



NORTH BAY POLICE SERVICE

2008 Annual Report Information Technology

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A. Mandate of the Unit

Using a secure network environment, the Information Technology section provides necessary hardware, software, technical support and training to members of the North Bay Police Service.

B. Executive Summary

The Information Technology section consists of an Information Systems Coordinator and two part-time Information Systems Technicians who maintain computer systems. This group also works with various agencies like the RCMP, OPP, and City Hall for the exchange of electronic data. Our police service continues to participate in the Ontario Police Technology Information Cooperative which provides the secure environment for our Computer Aided Dispatch and Record Management Systems.

C. Activities

Mobile Workstations (MWS)

The goal of the MWS project was to extend the office environment to the police cruiser and provide the officers with the necessary tools to police in an effective manner. During the three years we were faced with many challenges ranging from securing communications to installing hardware in the limited space of the cruisers. After network security concerns were satisfied a small test group of officers began testing two laptop models. The Panasonic Toughbook was chosen as the preferred laptop. During the test period we learned that more working space would be available by moving the location of other policing equipment installed in the cruiser. Ten cruisers were outfitted with the necessary components needed to use the MWS. Officers now have access to various police databases, can view mug shots, email, and have access to all internal network resources from the cruiser.

Digital Recording of Cell Block and Interviews

Since the 1980's recordings of our cell block and interview rooms were created using VHS format. VHS tapes are becoming obsolete and some manufactures have stopped manufacturing these tapes. In addition to the difficulties of obtaining VHS media, storage of the tapes themselves was an issue. A digital recording system was installed to replace the outdated system. Now all recordings are automatically stored on a central disk. The benefits were immediate and included ease of use; very little manual interaction from the user; better quality of recordings; longer storage time of videos; the ability of searching recordings; and the ability of viewing interviews from any computer.

Digital Cameras

New digital cameras have been issued to the platoons replacing the old Polaroid cameras. Images are downloaded weekly by IT and property is being returned to victims and owners in a timelier manner. This process is cutting back on personnel time that spends hours having to document North Bay Police Service property.

Digital Radio Console

A VoIP system was installed which transmits radio packets to digital allowing personnel in designated positions to listen to radio transmissions using their computer. Special radio equipment is no longer required to perform this task.

Other Activities

Installations and upgrades in 2008 included the addition of Blackberries and a Blackberry server, an upgrade to our Records Management System (RMS), Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Office 2007 upgrade. Other changes made in the IT section this past year was the expansion of the server room and the hiring of another part-time IT technician.

D. Performance Indicators

The Information Technology section strives to provide a high level of availability of computer systems to members. Being proactive in maintaining various systems reduces downtime for critical applications.

E. Anticipated Issues for the Future

More resources are needed to manage the many additional tasks and systems assigned to the IT department. Although the hiring of a second part-time IT person has certainly helped in this area the limitation of hours may hinder keeping quality individuals. Training for the new IT person is time consuming and costly. A second full-time employee would ease the demand of supporting our network and uses on a 24-hour basis.

F. Performance Objectives for the Next Year

Developing competency amongst the I.T. team will allow all team members to support the various systems. Competency can be achieved through on the job training and other training workshops available on the web and in a class room environment.

In 2009 the service will replace the data connections to the City and Court House with a point to point wireless system. This new data connection is encrypted and will eliminate the long transmission delays currently being experienced.

Installation of a Mobile Workstation in the traffic vehicle will allow this service to proceed with the e-ticketing system. The officers will have the ability of swiping driver's licenses and printing tickets in the cruiser reducing the time involved in processing traffic violations.

We will continue to take a proactive role in policing by working with the school boards to complete the Implementation of the School Police Emergency Action Response (S.P.E.A.R.) system. The S.P.E.A.R. system is a collection of school information data sheets, maps, floor plans and photographs of area schools to assist officers in responding to school emergencies. With the MWS available, officers have immediate access to this critical information.

The proximity system used for door security is obsolete and cannot be expanded on as needed hardware is no longer available. This system is due to be replaced in 2009.

Many other software upgrades are planned for 2009 such as upgrading our backup software, two factor authentication software upgrade and web filtering software upgrade. Our service also plans on using Microsoft InfoPath to develop the many forms currently in use.

G. Other

H. Appendices