



Focus on High-Tech Public Safety Solutions Newport Beach (CA) Police Department Capt. Tim Riley

It's all about being empowered with information. Newport Beach Police Department views the use of high-tech tools as a way to keeping its officers safe and informed.

For instance, Newport Beach PD is pilot testing the use of GPS in some of its cars and motorcycles. With the GST Tracker installed in the vehicles, the dispatch center receives real-time vehicle information which allows the dispatchers to automatically reroute vehicles as needed.

At the department's dispatch center, the locations of the vehicles equipped with the GST Tracker can be seen on a large Sony LCD Projection Monitor and on Communications Supervisor Shelley Santy's WinTV monitor. With the GST Tracker vehicle-tracking system, the dispatcher has the ability to easily get on demand the real time location, speed, direction, the names of street and cross streets. That information can also be recorded for playback at a later time.



Tech-Head: Capt. Tim Riley, who oversees the Support Services Division, believes technology plays an integral role in the public safety arena.

Riley is quick to point out that the department's primary use of GPS is to ensure the safety of its officers and to provide better response times to calls for service.

Tech-Head: Capt. Tim Riley, who oversees the Support Services Division, believes technology plays an integral role in the public safety arena.

"The use of GPS is not intended as a supervisory tool to watch or officers' every move but instead is meant to provide them a tool to get to a location more efficiently, provide dispatchers with assistance in assigning the

closest police vehicle to a call for service and know where an officer is should he or she need assistance," says Capt. Tim Riley, who manages the Support Services Division that comprises of Communications, Records, Personnel and Training, Video and Electronics Specialist and Computer.

Riley says staying on top technology is imperative for law officers. "It's absolutely essential to survive in today's world," he says. "It is very important because an officer's life may depend on how much he or she knows about the person they are making contact with. Also, it is our responsibility to deliver law enforcement services to the public as quickly and efficiently as we can and technology plays a major role in accomplishing those missions."

Among its suite of public safety solutions, Newport Beach PD also uses GST Mapper, a real-time mapping and routing system, GST CrimeMap, a comprehensive crime analysis and mapping software, and GST CrimeMap Lite, a streamlined version for officers in the field with their MDCs (Mobile Data Computers). The products are developed by GeoSpatial Technologies, Inc., a Santa Ana-based technology company.

Watchful eye: With the GST Tracker installed in certain police vehicles, Communications Supervisor Shelley Shanty can instantaneously see which officer is closest to a call for service.



Going high-tech: Newport Beach Police Department uses the power of wireless, GPS/GIS and the Internet in its suite of public safety solutions.

Again, Riley says the idea behind the department's use of technology is to equip the officers with the tools that help them do their job better. "Providing access to GST Mapper allows an officer to navigate to a call for service and obtaining routing information if necessary," he says. "GST CrimeMap Lite again provides an officer with updated crime information that is easily recognizable for patterns and types of crimes via a map display. There is also a corresponding database to obtain details about each item displayed on the map."

Newport Beach Police Department with its 140 sworn officers appears to be at the forefront in its use of technology in public safety because of a strong leadership that believes technology is more of a help than a hindrance, Riley says. "Supporting the use of technology starts at the top," he says. "Our Chief of Police supports our technology projects and the financing of those products through grants and existing budgets."

Although a fan of high-tech tools, Riley says he does not buy into new technologies just because it is available. He says he is always thinking of his officers when it comes to the usability of the products. "My experience as a field officer helps," he says. "I play the user. I decipher the technology for them and apply what is best in the field."