

From the Office of the sheriff:

Not only is it a new year, it is also the start of my second four-year term as your Sheriff. As with my first term, I have again set a number of objectives for the department. These include Mobile Data Computers, Centralized Dispatch, Centralized Records, substations, and Contract/Consolidated Law Enforcement. I feel these goals are in the best interest of the taxpayers, local law enforcement, and the customer base we serve. I will explain each of these initiatives.

The staff has worked hard to implement technology to make the department more efficient and more responsive to the customer's needs. In the long run technology and automation save dollars and costs associated with adding personnel. One of our final initiatives in technology is the installation of a Mobile Data Computer's (MDC) in our squad cars. Dodge County is one of only a handful of county's or even area law enforcement agencies that has yet to field MDC's. Many agencies are on their second generation as we look into our first. The question becomes – How important is this and is it money that needs to be spent?

The answer is a resounding YES! It is a must have and the system will pay for itself in 3-5 years. Benefits include enhanced officer safety, enhanced response, more secure communications, and a many more. MDC's will also free up time and allow deputies an increase of hundreds of more hours of patrol time on the road vs. time in the office. MDC's will also provide the platform for future technological advances. This system is not limited to law enforcement, it has applications for every county departments, all of whom we would make this system available.

So what is it and how does it work? The MDC's in layman's terms – a rugged laptop in each patrol car. The computer will allow the deputy to access data bases directly from his squad. They can check vehicle registrations, driver's licenses and check for warrants. Currently this is all done over the radio and conducted by our Communications Officers. Even with the best of staff, this is still a very time consuming event as the deputy radios the information, the Communication Officer runs it through the computer and then communicates the response back to the deputy over the radio.

Another super feature will be the ability to access our information system and records database. Should a Detective seek information on a suspect he must radio that request in and wait for a response. With the MDC they will be able to access that information directly from their squad. The MDC will also us to access our jail records and photo array's. At time people may not be as forthcoming as we want them when it comes to providing identification. The ability to access that data from the squad will assist is in that task.

Another great feature will be the ability to adapt to an automated citation program reducing the prehistoric and redundant data entry of citations and the eventual electronic delivery of citations to the Clerk of Courts. With an easy swipe of the magnetic strip of a driver's license, citation fields are automatically populated with the information and citations would be printed on scene. This is just a snap shot of the benefits. We forecast that this system will prevent the hiring of 5-7 employees over the next 3-5 years.

If I were asked to compare this enhanced business practice to the business world, I would equate to a large grocery store going from adding your purchases via pencil and paper to the current scanning. Next, Centralized Dispatch and Records. Thanks for listening, [tnehls@co.dodge.wi.us](mailto:tnehls@co.dodge.wi.us).