

2013 JAG PROGRAM – LOCAL SOLICITATION

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

The Olympia Police Department seeks to purchase computer software that will allow for advanced analysis of crime and call data contained in our Records Management System (RMS). The Department belongs to a regional Law Enforcement Records consortium comprised of five city police departments. The departments share a suite of software products that include Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), Mobile Field Reporting (MFR), a Records Management System (RMS) and a Jail Management System (JMS). The City of Olympia seeks this grant to purchase an additional, stand-alone software “module” that will mine the data available in our RMS and JMS systems. The software will be available to other members of the consortium, as well.

With the exception of the CAD software, the City and its partners utilize Public Safety software from SunGard Public Sector. SunGard recently marketed a new product for its law enforcement suite that allows for detailed crime analysis on-the-fly. The software, called Crime Analysis +, mines data from the various SunGard systems utilized by the Consortium and gives the user multiple ways to view the results. The software can produce heat maps to highlight crime “hot spots”, can geographically map officer actions against crime occurrences, and can provide a time-lapse analysis of crime events. The software allows the user to customize the data being reviewed to allow for analysis of geographic districts, particular types of crimes, significant offenders, etc. In addition, geographic information from Google, NOAA, and other web-based databases can be used with the software. This capability expands the ability to cross-reference crime data with street-level views and other geo-related data.

With this information, the City of Olympia can more effectively police the community and regional law enforcement will improve, as well. Recent analysis of regional crime trends have shown that criminals do not limit themselves to one jurisdiction. The local cities, along with the Thurston County Sheriff’s Department, have created a Regional Investigation Team (RIT) to address crimes that cross jurisdictional boundaries. The team has successfully used data-driven policing methods to locate and prosecute prolific criminals and crime rings. The Crime Analysis+ software will enhance the capability of both the RIT and individual jurisdictions to address crime throughout the region.

In addition to the work being done by officers and detectives, the City of Olympia is very proactive in involving the community in addressing crime. Our crime prevention and neighborhood assistance programs rely on data to accurately paint a picture of challenges that exist in particular areas. From apartment managers who work with police to identify suspects on their premises, to neighborhood associations who report suspicious activity, the community works cooperatively with law enforcement to improve the safety of their neighborhoods.

Currently, the City of Olympia is engaged in data-driven policing. We use a CompStat model for addressing crime in our community. Our regional partners are beginning to adopt these principles, as well. The crime analysis tools that are being used today are fairly unsophisticated, are not readily available for the average police officer, and are labor intensive. However, early success in addressing crime trends has already been realized despite these limitations, spurring a need for better tools. With Crime Analysis+ software, police personnel will be able to produce meaningful analyses of crime and the response to crime. The software will enhance our ability to communicate with our communities through maps, charts, and other visual aids to explain “hot spots” and to engage citizens in efforts towards crime prevention, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), and Neighborhood Watch.

Achieving the goal of increasing data-driven policing requires several things: cooperation amongst regional agencies to share data, the ability to easily analyze and use the data, sufficient training to become proficient with the available tools, and communication between law enforcement and the communities it serves. The first criteria, sharing data among agencies, is already occurring. The City of Olympia shares data with four neighboring cities and also uses resources such as LiNX to cast a wider data net. In addition, the regional law enforcement departments also share investigative resources through the RIT. The second issue, easy data analysis, will be significantly improved with the purchase of Crime Analysis+ software. Crime analysis in Olympia currently relies on the work of one Crime Analyst who uses unsophisticated software. The Crime Analyst produces information and crime maps for officers and detectives on a weekly basis. Because much of the work is done manually, analysis is time-consuming and cannot be done effectively by investigative staff. Crime Analysis+ would put robust crime analysis data, geographically displayed, instantly at the fingertips of detectives and officers on the street. The third strategy for achieving success through data-driven policing recognizes that before officers can be expected to use a new tool effectively, they must be well-trained on its use. The purchase of the software, funded in part by the grant, includes thorough training for law enforcement personnel. Lastly, effective data-driven policing relies on law enforcement’s ability to communicate information about crime trends to the community. The Crime Analysis+ software will allow for easy preparation of visual aids, such as data charts and crime maps, to help the community better understand the criminal activity in their neighborhoods and throughout the area.

The City of Olympia Police Department will measure the effectiveness of the software during the life of the JAG grant. To do so, police management staff will assess, on a quarterly basis:

- The number of officers, detectives, and other staff using the software
- The number of CompStat meetings facilitated by Crime Analysis+
- The number of RIT team meetings facilitated by Crime Analysis+
- The number of community meetings where data from Crime Analysis+ is utilized