Developing Measures of Effectiveness for an RTCC

Given the fast-paced nature of the work that occurs in a Real Time Crime Center (RTCC), it can be difficult to keep track of productivity and to document the effort and effectiveness of the unit or of individual personnel. Proactively establishing methods for collecting and organizing data and documenting the work being accomplished by RTCC detectives serve a variety of purposes. Those purposes include providing work-performance feedback to personnel, tracking and reporting accomplishments to executives/leaders and external constituencies, and building the case for additional resources as the range of responsibilities grows, as new technologies emerge, and as work demands rise.

There are several possible methods for tracking and documenting work productivity. For example, developing an in-house database can allow RTCC analysts and detectives to document their daily activities and work associated with each priority 1 call/BOLO (e.g., which cameras checked, electronic monitoring activity, officer support provided). The database also can allow individuals and supervisors to check their daily, weekly, or monthly statistics and identify any trends in workloads or response effectiveness.

It also may make sense to keep track of the outcomes that RTCC activities and operations have on high-profile crimes to systematically document cases in which a suspect was captured, or the case was solved, in real time. These kinds of organizational successes also might be considered for public dissemination (as appropriate and remaining mindful of privacy rights, status of active cases within the criminal justice system, and other factors) via a public information office (or officer). In an era of law enforcement transparency, sharing real-time crime response successes may help to ease community tensions, establish or enhance organizational legitimacy and trust, and help the community realize that is law enforcement agency is "on top of the crime problem."

Departments also should consider assessing the impact of RTCC activities in addressing and disrupting crime patterns, impacting reductions in the time elapsed between reporting a crime and suspect arrest, and measuring the additional resources that RTCC detectives provide to officers who are deployed and on scene. Each of these different measures of productivity and effectiveness also could be used within a cost-benefit analysis, which may help demonstrate the impact of an RTCC on the overall effectiveness of a law enforcement agency and provide support during requests for additional resources.

Here are some examples of measures of effectiveness, and samples of work/productivity products, which may be useful for agencies that plan to establish an RTCC:

> *Monthly activity reports*—Monthly activity reports can capture a wide range of metrics that can help document the work within an RTCC. For example, agencies might capture information on asset-type successes (videos located/saved, ALP system uses and hits, electronic monitoring hits, etc.), cases cleared with help from the RTCC, and calls-for-service types that involved RTCC assistance). Departments also can gather weekly or monthly reports on BOLO successes (stolen plates, stolen vehicles, NCIC alerts, missing persons, or internal hotlist hits). Examples of report templates are on the toolbox website.

*Documenting the RTCC impact on visible or high-profile cases or assisting with solving crimes or disrupting crime pattern*s—This kind of product would likely take the form of a qualitative assessment of how the RTCC contributed to a particular case. Anecdotally, a number of such examples always are known within agencies, but systematically capturing this kind of information may be useful for those agencies that are interested in growing their capabilities. Further, an agency may want to track the impact of captured video on conviction rates (or plea bargaining). This is likely an area in which an RTCC may indirectly impact the broader criminal justice system.

Time measures between crime reporting and resolution/arrest—Real-time response suggests that an agency is responding to crimes in progress. As such, the time frame between a report to the police and an arrest, an apprehension, a traffic stop, or other forms of resolution might be captured and recorded as an indicator of RTCC and organizational efficiency. These data are likely available within the agency data infrastructure, but proactive steps to capture and measure the time frame between initial report and resolution (in varying forms) certainly can be useful.

Cost-benefit analysis—Past studies are available that focus on cost-benefit analyses for introducing crime analysis functions into a law enforcement organization. However, the cost of technology and the broad range of law enforcement technology are rather extensive, so agencies would likely need to conduct their own internal needs assessments. Assistance with conducting such a technology needs assessment is also available.