# TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT
## SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) National Public Safety Partnership (PSP) program provides an innovative framework for the US Department of Justice (DOJ) to enhance its support of state, tribal, and local law enforcement officers and prosecutors in the investigation, prosecution, and deterrence of violent crime, especially crime related to gun violence, gangs, and drug trafficking.

Departments and agencies interested in improving their violent crime reduction capacity participate in BJA-sponsored reviews of departmental functions (crime analysis, grants landscape, investigative, technology, etc.) to develop a baseline understanding of their challenges and areas for growth. **The technology assessment helps agencies plan and implement their future initiatives based on their existing technical resources and abilities.** The assessment also identifies the various technology training and technical assistance (TTA) opportunities to support agencies in building and enhancing their technology capacities.

Thirteen medium- to large-sized law enforcement agencies across the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West. have completed technology assessments, allowing an opportunity to identify and share common themes, technical gaps, and recommendations found across law enforcement agencies nationwide. Additional information on the analysis and other common findings and recommendations can be found in our *Technology Assessment Summary Report*, and other reports in the assessment summary series, including the *Crime Analysis Assessment Summary Report*, *Grant Landscape Review Summary Report*, and *Non-Fatal Shooting and Homicide Assessment Summary Report*.

## ENHANCE THE USE, TRAINING, AND CAPACITY OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (RMSS) AND COMPUTER-AIDED DISPATCH (CAD)

- **Common findings**
  - Agencies require modern and reliable CAD system and an RMS for effective police operations. CAD enables officers to be dispatched quickly to 9-1-1 calls for service and be provided with the necessary information to respond to the call. An RMS provides the ability to complete incident/crime/arrest reports, report crime to the public and the Federal Bureau of Investigations/Department of Justice, produce copies of reports for those members of the community involved in an incident (e.g., traffic collision reports), manage the arrest/booking process, maintain the chain of custody of evidence, and provide the necessary documentation to file cases with the prosecutor.
  - Gaps in training and data entry often create inconsistencies and issues in data reporting, including generating multiple rounds of review or reports not approved in an RMS.
  - Some data fields in the RMS were identified as inappropriate or led to unreliable data.
  - Agencies may need IT support in order to address reoccurring issues in the RMS.
  - Repeated entry of data across multiple systems can result in data errors and inefficiencies.

- **Common recommendations**
  - Evaluate CAD and RMS platforms and infrastructure and ensure they receive proper maintenance and support.
  - Increase RMS user training as needed or alter the way an RMS currently accepts reports, to make information more accessible for investigations.
  - Review business processes and methods of data entry to ensure the maximum reliability of data and improve subsequent analyses.

- Allow IT vendors to have access for troubleshooting, dedicate staff to user support, and enhance the RMS user interface to allow officers access to more information.
- Consider integration with other local and state law enforcement RMSs to improve information-sharing capabilities, ease of access, and efficiency of data dissemination.

# USE CAMERAS AND CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) PROACTIVELY AND AS AN INVESTIGATORY TOOL

- **Common findings**
  - In cases when the crime scene unit is not deployed to a scene, photo and video access requires multiple steps, creating inefficiencies.
  - Current use of CCTV results in reactionary, not proactive, efforts to reduce crime and build community trust.
  - Legacy camera equipment and systems see a standard increase in maintenance time and cost as they get older.

- **Common recommendations**
  - Understand the scope and quality of the agency's existing fleet of cameras and software.
  - Integrate cameras with other proactive monitoring systems, such as shot detection technologies and automatic license plate readers (LPRs).
  - Allow access to cameras within the department; also allow external partners, such as dispatch and local law enforcement agencies, to access them.
  - Look to peer agencies and best practices to better understand the force-multiplier effect of integrating CCTV with LPRs, gunshot detection systems, and other analytics.

# IMPROVE DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

- **Common findings**
  - Lack of transparency may exist between different departments in an agency on IT projects.
  - Agencies have several needs for technology, but no documented plan on what new technology they want, or why and how they want to implement it.
  - Agencies lack business experts/analysts who can justify and explain their need for new technology, and champion its acquisition to agency and city leadership.

- **Common recommendations**
  - Identify a dedicated technology group or individual to consider and implement new or revised technologies and processes.
  - Conduct a full business process review and gap analysis to determine the top departmental needs and associated costs of required technology.
  - Task a group or individual with representing the department's technology needs to the local government and their IT organization.

## SUBMIT A REQUEST

To request a technology assessment for your agency, contact the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) National Training and Technical Assistance Center (NTTAC) at BJANTTAC@ojp.usdoj.gov.

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