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# National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center System

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as well as the creation of a special projects budget to address cutting-edge research issues. The mission of the NIH remains constant; however, the multiple venues requiring research will continue to challenge the NIH to evolve and adapt to ever-increasing health and security risks to the public.

*Pamela A. Gibson*

### *For Further Reading*

National Institutes of Health. (2000). *NIH Almanac, 2000* (NIH Publication No. 00-5). Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health.  
National Institutes of Health. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nih.gov>.

## NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTIONS TECHNOLOGY CENTER SYSTEM

The National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) system was created in 1994 as a component of the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ's) Office of Science and Technology. The National Institute of Justice is the research and development agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. The NLECTC system serves as the honest broker, offering support, research findings, and technological expertise to help state and local law enforcement and corrections personnel perform their duties more safely and efficiently.

The NLECTC system is assisted in its work by national and regional advisory councils. National council members are appointed by NLECTC based on their records of distinguished service and include representatives from federal, state, local, and international criminal justice agencies and organizations. Each regional council is made up of criminal justice practitioners who represent a cross section of law enforcement and corrections agencies from each of the states within the centers' constituent regions. The system consists of facilities across the country that are colocated with an organization or agency that specializes in one or

more specific areas of research and development. Although each NLECTC facility has a different technology focus, all facilities work together to form a seamless web of support, providing technology assistance, support, and information. The NLECTC system's regional centers and specialty offices work directly with federal, state, and local government agencies; community leaders; and scientists to foster technological innovations that result in new products, services, systems, and strategies for criminal justice professionals throughout the United States. These offices are as follows:

*The National Center.* The National Center is colocated with its host, Aspen Systems Corporation, in Rockville, Maryland, and serves as the hub of the NLECTC system. As part of its mission, this center

1. Provides information and referral services to anyone with questions about law enforcement and corrections equipment or technology
2. Oversees the equipment standards and testing program to ensure that law enforcement and corrections equipment is safe and reliable
3. Reviews and analyzes testing data and publishes test results and consumer-product reports designed to help justice system officials make informed purchasing decisions
4. Publishes *TechBeat*, a quarterly newsletter that highlights technology breakthroughs and applications
5. Operates JUSTNET, a Web site that provides links to the entire NLECTC system and serves as a gateway to other technology sites for those seeking information about equipment, technology, or research findings.

*NLECTC-Northeast.* Located at the Air Force Research Laboratory Rome Research Site, on the grounds of the Griffiss Business and Technology Park in Rome, New York, this center leverages technologies designed for the military that can be adapted to meet law enforcement and corrections needs. It draws on the expertise of Air Force scientists and engineers and focuses on concealed weapons technologies, through-the-wall sensors, audio and image processing,

timeline analysis, computer forensics, secure communications, speaker identification, and communications interoperability. NLECTC-Northeast also operates the Law Enforcement Analysis Facility and NIJ's National Law Enforcement CyberScience Laboratory-Northeast.

*NLECTC-Northwest:* Law enforcement and corrections (LE&C) officers in Alaska and other cold, remote areas of the United States face unique challenges to crime prevention, investigation, and rehabilitation efforts. This center was established to provide assistance in defining LE&C's requirements for information and operational technology, with specific attention directed toward technologies that support law enforcement and corrections under the extreme weather conditions and vast distances found in remote, rural Alaska and other parts of the United States. Newly developed technologies will be applicable for law enforcement and corrections officers in all regions of the country with rural or severe weather challenges. NLECTC-Northwest identifies, evaluates, demonstrates, and assesses technology applications for state and local law enforcement and corrections agencies. Staff also manages joint technology programs applicable to law enforcement and corrections missions. NLECTC-Northwest was founded in 2001 in partnership with Chenega Technology Services Corporation, a technology support company experienced in providing information technology support to America's military organizations and private corporations.

*NLECTC-Rocky Mountain.* This center, located at the University of Denver in Colorado, focuses on communications interoperability and the difficulties that often occur when different agencies and jurisdictions try to communicate with one another. This facility works with law enforcement agencies, private industry, and national organizations to implement projects that will identify and field test new technologies to help solve the problem of interoperability. In addition, NLECTC-Rocky Mountain houses the Crime Mapping and Analysis Program, which provides technical assistance and capacity building to state and local agencies in the areas of crime and intelligence analysis and geographic

information systems. Sandia National Laboratories has been designated as a satellite of NLECTC-Rocky Mountain and works in partnership with NLECTC to focus on technologies for detecting and neutralizing explosive devices.

*NLECTC-Southeast.* This center is colocated with its host, the South Carolina Research Authority in North Charleston, South Carolina. Its technology focus areas include information technology and technologies for corrections and school safety. NLECTC-Southeast helps law enforcement and corrections agencies acquire and redistribute federal surplus and excess property. The center also operates an Incident Mapping and Analysis Program that includes crime mapping training, spatial information management, geographic profiling, and data mining. The center's technology partners include the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center-Charleston, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and Savannah River Technology Center.

*NLECTC-West.* This center is colocated with its host, the Aerospace Corporation, in El Segundo, California. The nonprofit corporation provides technical oversight and engineering expertise to the Air Force and the U.S. government on space technology and space security systems. NLECTC-West draws on Aerospace Corporation's depth of knowledge and scientific expertise to offer law enforcement and corrections personnel the ability to analyze and enhance audio, video, and photographic evidence. This NLECTC facility also has an extensive array of analytic instrumentation to aid in criminal investigations, such as a scanning electron microscope and a mass spectrometer, instruments that can be used to process trace evidence. The center's other focus areas include computer forensics, communications systems, technologies to stop fleeing vehicles, and a Homeland Security Project with programs in less-than-lethal weapons and counter-OPFOR (opposing force) activities.

*The Border Research and Technology Center.* Operated by Sandia National Laboratories and located in San Diego, California, this center works

with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the U.S. Border Patrol, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the U.S. Attorney offices, and law enforcement agencies to strengthen technology capabilities and awareness on U.S. borders. One of its most recognized assistance activities has been the implementation of the Secured Electronic Network for Travelers' Rapid Inspection. The Border Research and Technology Center (BRTC) also works on joint ventures to identify technologies that will stop fleeing vehicles and is currently participating in a project to detect heartbeats of people concealed in vehicles or other containers. BRTC's technology partners include Sandia and the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center-San Diego.

*Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization.* This program of NIJ's Office of Science and Technology was established in 1995. Its mission is to develop and deploy an active, broad-based national program to assist in the commercialization of innovative technology for use by the law enforcement and corrections community. The Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization's (OLETC's) primary objective is to bring research and private industry together to put affordable, market-driven technologies into the hands of law enforcement and corrections personnel. OLETC actively solicits manufacturers to commercialize technologies based on requirements identified by NIJ and its Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Advisory Council as well as from law enforcement and corrections practitioners.

*Office of Law Enforcement Standards.* The mission of the Office of Law Enforcement Standards (OLES) is to serve as the principal agent for standards development for the criminal justice and public safety communities. OLES has been instrumental in the development of numerous standards and the issuance of various technical reports that have had significant impact on both of these communities. Through its programs, OLES helps criminal justice and public safety agencies acquire, on a cost-effective basis, the high-quality resources they

need to do their jobs. OLES's programs are organized into six areas: Weapons and Protective Systems; Detection, Inspection, and Enforcement Technologies; Chemical Systems and Materials; Forensic Sciences; Public Safety Communication Standards; and Critical Incident Technologies. Within each program area there are a variety of projects.

*The Rural Law Enforcement Technology Center.* This center provides technology and technical solutions to rural and small criminal justice agencies. The Rural Law Enforcement Technology Center (RULETC) concentrates on information technology, communications interoperability, and training and simulation technologies that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of rural law enforcement. RULETC provides technology assistance via a nationwide network of criminal justice subject-matter experts, engineers, academia, and scientists. The center is developing capacity-building programs for dissemination nationwide that will provide rural agencies with the information they need to better equip officers to serve their communities. Hosted by Eastern Kentucky University Justice and Safety Center, RULETC is located in Hazard, Kentucky.

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#### *For Further Reading*

- Justice Technology Information Network (JUSTNET). National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center-National. (2002). [Online]. Available: <http://www.nlectc.org/justnet.html>
- TechBeat.* (1994-2002). Rockville, MD: National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center-National.

## NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MEMORIAL

The National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, D.C., honors police officers killed in the line of duty and provides a quiet place for survivors to mourn and to heal. The memorial also serves as a positive image of law enforcement in