



Client Agency

Detroit Police Department (DPD)
Detroit, Michigan

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Dates Services Provided

May 20-25, 2007

Overview of Technology Assistance Request

This request for technical assistance was made to assist efforts being undertaken by the City of Detroit and the Detroit Police Department (DPD) in consolidating their IT systems and making them functionally more effective and operationally more cost-efficient.

Simultaneous to the establishment of the fusion centers, the DPD and the City of Detroit's Department of Information Technology Systems (ITS) have been working to develop a strategic plan for the consolidation and improvement of DPD's IT systems.

Over past years, the Detroit Police Department (DPD) has acquired a significant number of computer systems covering a wide range of operational, investigative, and administrative organizational areas. With the proliferation of personal computers (PCs), many new systems were acquired to provide and service the needs of individual units within the department; in the long term, the DPD Information Technology (IT) infrastructure has suffered from the negative effects of what was a well-meaning proliferation of disparate PC systems.

The acquisition of these systems was often perpetuated by demands for information collection and management, and with a sincere intent to maximize the use of information. While selection and implementation of standalone systems often satisfied the localized need for data management and informational support, this proliferation unknowingly caused a longer term and more strategic problem - many disparate systems surfaced throughout the DPD. In many cases, limited or no implemented interface capabilities existed between these standalone function specific systems. As a result, in many cases the files or databases contain redundant



information that required reentry into each separate system. In some cases, information retrieval and report needs required data that was spread across several systems with no inherent means of multiple file or database access.

As technology advanced and earlier systems aged, there came about a need to phase out old systems and bring in new systems (hardware and/or software). In some circumstances, the installation of, and transition to, a new system occurred with the loss of certain features and a compromise of previously existing functional capabilities. Because of data incompatibilities, some data conversions were only accomplished when units of data matched exactly and did not require any edit conversions or standardization. In a few cases the historical data was not carried forth during the transition.

Type of Technology Assistance Services Provided

Specific objectives of the Detroit Police Department technical assistance engagement include the following:

- ◆ Validate the assessment of DPD's existing systems as developed by Detroit ITS and DPD.
- ◆ Work with Detroit ITS and DPD on the development of the IT strategy and business plan.
- ◆ Identify standards and best practices that should be integrated into the strategy and business plan.
- ◆ Make recommendations about how DPD can leverage existing capabilities and/or planned investments.

Overview of Observations and Recommendations

A copy of the TA report can be found on the IJIS Institute website at www.ijis.org.

Contact Information

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