

## **The Importance of Communication and Stakeholder Engagement as a Prerequisite to Effectively and Successfully Launching an RTCC**

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In addition to securing technology, hiring employees, and setting up the RTCC infrastructure, two additional steps are recommended to establish an effective RTCC. First, it is helpful to educate the organization and its employees about what the RTCC is, how it operates, and what benefits it can provide. Within this context, establishing trust among different internal stakeholders is also important. Second, the general public, local businesses, and other community external stakeholders need to be a part of the process, and engaging them will enhance organizational legitimacy and trust.

### **Educating and Building Trust With Officers, Detectives, Supervisors, Civilians and Other Organizational Units**

As an RTCC is developed and established, and its technology and capabilities continue to evolve, it becomes ever more important to ensure that officers (current and newly hired), supervisors (including those who are later promoted), and units within the organization are educated regarding the mission of the RTCC, its capabilities and constraints, and its operating guidelines. A proactive approach to this educational process will serve the agency and its employees well, will help to minimize time dedicated to one-on-one or small group training/educating, and will allow the organization to efficiently deliver the necessary information to relevant stakeholders when appropriate. The agency might consider developing an RTCC video that can quickly summarize and explain what the RTCC is capable of providing to officers, supervisors, and others that can be shown. This would allow officers to educate themselves as needed and also allow the agency to share the information to external constituencies. Here are some examples of videos from a variety of agencies:

[Albuquerque \(NM\) Police Department](#)

[Austin \(TX\) Police Department](#)

[Charlotte Mecklenburg \(NC\) Police Department](#)

[Fresno \(CA\) Police Department](#)

[Memphis \(TN\) Police Department](#)

[Newark \(NJ\) Police Department](#)

[New York \(NY\) Police Department](#) and [Stop Talking Start Doing-NYPD](#)

[Ogden \(UT\) Police Department](#)

[St. Louis \(MO\) Metropolitan Police Department](#)

## **Building Trust With the Local Community**

The first, and perhaps most fundamental pillar of the [President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing](#) is the principle of building legitimacy and trust between law enforcement and citizens. Establishing an RTCC, which could include setting up a city- or countywide video camera infrastructure, capturing license plates on public roadways, and/or electronically monitoring pretrial (and potentially innocent) offenders, represents some level of law enforcement intrusion into the private lives of law-abiding citizens.

Using RTCC resources to [manage large-scale security events](#) also can present similar challenges and sometimes can result in overly aggressive policing. As a result, proactively engaging the community, including the most challenged neighborhoods, other components of the criminal justice system, public and private businesses, local politicians and leaders, religious organizations, school systems, advocacy groups, and others prior to launching an RTCC would be advisable. In some communities, where privacy is more valued and police intrusions more carefully scrutinized, establishing an RTCC is unlikely. In other locations, part of the infrastructure may be in place already, and law enforcement can simply expand on what exists. Regardless, engaging stakeholders before you start recording their activities, capturing their license plates, or monitoring their citizens, is an important step that will further sustain the agency's legitimacy and trust, which ultimately will help ensure a safer community.