TECH*Beat*

Dedicated to Reporting Developments in Technology for Law Enforcement, Corrections and Forensic Sciences

PANORAMIC IMAGING TECHNOLOGY WIDENS

CRIME SCENE VIEW

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PANORAMIC IMAGING TECHNOLOGY
WIDENS CRIME SCENE VIEW

By Becky Lewis

The report on the District Attorney's desk lays out the evidence piece by piece, measurement by measurement, the result of months of careful investigation. Precision crime scene reconstruction details help lay out the case, details made available because the investigators "returned to the scene of the crime" multiple times for more research. Details provided not by holding a scene closed, but by reviewing panoramic images stored in the agency's computer system.

The Department of Forensic Science at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), through the National Institute of Justice Forensic Technology Center of Excellence (FTCoE), recently concluded an evaluation of three panoramic imaging technologies used for digital crime scene documentation. VCU's Michelle Peace says that over and over again, agencies that had successfully implemented one of the technologies told her how much they valued the ability to revisit a crime scene days, even weeks or months later.

"Every agency that we talked to seemed passionate about the technology and had confidence in their ability to use it," Peace says. "It can deliver a lot of strengths to an investigation, but it doesn't necessarily replace taking photographs and measurements at the physical scene. Instead, it's another tool in the toolbox."

The evaluation, which objectively compared three different technologies to assess their capabilities, requirements, benefits and challenges, resulted in the December 2013 publication of *A Technical Evaluation of Three Panoramic Crime Scene Imaging Technologies,* available for download from the Technology Transition reports page of the FTCoE website (https://www.forensiccoe.org/reports.aspx).

Researchers looked at operational use, hardware and software needs, pricing, and training and technical requirements for 3rd Tech's SceneVision-Panorama, the Panoscan MK-3 and the Leica ScanStation C10. SceneVision-Panorama uses limited on-scene hardware to blend traditional photographs into a single panorama; Panoscan MK-3 rotates to record a complete panorama as a single image; and the Leica ScanStation C10 system records a full panorama and collects millions of data points via a three-dimensional laser scanner, thus allowing additional measurements to be taken at a later time.

"I work and help train crime scene investigators through the Virginia Forensic Science Academy," Peace says. "We're always talking about advancements in crime scene investigation, and I realized that some really small agencies were buying expensive tools that turned out to be so complicated, the agency never used them. There's a wide spectrum of these tools available, and no one had objectively evaluated any of them head-to-head, so we developed a plan to look at several technologies that had a wide range of capabilities."

As a follow-on to the evaluation, the FTCoE also held a technology transition work shop, and FTCoE Director Jeri Ropero-Miller says many participants came to the event not realizing that panoramic technology complements, rather than replaces, established photography and measurement techniques.

"We also heard from some agencies that they had the go-ahead to buy a high-end device, but when they learned more about the options available, they decided another device better met their needs," she says.

Deciding up front how an agency will use the technology is one of the most significant steps in its procurement decision, Peace says. Agencies can implement panoramic imaging technology in multiple ways, ranging from making a quick scan of a crime

scene before physically collecting evidence to taking detailed scans of potential targets such as courthouses and schools as part of a preparedness plan.

"Every agency talked about the value of going back into a crime scene after it's been released, to revisit it and better understand the spatial relationships, to potentially put themselves at a victim's or suspect's or witness's vantage point," Peace says. "This could be a week after a scene is released, or two or three years. The ability to document spatial relationships is invaluable when you get to court. It can be used to reconstruct crash scenes or more quickly document really large scenes like fire or explosion scenes."

"It may or may not speed up the process, but it will definitely change the logistics. It all goes back to why they chose to adopt the technology in the first place," Ropero-Miller adds.

Agencies may not need to invest in the most expensive instrument, Ropero-Miller says, and should remember that more complex technologies also require more complex ongoing training.

"Some agencies are able to dedicate personnel to these more complex technologies, but a smaller agency might want something simpler that all their investigators can use as needed," she says.

With research on panoramic technologies complete, the FTCoE plans to continue the evaluation process with other technologies. Several research efforts are underway, but the Center also welcomes input from the field as to future technology needs. Visit www.forensiccoe.org or call (866) 252-8415. For information on the FTCoE and other National Institute of Justice forensic programs, contact Gerald LaPorte, acting director, Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences, at Gerald.Laporte@usdoj.gov.

Returning to the Scene of the Crime

For Crime Scene Supervisor Ryan Rezzelle of the Johnson County (Kan.) Sheriff's Office Criminalistics Laboratory, using the agency's Leica ScanStation C10 "can be better than actually being at a crime scene."

"It helps us avoid contamination and cross-contamination and to otherwise risk damaging the evidence. I believe it's been instrumental in helping our customers [the other law enforcement agencies in Johnson County] present their cases in a manner that allows for successful prosecution. In fact, I think our use of the laser scanner has possibly led to some plea agreements because of the strength of the science and technology, and therefore the evidence they're up against," Rezzelle says.

The ScanStation creates a "point cloud" consisting of as many as 150 million discrete points from which investigators can take spatially accurate measurements, giving it an advantage over standard panoramic technology, Rezzelle says. The crime lab acquired the ScanStation in December 2010 and after spending six months validating its effectiveness, put its use into practice in July 2011. Since that time, Johnson County has used the scanner on 40 to 45 crime scenes annually.

"There are still occasions where we need to get hand-recorded measurements, but this leaves far fewer unanswered questions," Rezzelle says. "If you didn't put a tape on something at the time, you can revisit the crime scene and take the measurement later. Closing gaps like that led me to push for purchasing the scanner. We can do more with this than we can with hand measurements. We can bring the scans back to the lab and share them with our investigators. We can also show judges, juries and attorneys exactly what we captured."

Rezzelle thinks that this type of technology — which is just one of the three options evaluated by Virginia Commonwealth University — is the future of crime scene documentation, and it should be a goal for agencies that acquire it to share services and collaborate with other agencies, similar to the way Johnson County agencies work together. To implement scanning technology an agency must invest not only in the technology itself, but also in hardware, software, resources and training, which may be beyond the grasp of many agencies, he says.

"We've even used it at scenes outside of Johnson County in certain circumstances," Rezzelle says. "Our mission is to protect and serve, and collaboration is part of that."

Another part of that mission is to proactively use the scanning technology to help protect infrastructure by scanning high-risk targets such as schools, post offices and municipal buildings. The crime lab presently is scanning specific areas of the county courthouse, and has school buildings on its "to do" list.

Market Survey of BODY-WORN CAMERAS
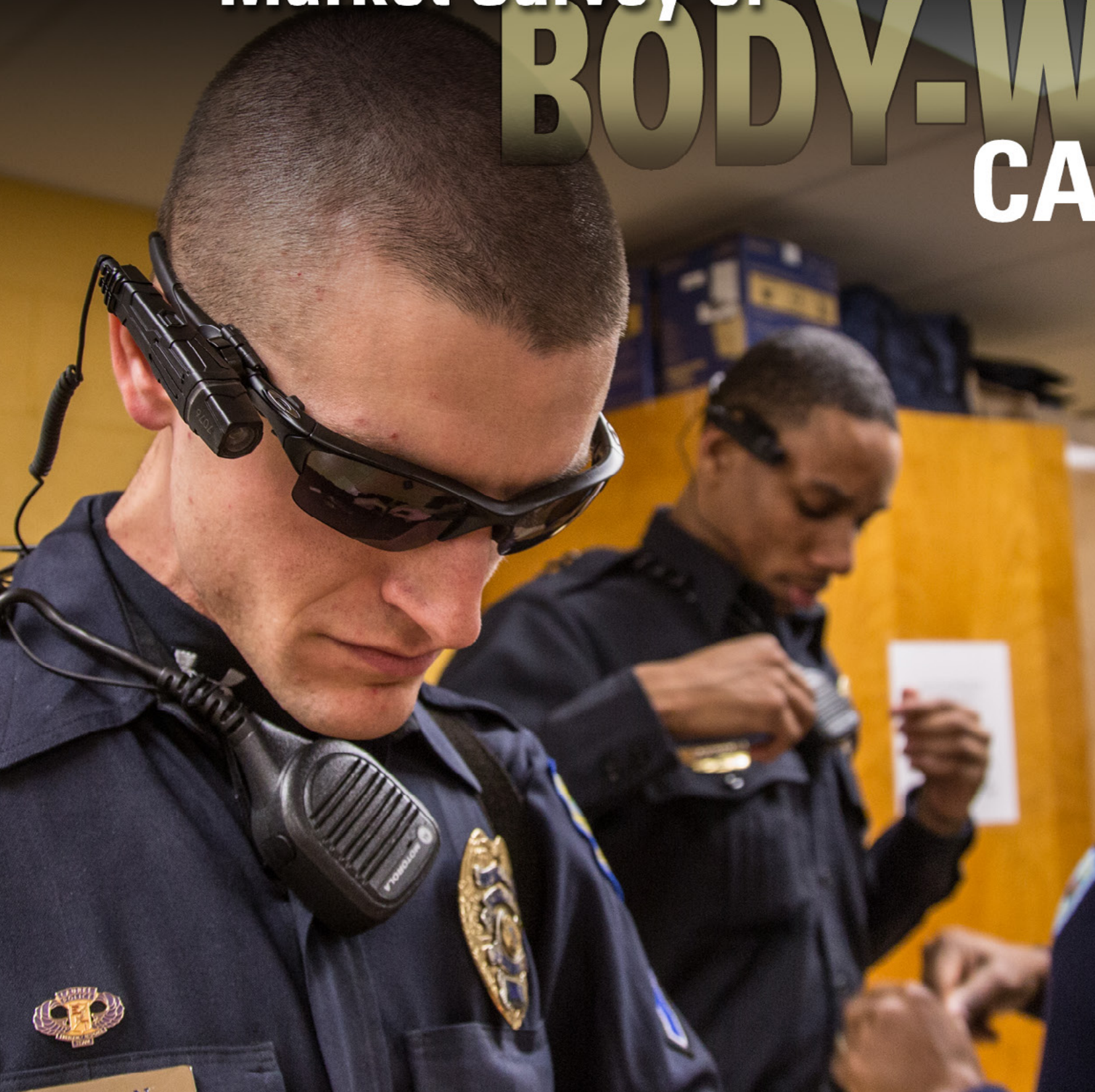
By Becky Lewis

Whether you're choosing a new smartphone, an upgraded computer or just a breakfast cereal, today's marketplace offers so many choices it can seem overwhelming. The same is true for body-worn cameras (BWCs).

In recent years, the number of law enforcement agencies looking to implement BWC technology has grown significantly, and so have the number of devices available for procurement. *Body-Worn Cameras for Criminal Justice: Market Survey*, a new publication produced by the Sensor, Surveillance, and Biometric Technologies Center of Excellence (SSBT CoE), provides assistance to agencies looking to implement this technology by looking at devices and summarizing their features in a consistent manner.

Lars Ericson, SSBT CoE director, says that by reporting the same information in the same way, and using the same units of measure, agencies can make a strong "apples to apples" comparison of the different devices on the market.

Photos courtesy of The Washington Times

"We want them to get the right system for their needs and their capabilities," Ericson says. "As with most technologies, there's no one-size-fits-all answer, particularly when funding considerations come into play."

This new publication makes that kind of "apples to apples" comparison for 18 commercially available devices, tripling the number listed in a brief survey contained in a fact sheet produced by the SSBT CoE in 2011 and included as an appendix in the 2012 *A Primer on Body-Worn Cameras for Law Enforcement.* The expanded *Body-Worn Cameras for Criminal Justice: Market Survey* serves as a companion piece to the September 2012 *Primer,* which focused on factors an agency should consider when planning to deploy the technology.

"Since we published the *Primer,* more and more departments have seen the value of deploying BWCs, value related to factors such as accountability, capturing video for evidentiary purposes and obtaining video that relates to citizen complaints," Ericson says.

"With the new market survey, we wanted to compare and contrast these new devices to help agencies make the decision that is right for them."

—Lars Ericson,
Director, SSBT CoE

As more agencies began deploying the devices, more vendors entered the market, leading to more available options and more potential confusion.

"With the new market survey, we wanted to compare and contrast these new devices to help agencies make the decision that is right for them. We focused exclusively on commercial products because we wanted to develop a publication that would be immediately relevant," Ericson says.

Photo courtesy of The Washington Times

The SSBT CoE obtained the information needed to produce the publication by issuing, through the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), a request for information in the *Federal Register.* The request solicited input on more than 20 different topics and features, and SSBT CoE staff reached out to the vendor community to ensure awareness of the request. All but one of the vendors contacted provided information on their systems.

"A department considering what to purchase could be overwhelmed by the different options, or could be swayed by an aggressive marketing campaign when another device might be a better option," Ericson says. "In addition to funding considerations, some features may appeal to one department, while another may want a different option. For example, you might think that all agencies would want cameras that capture video images in the dark, but when you consider how that technology fits into the logistics of a criminal case, you might realize that isn't the best option for your department because it doesn't represent what the officer sees. That type of evidence could complicate a jury's opinion."

OTHER FEATURES ADDRESSED IN THE MARKET SURVEY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Mounting options.
- Maximum video resolution.
- Recording speed.
- Recording format.
- Time/date stamp capabilities.
- Field of view.

The SSBT CoE is part of NIJ's National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) System. To download Body-Worn Cameras for Criminal Justice: Market Survey, go to the NLECTC website at https://www.justnet.org/pdf/Body-Worn-Camera-Market-Suvey-508.pdf. For more information about NIJ's Sensors and Surveillance, and Biometrics programs, contact Program Manager Mark Greene at (202) 307-3384 or by email at Mark.Greene2@usdoj.gov.

# CALIFORNIA combats growing CELLPHONE PROBLEM with technology

By Becky Lewis

There was a time when cellphones made only phone calls. Rates could be high, minutes limited, coverage spotty. They were barely of any use to those who had them legitimately, and if those users worked in the corrections field, they might have been hard-pressed to think how they would prove of any value to inmates.
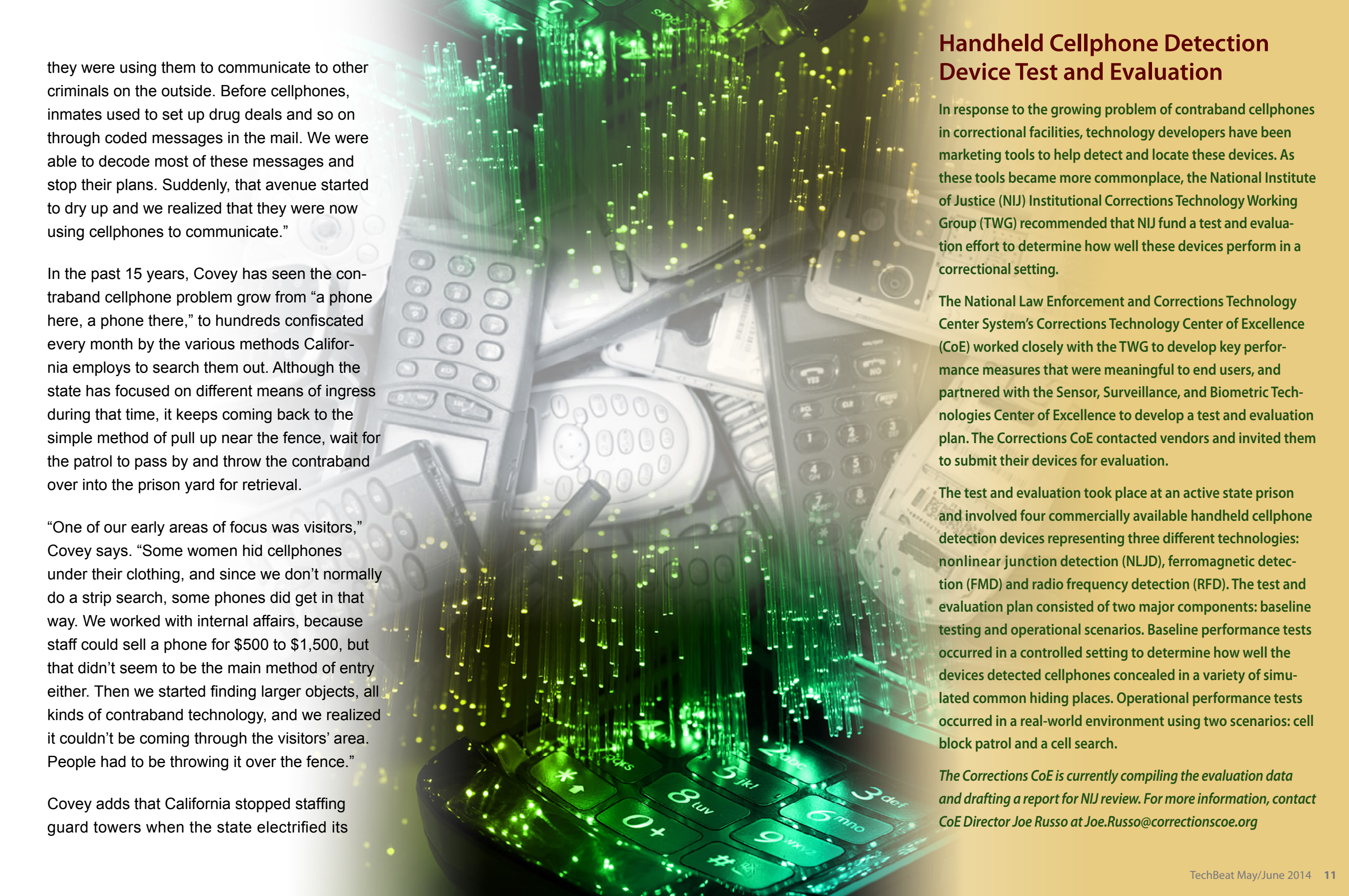
My, how times have changed.

Count Brian Covey, associate director for design and environmental services and standards with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, among those who didn't foresee the scope of the problem that contraband cellphones would become.

"We didn't realize in the beginning how dangerous a cellphone could be," Covey says. "In fact, when I got my first cellphone, I laughed and said, 'What would an inmate want with this?' We soon realized through our intelligence gathering process that they were using them to plan drug transactions and
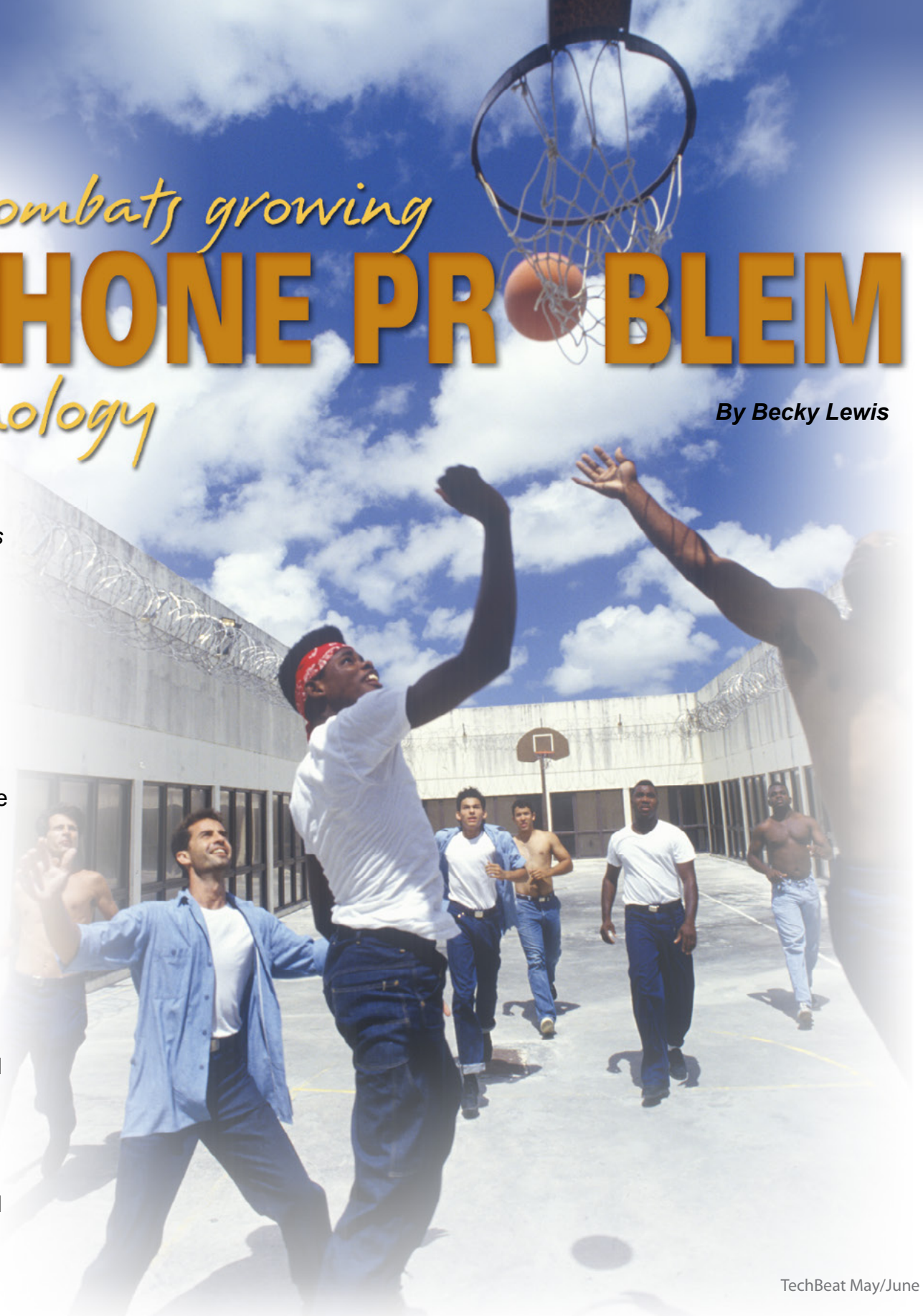
they were using them to communicate to other criminals on the outside. Before cellphones, inmates used to set up drug deals and so on through coded messages in the mail. We were able to decode most of these messages and stop their plans. Suddenly, that avenue started to dry up and we realized that they were now using cellphones to communicate."

In the past 15 years, Covey has seen the contraband cellphone problem grow from "a phone here, a phone there," to hundreds confiscated every month by the various methods California employs to search them out. Although the state has focused on different means of ingress during that time, it keeps coming back to the simple method of pull up near the fence, wait for the patrol to pass by and throw the contraband over into the prison yard for retrieval.

"One of our early areas of focus was visitors," Covey says. "Some women hid cellphones under their clothing, and since we don't normally do a strip search, some phones did get in that way. We worked with internal affairs, because staff could sell a phone for $500 to $1,500, but that didn't seem to be the main method of entry either. Then we started finding larger objects, all kinds of contraband technology, and we realized it couldn't be coming through the visitors' area. People had to be throwing it over the fence."

Covey adds that California stopped staffing guard towers when the state electrified its

Handheld Cellphone Detection Device Test and Evaluation

In response to the growing problem of contraband cellphones in correctional facilities, technology developers have been marketing tools to help detect and locate these devices. As these tools became more commonplace, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Institutional Corrections Technology Working Group (TWG) recommended that NIJ fund a test and evaluation effort to determine how well these devices perform in a correctional setting.

The National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center System's Corrections Technology Center of Excellence (CoE) worked closely with the TWG to develop key performance measures that were meaningful to end users, and partnered with the Sensor, Surveillance, and Biometric Technologies Center of Excellence to develop a test and evaluation plan. The Corrections CoE contacted vendors and invited them to submit their devices for evaluation.

The test and evaluation took place at an active state prison and involved four commercially available handheld cellphone detection devices representing three different technologies: nonlinear junction detection (NLJD), ferromagnetic detection (FMD) and radio frequency detection (RFD). The test and evaluation plan consisted of two major components: baseline testing and operational scenarios. Baseline performance tests occurred in a controlled setting to determine how well the devices detected cellphones concealed in a variety of simulated common hiding places. Operational performance tests occurred in a real-world environment using two scenarios: cell block patrol and a cell search.

The Corrections CoE is currently compiling the evaluation data and drafting a report for NIJ review. For more information, contact CoE Director Joe Russo at Joe.Russo@correctionscoe.org

fences, and although armed patrols circle the outer perimeter, it's just a matter of timing for those who want to throw something in.

"It was too easy back then to just walk up. We looked at improved lighting and surveillance cameras and that seemed to help for a while, but then they just became smarter about finding the right place and time to throw the phones in," he says.

To combat that ongoing influx of phones, California turned to technology. The state started using handheld cellphone detectors in the early 2000s, but officials weren't happy with the number of false alerts on items such as MP3 players. In the years since, the state has continued to search for new and better technology solutions, particularly under Secretary of Corrections Jeffrey Beard.

"He's a huge advocate for technology and contraband interdiction, and he really gave us the green light to look at new technology to try to completely stop this problem," says Covey, who serves as executive officer of the Technology Transfer

Committee. "That's why it was so important for me to attend the National Institute of Justice Technology Institute for Corrections. I was able to network with people from other states and learn what they've tried that has worked and what they've tried that hasn't worked."

For example, he says the state recently began a pilot project of a new technology, and had mixed results. Through networking at the Institute, he learned that the technology performs better when two units are used in tandem. Covey returned that favor by bringing the emerging issue of satellite phone use to the attention of other Institute attendees.

"We were asked to bring information on anything new that might defeat existing technology," Covey says. "Through research, I learned about conversion kits that will convert an iPhone 4G into a satellite phone. The idea is that it might help someone who gets injured or lost when hiking, but inmates can use its messaging function to set up a drop. Some 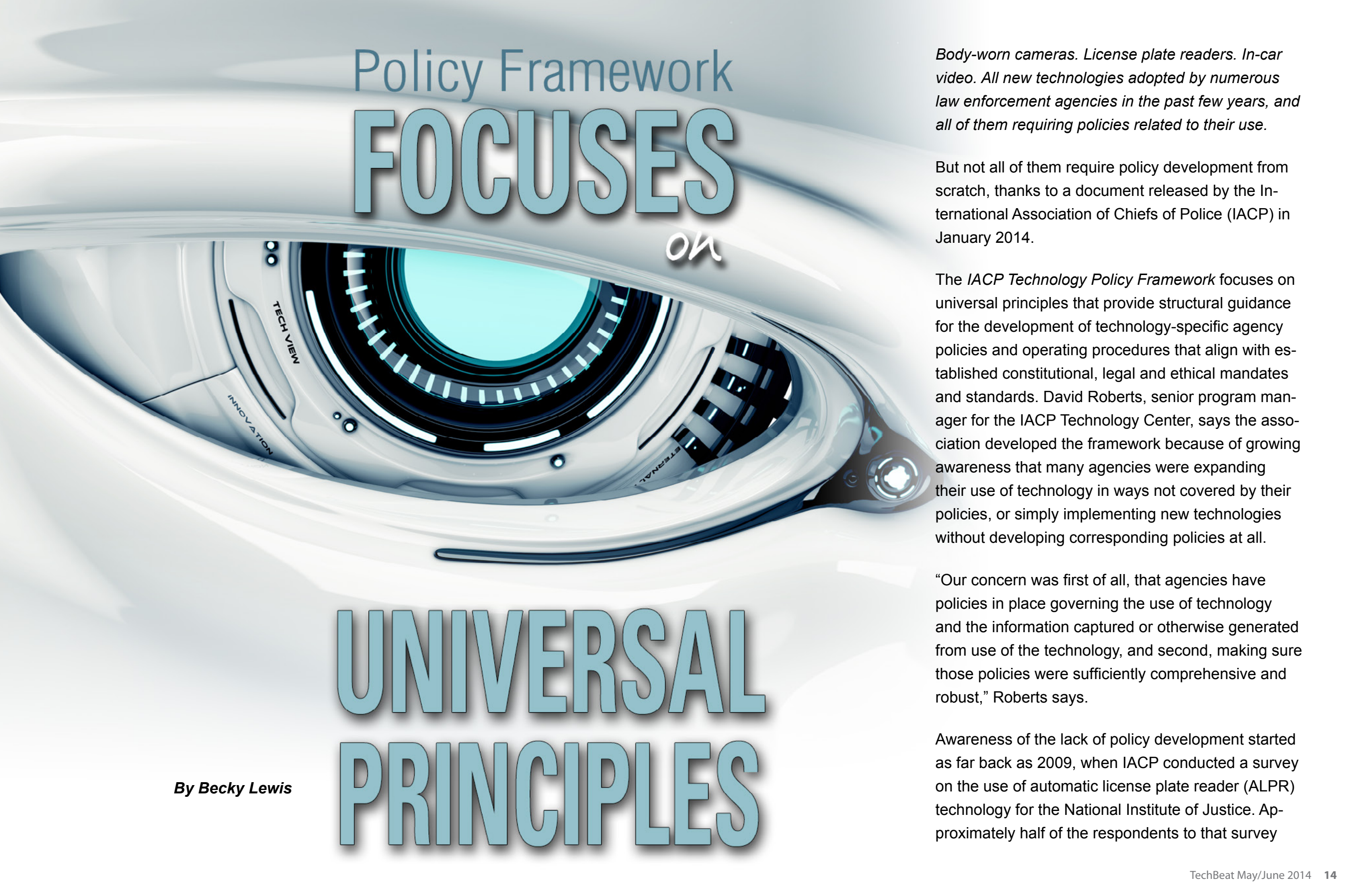states are spending millions on managed access, and this would defeat it because it doesn't use cell towers. We haven't had any indication that they're using it yet, but I don't see it as being too long before they figure this out."

"That's why the Institute is so important. I put this out there, and with everyone looking at it, we may be able to come up with a solution," he adds.

For more information on the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's contraband cellphone interdiction effort, contact Brian Covey at (916) 255-3339 or brian.covey@cdcr.ca.gov.

This article is one of a series of articles to appear in TechBeat *focusing on information presented at the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice (NIJ) August 2013 Technology Institute for Corrections, which brought together administrative-level corrections professionals to learn about contraband cellphone interdiction. For information on NIJ corrections programs, contact Jack Harne, NIJ corrections technology program manager, at jack.harne@usdoj.gov.*
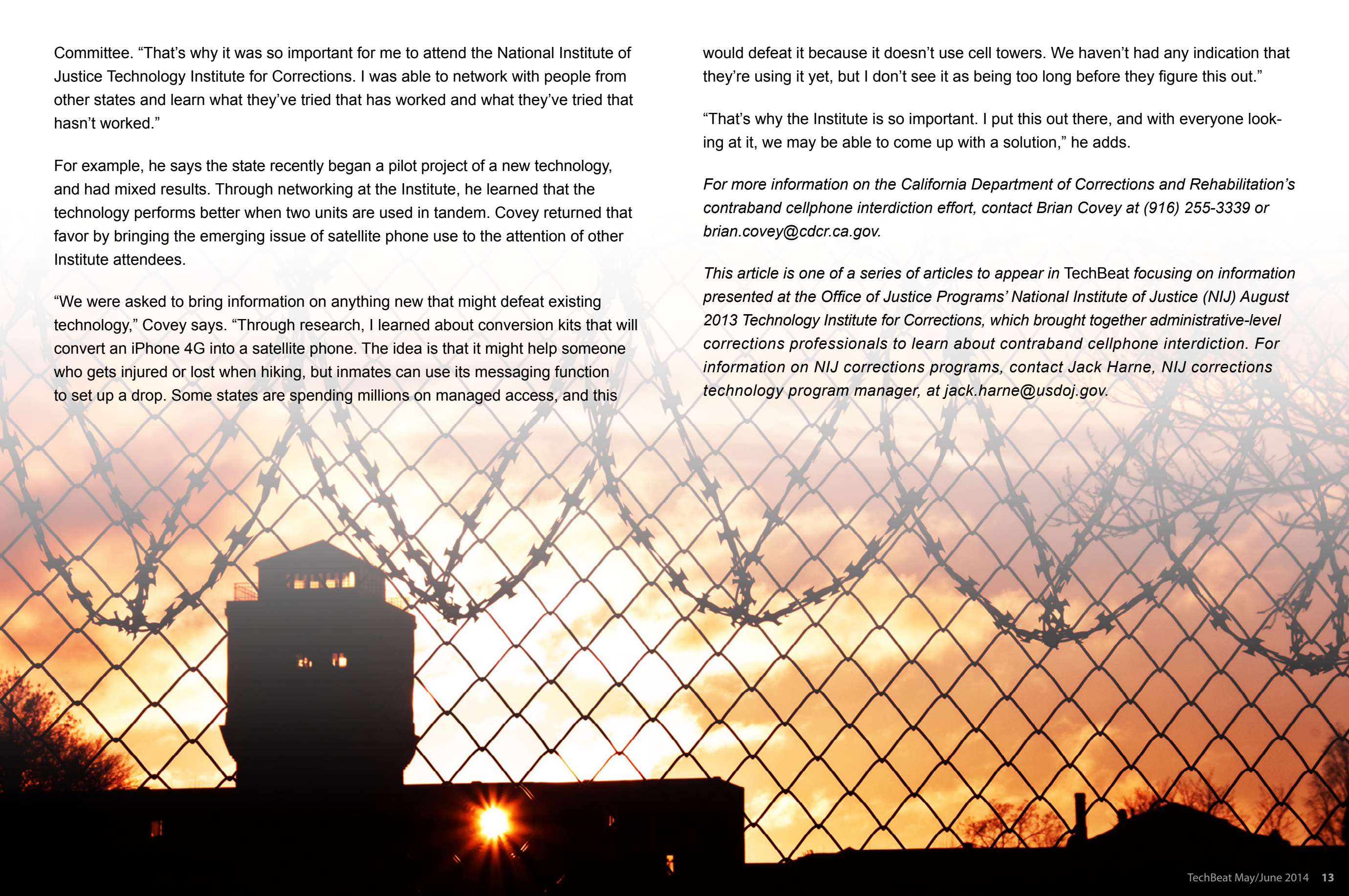
Policy Framework FOCUSES on UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES

By Becky Lewis

Body-worn cameras. License plate readers. In-car video. All new technologies adopted by numerous law enforcement agencies in the past few years, and all of them requiring policies related to their use.

But not all of them require policy development from scratch, thanks to a document released by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) in January 2014.

The *IACP Technology Policy Framework* focuses on universal principles that provide structural guidance for the development of technology-specific agency policies and operating procedures that align with established constitutional, legal and ethical mandates and standards. David Roberts, senior program manager for the IACP Technology Center, says the association developed the framework because of growing awareness that many agencies were expanding their use of technology in ways not covered by their policies, or simply implementing new technologies without developing corresponding policies at all.

"Our concern was first of all, that agencies have policies in place governing the use of technology and the information captured or otherwise generated from use of the technology, and second, making sure those policies were sufficiently comprehensive and robust," Roberts says.

Awareness of the lack of policy development started as far back as 2009, when IACP conducted a survey on the use of automatic license plate reader (ALPR) technology for the National Institute of Justice. Approximately half of the respondents to that survey

Research, the Integrated Justice Information Systems Institute and various federal partners, reviewed and commented on the framework, which was produced solely with IACP funding.

Because IACP received no outside funding for the project, the association also did not seek formal endorsement from outside agencies whose representatives participated; rather, they served as an informal review board. Roberts says IACP staff studied court cases, the Fair Information Practice Act and similar legislation from the United Kingdom and Canada, and conducted field research, speaking with practitioners about existing policies. All of that research informed the development of the principles outlined in the framework.

"There are universal principles that apply to all technologies," Roberts says. "Agencies don't have to start with a blank sheet of paper, because ALPR is not that different substantively from body-worn cameras, which in turn are not that different from the use of unmanned aviation systems (UAS). There are basic principles that apply to all of them."

used ALPR, but had no policies governing its use. Similar findings emerged from a survey by the Legal Advisors' Committee of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) in 2013. Since use of this technology has been surrounded by controversy regarding data retention and access, these findings created concern that led to further research.

An ad hoc committee of law enforcement executives and subject-matter experts representing various committees and sections within IACP, as well as other organizations and groups such as the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council, MCCA, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, the Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies, the Institute for Intergovernmental

In an 11-page document that includes endnotes and references, the framework addresses:

- Technology objectives.
- Deployment.
- Privacy protections.
- Records management.
- Data quality.
- Systems security.
- Data retention and purging.
- Access and use of stored data.
- Information sharing.
- Accountability.
- Training.
- Sanctions for noncompliance.

Roberts emphasizes that the principles that make up the framework provide guidance and direction, not only to law enforcement agencies but also to the association itself.

"We are in process now of applying the framework principles to model policies that IACP is developing. We're updating our model policies for ALPR and UAS, and developing one for body-worn cameras. All will be informed and structured in large measure by the framework."

To download IACP Technology Policy Framework*, go to http://www.theiacp.org/ViewResult? SearchID=2361. For more information on the project, contact David Roberts at roberts@theiacp.org. Also contact Mark Greene of the National Institute of Justice at mark.greene2@usdoj.gov.*

NEW JERSEY CORRECTIONS AGENCY MAKES CHANGES

Sleeping peacefully in the 4 a.m. quiet, the inmate wakens to the sound of footsteps: one pair human, one pair canine. A canine with a specially trained nose that will soon be alerting on the contraband cellphone that has passed from hiding place to hiding place, inmate to inmate, for several weeks. A phone that was thought to be hidden away safely for the night, a time when no dogs would search for its distinctive smell.

More frequent canine searches at odd times make up one of several components of a new strategy toward finding contraband cellphones implemented in the state of New Jersey, a strategy that also includes increased staff education, improved fencing and lighting, and changes in the way staff and inmates enter buildings. Deputy Commissioner Mark Farsi of the New Jersey Department of Corrections, a participant in the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice (NIJ) August 2013

from the
GROUND up

By Becky Lewis

Technology Institute for Corrections, says the state is reaping the benefits of employing a number of approaches that came from the brainstorming of a task force established by Commissioner Gary M. Lanigan in 2010, including the changes in canine search patterns.

"We've increased our canine patrol from three to seven dogs and we've changed from five days a week to seven," Farsi says. "We might go at 4 in the morning, we might go at 11 at night, we might go on Sunday morning. The inmates never know when we'll show up. We've also learned it's important to let the dogs roam around the grounds and the perimeters, where they come across phones that have been thrown over the fence."

> *"We might go at 4 in the morning, we might go at 11 at night, we might go on Sunday morning. The inmates never know when we'll show up."*
>
> *—Mark Farsi, Deputy Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Corrections*

Farsi says the task force, which consisted of members selected from every type of position within the department, recommended starting from the ground up by looking at methods of searching, problematic facilities and specific areas within those facilities. From this approach, the New Jersey DOC learned that security at full minimum camps and satellite units wasn't as strong as perceived, and that cellphones dropped off in those areas were "muled," or channeled, through the rest of the system. As a result, the state looked at vulnerable points in the full minimum units and enhanced the equipment and procedures used for searching, put up fencing and lighting, and installed cameras to ensure proper supervision during exit and entry of the inmate population.

"There were also changes to the way that staff entered," Farsi says. "We put equipment in place and there is 100 percent staff compliance. From the commissioner on down, everyone is searched just like at the airport. And also including the commissioner, no staff member may bring a cellphone into a facility. We removed all the metal from the uniforms, going to patches instead of shields."

He adds that educating staff, both uniform and civilian, about the dangers created by allowing inmates to have cellphones has proved key.

"Some of the problems stemmed from lack of knowledge of all the damage a cellphone can do in a prison. We're trying to educate staff about all the negative ways it can be used, and we've also

prosecuted four or five staff for smuggling contraband into the secure perimeter of a facility."

Lanigan also established and implemented an initiative called C.H.A.N.G.E. (Challenge Historic Assumptions Nobly Generating Efficiencies). C.H.A.N.G.E. entails the tracking and reporting of primary indicators for each correctional facility, which are measured by staff on a monthly and annual basis to ensure the goals of the department are met.

"We meet on a monthly basis. Every facility is given an opportunity to report on how they're doing with certain key performance indicators, the problems they encounter and what they do to combat them," Farsi explains.

"We get to discuss how everyone is accomplishing their goals, where they need assistance, and what they see as best practices," Farsi adds. "We use this to determine strategies for deploying canines, sending out the mobile forensics units and deciding where search teams are needed. It's a piece of contraband and treating it the way we do all other contraband is important. We have a multipronged approach and so far it's working."

For more information on New Jersey's multipronged approach to cellphone detection, contact Deputy Commissioner Mark Farsi at (609) 826-5650 or mark.farsi@doc.state.nj.us.

This article is one of a series of articles to appear in TechBeat *focusing on information presented at the NIJ August 2013 Technology Institute for Corrections, which brought together administrative-level corrections professionals to learn about contraband cellphone interdiction. For information on NIJ corrections programs, contact Jack Harne, NIJ corrections technology program manager, at jack.harne@usdoj.gov.*

TECHshorts
Technology News Summary

TECHshorts is a sampling of the technology projects, programs and initiatives being conducted by the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) System, as well as other agencies. If you would like additional information concerning any of the following TECHshorts, please refer to the specific point-of-contact information that is included at the end of each entry.

In addition to TECHshorts, *JUSTNET News,* an online, weekly technology news summary containing articles relating to technology developments in public safety that have appeared in newspapers, newsmagazines and trade and professional journals, is available through the NLECTC System's website, www.justnet.org. Subscribers to *JUSTNET News* receive the news summary directly via email. To subscribe to *JUSTNET News,* go to https://www.justnet.org/subscribe.html, email your request to asknlectc@justnet.org or call (800) 248-2742.

Note: The mentioning of specific manufacturers or products in TECHshorts does not constitute the endorsement of the U.S. Department of Justice, NIJ or the NLECTC System.

Offender Tracking Evidence Protocols Guide

Corrections Technology Center of Excellence

A new publication is available that addresses a need for information on how to best handle the various types of offender tracking evidence that may be required in a court proceeding.

A Practical Guide for Offender Tracking Evidence Protocols was developed for agencies that operate offender tracking programs and assumes a basic understanding of the technologies used. The guide was developed by the Corrections Technology Center of Excellence.

The guide is available to law enforcement and corrections agencies on request by emailing asknlectc@justnet.org.

Police Officer's Guide to Recovered Firearms App

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has released a free app to aid law enforcement in processing recovered firearms while in the field. The app contains the *Police Officer's Guide to Recovered Firearms*.

Access the app from a mobile device to identify recovered firearms and for information on firearms safety, identifying markings, tracing firearms and identifying persons prohibited by federal law from possessing firearms. The app is

provided through a partnership between ATF, the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and is a product of Project Safe Neighborhoods.

To access the guide, go to http://myappsinfo.com/recoveredfirearms.

Portable Carbon Monoxide Detectors Can Protect First Responders

Emergency responders sometimes don't know exactly what they are responding to and what they will confront when they arrive. Some departments are using small, portable carbon monoxide (CO) detectors to ensure responders encountering a CO leak don't become victims themselves.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, toxic gas. Symptoms of CO exposure can include headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. High levels of CO inhalation can cause loss of consciousness and death.

In some jurisdictions, police routinely respond to every medical emergency call and are often the first on the scene. That's the case in the Borough of Peapack and Gladstone Police Department in New Jersey, where officers in the nine-member department have been carrying small CO/methane detectors on responder bags for about a year. Each of the department's six police cars has a trauma kit with a CO detector attached to it. The detectors the department uses each cost about $470 and were paid for through a donation from a local corporation.

"They are clipped to our trauma kit bags," says police Chief Gregory Skinner. "We all are trained to respond to all EMS calls within our borough, and are often the first responders to arrive. Police have an average of four-minute response time on EMS

calls, and the EMS has an average 10-minute response time, so we often are there first. The theory is that when officers go for an EMS run, they carry the bag and turn the detector on before they enter the building."

Skinner, who is also a member of the borough's volunteer fire department, got the idea for the police department to use the portable CO detectors from his college roommate and longtime friend, Battalion Chief Robert Corrigan of the Technical Services Unit of the Philadelphia Fire Department.

"The advantages are obvious," Corrigan says. "It is likely the patient calling for help for CO symptoms may not be aware of the poisonous environment they are in, and unsuspecting fire, EMS and police crews can unwittingly find themselves in the same environment."

The cost of a small CO detector varies, depending on the model. Brian P. Kazmierzak is the division chief of training for the Penn Township Fire Department in Mishawaka, Ind., and serves as the director of operations for www.firefighterclosecalls.com. His department has been using CO monitors that clip to responder bags for about a year.

"They only cost about $150 each and they stay on for two years and you don't have to calibrate them or do anything to them," Kazmierzak says. "The second day we had them in our bags we caught a carbon monoxide leak. We were called to a house where a woman was not feeling well and after we got the bag in there the monitor went off."

For more information, contact police Chief Gregory Skinner at gskinner@ peapackgladstonepd.org, Battalion Chief Robert Corrigan at Robert.corrigan@ phila.gov, or Chief Brian Kazmierzak at brian@firefighterclosecalls.com.

PUBLIC SAFETY TECHNOLOGY
In The News

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Following are abstracts on public safety-related articles that have appeared in newspapers, magazines and websites.

Md. Natural Resources Police Turn High Tech in Pursuit of Oyster Thieves

The Daily Times, (04/06/2014), Liz Holland

A radar and camera system is helping law enforcement crack down on oyster poachers in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay. Maryland Natural Resources Police have been able to track waterman poaching oysters from state sanctuaries. The new Maritime Law Enforcement Information Network was built primarily for homeland security purposes, but is useful in many ways. Currently, about 14 state and federal agencies monitor the network, including the Coast Guard and the Maryland Transportation Authority.

http://www.greenfieldreporter.com/view/story/abda8787ac984373bdda63e495632d5d/MD--Oyster-Sleuths

R.I. Law Enforcement Agencies Want Officers to Carry Opioid Antidote Narcan

Providence Journal, (04/07/2014), Katie Mulvaney

Rhode Island state police troopers and detectives are being trained to administer naloxone, also known as Narcan, which can reverse opiate drug overdoses. Narcan, which police administer through a nasal spray, interrupts the effects of opiates on the brain and works to restore breathing quickly. Charlestown was the first police department in the state to train and equip its officers with Narcan.

http://www.providencejournal.com/topics/special-reports/overdosed/20140407-r.i.-law-enforcement-agencies-want-officers-to-carry-opioid-antidote-narcan1.ece

New System to Bring Unity to Suburban Emergency Response Services

The Denver Post, (04/07/2014), John Aguilar

Five suburban fire agencies in the Denver area are consolidating their emergency dispatch centers to better share information and improve service. Arvada, Evergreen, Littleton, South Metro and West Metro plan to place the management of all 911 calls for fire and medical help under a single computer-aided dispatch system (CAD). Covering 23 cities, 1 million residents and nearly 1,200 square miles across three counties, the Jefferson-Arapahoe Consolidated CAD (JACC) will be one of the largest efforts of its kind in the state. The plan calls for the system to be in service in October 2014.

http://www.denverpost.com/News/Local/ci_25509289/New-system-to-bring-unity-to#

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Testing Results. Up-to-date listing of public safety equipment evaluated through NIJ's testing program. Includes ballistic- and stab-resistant armor, patrol vehicles and tires, protective gloves and more.

Calendar of Events. Lists upcoming meetings, seminars and training.

Social Media. Access our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube feeds for the latest news and updates.

Do More With Less. Highlights creative programs and resources to help agencies meet challenges as budgets shrink and demands on departments grow.

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