give law enforcement and corrections a roadmap showing how to bring in new technologies. In the end, we hope they’ll have more efficient and effective systems.”

For more details regarding information technology initiatives sponsored by the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center–Southeast, contact Bill Deck, 800–292–4385.
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**2000 Model Year Police Vehicle Evaluation Program.** This report provides complete data on test results from the Michigan State Police’s annual evaluation of patrol vehicles, including summary charts.

**Michigan State Police Tests 2000 Patrol Vehicles.** This bulletin summarizes the test results from the Michigan State Police’s annual evaluation of “police-package” and “special-service” patrol vehicles.

**AutoBid 2000.** AutoBid software is designed to help police fleet administrators select the patrol vehicle that is best suited to the needs of their department. The system is based on vehicle performance data for police patrol package models published annually by the Michigan State Police.

**Keeping Track of Electronic Monitoring.** This bulletin gives an indepth look at current and upcoming home monitoring devices, system components, buy/lease factors and options, and recommendations for establishing an electronic monitoring program.

**1999 Mock Prison Riot Video.** This videotape features technologies used to quell a mock prison riot staged by the National Institute of Justice’s Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization. Emerging technologies were incorporated into training scenarios to demonstrate the latest crimefighting technologies.

**TechBeat, Fall 1999.** Articles feature the Weapons Team Engagement Trainer, a high-tech simulation system; a weapons detector being used at the Bannock County Courthouse in Pocatello, Idaho; FALCON, a software program to alert officers to crime trends in the community; and the use of videotaping systems in police vehicles.

**NLECTC Tests Autoloading Pistols for Law Enforcement Use.** This bulletin summarizes test data and results from NLECTC’s recent evaluation of 24 models of autoloading pistols in accordance with NIJ Standard-0112.03 (Revision A). It also includes the Autoloading Pistol Consumer Product List (CPL), which lists all models that were tested and found to comply with the requirements of the NIJ Standard.

**Equipment Performance Report: Autoloading Pistols for Law Enforcement Use.** This report provides a complete listing of the test data obtained during NLECTC’s recent evaluation of autoloading pistols to determine their compliance with NIJ Standard-0112.03 (Revision A). The report contains test results and data from 24 models of autoloading pistols, provided by nine manufacturers.

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**Office of Justice Programs Technology Resource Guide.** This first-of-its-kind resource guide delivers valuable information on law enforcement and corrections technology programs and activities of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs, including available technologies; funding sources and demonstration programs; equipment standards, testing, and evaluation; current research and development initiatives; and training.

**National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center Publications Catalog 2000.** This document provides a listing of NLECTC and other government publications of interest to law enforcement, corrections, and forensic science practitioners. Categories include communications, forensics, less-than-lethal weapons, protective equipment, and weapons and ammunition.

**NLECTC Tests Body Armor for Law Enforcement Use.** NLECTC has tested body armor to determine if they comply with NIJ Standard-0101.06. The NLCTC tests evaluated body armor for compliance with NIJ Standard 0101.06 (Revision A). The report contains test results and data from 1999 models of body armor, provided by 11 manufacturers.

**1999 Mock Prison Riot Video.** This videotape features technologies used to quell a mock prison riot staged by the National Institute of Justice’s Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization. Emerging technologies were incorporated into training scenarios to demonstrate the latest crimefighting technologies.

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