**The Haivision Podcast**

**Surveillance and Community Engagement with Captain Darin Hull**

## Summary of the Episode

In this episode of the Haivision Podcast, hosts Dustin Bilthouse and Kalli Ringelberg talk with Darin Hull, Captain at Cobb County Police Department in Atlanta, Georgia, about the importance of interagency collaboration and the benefits of having a Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) in the community. They delve into how technology, like RTCCs, supports law enforcement, especially when dealing with staffing challenges, by providing critical intelligence that enhances the effectiveness of officers in the field.

The discussion also addresses public concerns over police surveillance technology, sometimes dubbed a "digital snitch," and how law enforcement agencies can shift community perceptions to gain support for these tools. Darin Hull emphasizes the significance of transparent communication with the public and the need for ongoing conversations to ensure community buy-in for new technologies.

**Transcript**

**Introduction to the Podcast**

Welcome to the Haivision Podcast, where we take a deep dive into the innovations and challenges shaping video technology. In each episode, we'll bring you insights from experts behind cutting-edge video networking, visual collaboration, and video-wall solutions.

So whether you're a professional navigating the complexities of video-wall technology, working in live production, or someone simply curious about new tech, this podcast is for you.

Join us as we explore the latest trends, share success stories, and discuss the technology shaping the future of mission-critical video environments.

### 00:35 - Episode Overview

In this episode of the high vision podcast, Dustin Bilthouse and Kalli Ringelberg discuss interagency collaboration and the benefits of having a real time crime center in your community with Darin Hull, Captain at Cobb County Police Department in Atlanta, Georgia.

We further discuss the idea of the technology that allows for police surveillance, being referred to as a "digital snitch", and how you can change your community's perspective to get them on board with the technology in police departments today. Enjoy!

### 01:07 – Introduction to Darin Hull

**Dustin:** For the sake of the audience and people that don't know you and don't follow you on social media, if you can introduce yourself real quick and to your role in the department.

**Darin**: Oh yeah. I'm Darin Hull. I'm a Captain with the Cobb County Police Department that's in Georgia, just on the, we'll say, northwest side of Atlanta for the most part. So kind of an interesting community too, because you have the side of the county that is right there up against Atlanta. So, you know, think of a more of a light city kind of area, home of the Atlanta Braves. But then if you push on towards the other side of the county, it can quickly become rural to where the calls for service could be a neighbor's horse in your front yard, right? So there's just a little bit of everything in Cobb County, good university, military base, Lockheed Martin.

So just a lot of great diversity in our community, with the population and then the businesses and, you know, residential areas we have.

**Dustin:** yeah, and not to mention you also have a few large companies there as well. I believe Home Depot and Cox are two of the larger fortune 500.

**Darin:** Yeah, headquarters for Home Depot racetrack, if, if you're familiar with that gas station, their headquarters is there, but definitely a lot of big companies represented in Atlanta.

**Dustin:** Yeah, no Buckies yet, though there isn't no you have to go one county to the north working on it. I don't know where Buckies is headquartered out of but we need to, we need to figure that out. They're amazing.

So I guess I want to start off with something that, you know, and just kind of in that vein of community and outreach. I remember a couple years ago, I was working with City of Tuscaloosa, and they were establishing their operations center, which would technically fall in the category of what I would consider a real time crime center. And I remember they went to City Council to go through the final approvals, and, you know, have the vote of city council say, okay, yeah, let's go forward. Funds are approved. Go ahead and build your center. And of course, that meeting was open to the community, so people could come up there and voice their opinions or ask questions about, you know, what the center was going to be for. And interestingly enough, there was a lot of people there that were kind of up in arms a little bit about the PD Buildings Operations Center, and I think a lot of it had to do with vernacular and what they decided to call it, and they decided to call it the Cyber Intelligence Center. And I think that, you know, most people would probably get a little freaked out by that. Yeah, you know, when I think, when you think cyber, you immediately think, okay, everything that's happening online, and, you know, credit card transactions and Venmo transactions and you know, everything, just our entire digital fingerprint that's out there. And I think that's, you know, generally, that wasn't the actual case. It was more of the traditional, the real time crime center. But I guess you have had a lot of success in community outreach and getting support. I wanted to get your thoughts on that. And you know what, what that looks like in terms of Cobb County?

## 04:20 – Correct Branding for your Real Time Crime Center

**Darin:** Yeah, it's interesting. So you bring up a good point, and what we kind of envision in Cobb is if you don't set your narrative, other people will set that narrative for you. And so it's important to not only have those conversations and those meetings with the public when you're trying to onboard a particular technology, you're actually benefited by continuing those conversations even when you're not trying to get something passed by your council or your commission.

And part of the reason is that because if you're trying to be truly transparent, you want to show that it is a relationship that you do listen to your community. One thing our chief will refer to sometimes is the father of modern law enforcement, Sir Robert Peel. He had a couple of

tenants, and one of his principles dealt with that the police are the public, and the public are the police, and so the public is there to help basically craft how they are policed in their community, what their priorities are, and the police department is there to listen to them and make sure that they operate within those guidelines.

We call them guardrails. So those guardrails are there to basically border the lane, the lane that we're supposed to be in. And guardrails are there for two reasons, to catch people that unintentionally leave their lane, or people that intentionally leave their lane and direct them back into their lane. So those guardrails are crafted by that feedback from the public, from policies and procedures that are created with their input.

And so that is an ongoing conversation, and I'll give you an example of how that has to be an ongoing conversation license plate readers. It's pretty established technology. I mean, you have over a decade of use in in the Cobb County area, when we first wanted to look at license plate readers (LPRs), we had significant skepticism, I would say, outright pushback on license plate readers. There was a lot of uncertainty on what that technology meant, the surveillance state aspects and stuff like that. And we had those conversations, we crafted policies with LPRs, and we talked with our community, and we're able to get that buy-in. If you fast forward a decade later, that technology, though, there's always going to be some skepticism, and uncertainty, it has so much acceptance that this upcoming week, I have a homeowners association (HOA) meeting, because an HOA wants to purchase the technology in their own community. Yeah, it is. It has gone from more of an emerging technology to something that is a part of how public safety is conducted in Cobb County. So if we had that conversation 10 years ago, and we simply stopped the conversation, we couldn't measure the temperature of the room when it comes to license plate readers, because that has greatly changed over the last 10 years. There's significant buy-in communities want to see that resource in the area. They ask for that resource in their area. So theoretically, the pendulum could swing the other way on a technology.

So with so many technologies exponentially increasing in their prevalence and the scope of what they can do. You have to have a lot of conversations. So just to kind of wrap up our real time crime center, we're very open. So it could be other law enforcement agencies, but it could be different public groups, whether that be something like a rotary club, or whether that be a group that maybe is considered traditionally antagonistic law enforcement. We bring those people in because we want to two things, show them what we're really talking about and we're really doing because I think a lot of those misconceptions of what they think a real time crime center is going to be are alleviated when they see it for themselves.

It is not a room with 1000 video feeds, and we're watching every person's movement. The other reason why we're going to bring those groups in is because we feel that, if it's human nature, if you are standing face-to-face with somebody, and you have a conversation with

somebody, I think you can tell if they're being genuine with you or not. So by bringing them into our real time crime center, by telling them about the 'guardrails', about why we are doing investing our time and efforts in this real time crime center, the results of those investments, I feel people can see that we're being genuine with them and we're not being 'used car salesman' kind of approach, and they can tell that our hearts are in the right place and that we are also listening

**Dustin: Y**eah, and I think you bring up a good point about where people will fill in the gap in a narrative, you know, I know just within like enterprise businesses, you know, if someone in our company sends out an email and says: "Hey, there's that all hands deck, you know, meeting on Monday at nine o'clock" with no explanation. People are going to fill in that narrative in their own mind, whatever they think it might be. Whereas, you know, the more transparent you can be with somebody, the more they'll come to understand and adopt it.

And you know, you bring up LPRs, which is a good point, which was something you could we could probably go down a whole rabbit hole of LPRs, but it does seem like sort of this middle ground between the community adopting that technology, as well as law enforcement departments adopting that same technology. Because I think you know if you wanted to, correct me if I'm wrong, but if I wanted, if I was an HOA, I could go out and purchase LPRs for my own entry to my neighborhood without even having to run that past local law enforcement

**Darin:** Absolutely. And you wouldn't have to share that information with local enforcement if you didn't want to.

## 09:57  - Breaking Down Narratives Within your Community

**Dustin:** Yeah, and then I guess you know the next. Step from there is to break down that silo of hey, help us see that information, that LPR information through, you know, narratives within community and stories with the community. Because, you know, someone goes missing, that's valuable data, valuable for Intel that can cut down on the amount of time it takes to find a missing person.

**Darin:** Yeah. And with all these technologies too, one of the things we mentioned with technology is it's emerging technology until it's not. So it seems kind of like an odd phrase, but if you go back in time, let's say, let's not go that far back. Let's go back to the 90s, 80s and 90s. Yeah. And talk about DNA technology. I even remember kind of growing up hearing about DNA technology. And some of the initial pushback was, 'hey, the government's going to have my genetic code. They'll have my genome', you know, the most intimate thing about who I am, the government will possess. And there was some skepticism about it.

But you fast forward into the last, you know, decade plus DNA technology is now expected, especially for major crimes, juries want to see that if they don't see in DNA, they kind of almost have questions or uncertainties about the case. So something that started off as potentially controversial is now so 'bread and butter' to law enforcement that is no longer emerging technology. It's a part of the fabric of an investigation.

And so the technologies that we have out right now, they're, let's say, considered controversial. I think one of the primary ones might be facial recognition technology. If you want to onboard that in law enforcement, you have to understand it's emerging. There are concerns that a law enforcement agency needs to have about the technology, but also about how that technology is used in a jurisdiction. And the public is going to have concerns about that technology.

But if we fast forward again 10, 20, or 30 years, I would suspect that an emerging technology like facial recognition will no longer be considered emerging, and in plenty of ways, it may start becoming a part of the normal fabric of law enforcement, maybe even expected down the road by society or juries.

## 13:00 – The concept of 'Digital Snitch"

**Dustin:** Yeah, well, and I think I mean to some degree, you know, certainly not as widely adopted as a like license plate reader technology. But you know, facial recognition exists on our phones today, like I'm no Luddite, but, you know, I turn on my phone sometimes and I look through my photos, and it has organized my photos by people I know, you know, whether that's my children or family members or whatever. So it's already there in the background doing stuff. And so I to your point, maybe that sort of, that trickle of adoption, that trickle of exposure, will slowly win people over, over time. And I think, you know, I'm going to steal one of your comments I've heard you say before, is this concept of "digital snitch", which I think is really great.

And just kind of made me think of it because you made the comment about DNA, and I remember going to a trial a couple years ago, murder trial. I was not on trial, but I was on jury.

**Darin:** Okay, this is a better story now.

**Dustin:** Okay, yeah, but it was, you know, it was Fulton County, went down the courthouse, did the whole thing and got selected one of few jurors, and ended up being a murder trial that lasted about a week. But one of the things that stood out in my mind was I remember one of the witnesses testifying on the stand, and this was somebody that was currently incarcerated for a different crime, but there were people in the back of the room while he was on the witness stand making gestures at him and basically getting him to change his story on the stand in real time, to the point that the judge, you know, paused the court proceedings and made

those people leave the room, and then The guy who was going to be a witness was just like, yeah, it turns out I wasn't there, right?

Whereas, you know, some of the concepts of with this technology, and I think what people don't realize is, you know, it's, it's very binary. You can't be spoofed or faked. Is it is that kind of where the concept of like a "digital snitch" comes into play.

**Darin:** Yeah. I mean, I think human humans are creatures that like stories. It's in it's in human nature. If you think about paintings on caves, you know that you've seen stuff like that. We're people of stories.

And I think that ultimately, when you go to create the best possible case for prosecution. This technology is there to help craft that story, to help tell that story. And so there is no silver bullet in technology that paints that whole picture. It will never eliminate the human side of an investigation or of a case, we often talk about how good technology is nothing without good people, but technology is going to be important now and into the future on painting that picture for that jury that is seeking to find justice for the victim.

**Kalli:** Can I ask something on that? There's obviously public perception, then there's public intervention. How do you instruct them? Do you help with giving those guardrails that you guys have and extend it out to the public?

**Darin:** Are you talking about when we're when we're trying to figure out how we apply this technology and the guardrails that we use?

**Kalli:** Yeah, exactly. How you how you apply it, because obviously there's human error, but then there's technology comes in and kind of helps with human error. But then there's also the interpretation of a lot of the technology is done by humans, so it's kind of cyclical. So how do you kind of find that nice line between human interpretation, they obviously have an emotional connection here and there, and the technology that's behind it? Because, you know, there are guardrails, as you said, but I'm just curious how you can offer that extension. Because you guys are trained in this. You are in this all day, every day. So how do you offer that extension to your community who does get involved and wants to get involved?

## 16:30 - Police Officers as Humans and Community Members

**Darin:** Well, I'll try to answer a question. But first of all, you know, I like to remind people that we are police officers. That's obvious, right? You're sitting in the real time crime center. I'm introducing myself as you know, Captain Darin Hull, the guy I work with all the time is Lieutenant David Thorpe. And obviously we're police officers, but we're also members of the community, the community that we live in.

And so most of our lives is not in a uniform and on the clock, most of our lives with our families and in our community. And so one I think, we go off how we feel, we would want to be policed and then we use guides from case law to national, maybe state guidelines or laws, and we start trying to craft what we think the policies or these guardrails are.

But then we go to our community to determine how close we are to the mark and where we need to move.

I'll give you a great example that deals with facial recognition technology. So facial recognition technology is not new. It has been around for quite a while, and we saw some potential in it, but we also wanted to see that technology mature some there were some problems that appeared to be with the technology where it needed some of that maturity, some of that development. And so we did not onboard that technology in Cobb County for quite a while. So recently, we started getting very serious about wanting to look into this technology. We looked at NIST, National Institutes of Standards and Technologies, I believe, is what it is, and we saw that the technology had started to mature at a level that we were comfortable with, and we needed to determine if the if the community was comfortable with so initially, we looked at some vendors, found one that we believed was an industry leader, and we started meeting with our community.

We also met with some of those groups that we talked about that were considered traditionally antagonistic with law enforcement, though, I will tell you that we don't necessarily consider them antagonistic if they have a goal of constitutional policing. Well, we also have a goal of constitutional policing. So we're on the same page, although we might have different perspectives.

With that technology, we had the ability to give access to that to every sworn member and non-sworn investigator in our department. Let's say over 700 people. And after listening community, we developed a policy that incorporated a lot of checks and balances. Number one I think right now, we're at seven non-sworn criminal intelligence analysts, so 1% or less of our department has access to this tool. And then the Detective that gets the case and has a probe image or something that they want to search through that facial recognition vendor. They are interested in the case. They have a connection to the case. They want to solve the case, and that's good. We want people to be invested in their cases.
But because of that specific technology, they have to submit that image to a criminal intelligence analyst that is not involved in the investigation. They are disassociated from the investigation. So when they submit that image. If there is a match. We would call that a lead. It is not probable cause or anything like that. It's a lead, much as if somebody picked up the phone and called and said, 'Hey, John Smith, is your person?' If they get that match, then the probe image is sent. It's basically a double bind, but it's sent to another criminal intelligence

analyst that is not briefed on the case, has not talked to the first criminal intelligence analyst. And if they receive the same match, then we consider that an official lead, that lead can then be passed to the detective. The detective knows that that cannot be used as a sole base of probable cause, that there has to be corroborating evidence, and then the Detective Supervisor will also have to look at that case, and then finally, it's presented in front of a Magistrate Judge.

And so we took something that was a pretty powerful but technology, a powerful technology, but one that has a lot of skepticism in the community, and we craft a policy that we believe responsibly uses that technology in a way that makes it a scalpel and not a hammer. So it's not used in very many cases, and it's not used by very many people, and it has enough safeguards that our community sees the value in the technology, but also sees the value in narrowly crafted guardrails to keep us in our lane. So that being said, I don't know if that directly answered your question, so I can clarify if I need to.

## 21:10 – Different Roles of Community Members in the Real Time Crime Center

**Kalli:** No, it does, I would have asked for an example. So you did great by giving the example of how that actually is implemented. And I think you mentioned sworn and non-sworn. So do you, for those who don't know, you have actual members of the community that are not law enforcement, that are in these rooms as well? Is that something that you have members of the community that are non-sworn, they're in the room with you as well, like in the crime center?

**Darin:** 100% so what we have found is that the heart of serving the community is not lost across our nation. Obviously, law enforcement agencies are encountering a lot of recruitment issues on the sworn side. Cobb County is not immune to that.

However, there are people that want to serve in a law enforcement agency or serve in public safety, but maybe not with a badge and a gun on their hip, and so we have found great success leveraging those resources and those people in our community through non-sworn or professional positions. So for several years, we've had criminal intelligence analysts that help with investigations that are non-sworn, but our real time crime center also incorporates a hybrid approach, which means we have both sworn and non-sworn a real time crime center, but we rely very heavily on our non-sworn staffing.

What we have seen is that heart in our community is so good that when we open up a position, let's say for a public safety analyst, that's the person that sits in the driver's seat of a real time crime center, we're having 70 or more applications per position. And what that allows us to do is it allows us to 1. access the cream of the crop when you start having that amount of applications. But the other thing that allows us to look for that 'ideal team player'. So if you've heard of that book that's out there, that is what we incorporate in Cobb County. We believe in

looking for people that are 'hungry, humble and smart'. And so what that's resulted in in our real time crime center is such a diversity of personnel.

So for example, we have one public safety analyst and real time crime center that is a retired United States Secret Service agent with over 25 years of service, and think of all the wealth of knowledge and career experience that that person brings to real time crime center.

But if you look at the other end of the spectrum, we have a 'little baby bird', college graduate. I think we hired her before, yeah, we did. We hired her before her actual graduation date. But what you have between that college graduate and what we have with that United States Secret Service agent are two people that are extremely different, but have that overarching, 'hungry, humble and smart' characteristics, and so we, I think we have a very effective team in a real time crime center.

And honestly, their perspectives being non-sworn, complement what we traditionally have in law enforcement, which is our sworn approach to Public Safety.

**Dustin: Y**eah, no, it's nice to have a little like diversity and different backgrounds in terms of how people think and what they're going to bring to the team.

**Darin:** Exactly.

## 24:48 – Different Levels of Technical Proficiency Found in RTCCs

**Kalli:** And on that note, it's probably very important that the technology is very accessible to different ranges of expertise, right? You don't just have it focused heavy people in the room, you have a range.

**Darin:** 100% if, if the technology wasn't very user-friendly, then I would be lost as a duck in a desert, right? Because my training and my upbringing has been to do things like, you know. Chase cars and pit them out, right? To jump a fence and chase somebody, and then throw in, of course, the necessary case law and criminal procedure to make sure that I can make an appropriate case once I grab the person that I was chasing.

My background is not in technology, and so the vendors that we have out there that we've chosen using Cobb County, we can take somebody that doesn't have that IT background or a computer, you know, engineering or science background, we can take the average person, the typical member of your community that is 'hungry, humble and smart', and then we can put them on that platform and then watch them make the magic happen for public safety in Cobb County.

**Dustin:** And I've been fortunate enough to see the magic happen before I was one of the I was in there one time, and a call came in for a stolen vehicle. And within, you know, 10, 15 minutes, you see all the things going up on the screen, all decisions being made. The radio going in and out, bringing up various, you know, patrol car cameras and stuff like that. And within like, 10 to 15 minutes, you know, it was a successful apprehension of that suspect.

So it's, it's amazing when you when you see it happen in real time, in real life, it's, it's pretty outstanding. You did mention that, you know, technology obviously plays a big part in the real time crime center, but you know, staffing shortages being what they are, that you said it's kind of a real reality for people is that, do you think that's what's driving a lot of departments to establish some form of real time crime center, whether it's brick and mortar, or if it's just someone there with that's monitoring LPRs, just even on a small scale? Or do you think it's just the fact that there's just so much technology out there that not taking advantage of it is just a missed opportunity?

## 27:12 – Why RTCCs Are So Popular Today

**Darin:** Yeah, it's an interesting point. And we kind of usually give two reasons why we think there's almost a tsunami of this real time operation center, crime center, you know, this, this technology that's coming out. The first one is the one that you just explained. So basically, when we are countering staffing shortages, what can we do to be more efficient with the resources that we do have? For example, if an agency is down 100 personnel out of a 700 person department, that is a significant challenge to maintain and hopefully increase the public safety in the community. A real time crime center has the ability to not only use technology to impact that efficiency, but if they take that hybrid approach, or if they take a non-sworn approach to the staffing, then we are having no problems whatsoever. We have a very high level of competition for our non-sworn positions real time crime center. We can hire those folks and great folks left and right that are there.

Then they are able to help those patrol officers and those detectives who are short staffed by taking some of the burden off their plate. We talk about a Detective having a big investigation in front of them like a big pie, and they are able to take a slice of that pie off and hand it to somebody else and let them handle that part of the investigation, and then they can return it when the product is completed. So that is number one, is the staffing issues.

Issue number two, I believe real time crime centers can help meet the ever-increasing expectations from society on their law enforcement agencies. The bar of expectations of how we serve the community continue to rise, and that's a that's a great thing. And law

enforcement doesn't just want to meet that bar. We want to exceed that bar. We want to clear the bar right.

In Cobb County we call it 'precision policing'. And to give you kind of an anecdote, we describe it as the community is a herd of gazelles, and they want us to pluck the lion out of the herd of gazelles without disrupting the gazelles. So what the real time crime center can do is help give you more information, and it can help give you better information, and better information leads to better decisions. So what we feel it helps us do in that precision policing is give us the information to help make the right stop, on the right person, at the right time for the right reasons, and that is what we're looking to do.

We have a great example in Cobb County. It was one of our very first wins, and it still is a great example to this day, of a situation where there was a shooting and the suspects get into a vehicle and they flee and a general description of that vehicle, which we would have dealt with year after year, and decade after decade, would have been so basic that officers going to that area probably could have found matching descriptions of the vehicle and occupants.

The problem being, is when you stop a vehicle and it's not the right vehicle, that term 'matched the description' is a very charged phrase. So even though you may have legally been able to stop that vehicle when it's not the right vehicle, you have created a negative police contact that those people inside that vehicle will potentially harbor for the rest of their lives. It'll be very hard to mitigate that negative police contact. In this particular incident, we had integrated cameras in that apartment complex so a Detective heard the call, accessed the cameras, and she was able to get very specific information down to what color shoes they were wearing, who was holding the gun, the exact tag on the vehicle where damage was on the vehicle. Then using license plate readers, she was able to pick up that vehicle like breadcrumbs as it left the scene.

And what that ultimately created was two things. One, it created a situation where we were able to put a specialized unit on that incident, and within hours, they have the suspects under arrest with the fruits of the crime wearing the same clothes. Talk about a powerful case for prosecution.

But the other thing it did was prevent us from making a stop on a 'match to description' vehicle and occupants. It prevented us from having a negative police contact or multiple negative police contacts reference that incident. So it was a great benefit to the public safety to make the arrest, but it was also a great benefit to the public safety to not make an improper stop or a stop that should never have occurred, right?

So those were two powerful things that came from that real time crime center response.

**Dustin:** And if you rewind time, you know, 5, 10, years ago, without that integration into that apartment complex or condo complex, and without the real time crime center, that scenario could have played out entirely different, whether you may have found those suspects or not, somebody would have to have gone on site, access those cameras have the right person that knows how to access them on site, which I assume increases the likelihood that the wrong person could get pulled over in that scenario

**Darin:** Exactly. And for any law enforcement officer, especially detective that has some time on the job, they will probably tell you that when they go to that shooting location and they go to the leasing office, it just happens to be closed or their IT person is not there, or they don't know where the password is. And so something that you think is typically should be a pretty efficient process of getting video. We find that often 'hours' would be nice, but it's often days or longer to get video. So when you were talking about minutes matter, having video several hours or days later, it hurts the best possible case for prosecution, which ultimately the reason why you're creating the best possible case for prosecution is to one, speak for the victim that was involved in that case, and then 2. protect the public from those criminals reoffending, right? So game changer, and for us on that incident, our real time crime center it is. There are a lot of real time crime centers out there. Have been in the game longer than us, but we've been out there for about two and a half years. And so yeah, prior to two and a half years ago, that case would not have played out the way it did.

**Dustin:** Nice. Kalli, before we wrap up, I saw you just unmuted.

## 34:38 – Inter-Agency and Company Collaboration

**Kalli:** Just a final question, because I think we covered on, you know, community driven, real time crime centers when it comes to, obviously, community members, Hoa, individual communities. But what's the importance of one interagency so other mission critical type, emergency centers, plus companies? Because you mentioned Home Depot's there. You mentioned there has to be a level of cooperation, but it's definitely helpful to have the cooperation of those companies, access to what they have, as well as other agencies, right? What's the level of importance and how has that been able to help you?

**Darin:** Great question. The two broad aspects, we'll approach differently. One will be the inter-agency cooperation with other law enforcement agencies or public safety agencies. And then one is with our partners in the community or cooperations. We are trying to push down that path in Cobb County of inter-agency cooperation. If you think about it law enforcement is used to going into it alone within whatever boundary has been artificially drawn over years or centuries. We get along just fine. Agencies try to share information, but the RTCC aspect is a

whole other level of technology and information sharing. In Cobb County we have 7 cities, 6 have their own police department, we provide police services to the 7th. So if you think like a map and imagine Swiss cheese. Cobb county and other corporate areas, if you light up the city, where the cities are, if you take out the holes, you're Swiss cheese. If you're a city it's the opposite. Like you're an island in the middle of an ocean. So you're lit up, but you're surrounded by darkness and a lack of information. So what we're working on with the RTCC in Cobb County, we can light up the entire map of information. Better information makes you make better information.

We can get a better idea of crime trends, criminal activities, and we can get a grasp of public safety better when you light up that entire map. And of course that can be done regionally too. We know our friends in Atlanta PD and different RTCCs around the area, that's an untapped area where we can develop a better relationship. Another area that's untapped is with corporations. A lot of corporations are now realizing how they can benefit from operation centers. If you think of a large healthcare system or company with 20, 50, or 100 buildings across an entire region, with parking lots, access issues, they can use a RTCC to have a more holistic approach to their company. For their guest or personnel safety. So I think they are starting to see that RTCCs work in the corporate space as well.

Ultimately, the partnerships we establish with these people are crucial to our success. It can be a mom and pop shop, access to their video helps us expand our reach, especially if it's a road facing camera that can be our only chance to capture a vehicle and that would help us.

Think of a large home improvement store, one here in Cobb County, they had a shoplifting call that went out. We don't have any integrations with them, but we had some of our technology on the roadway on the way to the store. Before our officer even got to the store to respond, we were able to use the technology to locate the suspect vehicle, get it stopped, and then when the officer is showing up to the store they are showing up with thousands of dollars of merchandise that barely made it down the road. And it may seem like a drop in the bucket, but that's how it starts.

Those success stories and partnerships can open up the eyes with partnering with law enforcement so it can be good for their community, but also for them.

One last thing I'll bring up, but realizing that we call it a real time CRIME center, crime implies police departments, but we recently had our fire department pop by an we were looking at an incident report, and we realized that what we realized we were looking at, the fire department added information that we had never considered. RTCCs aren't just relegated to law enforcement, they might have the ability to impact public safety as a whole. Even though we are just starting to explore it, there are other agencies like at Elk Grove in California who

already do this, but I could see us move to real time information centers or emergency operation centers where it isn't just about law enforcement.

**Dustin:** Yes, we've seen a lot of emergency operation centers, but they usually operate in an emergency situation or expecting an incident. And otherwise the space is dormant and not always disseminating information or putting it out there like you guys are.

**Darin:** You're right and I don't think they will replace RTCCs, but these places are not always up or standing for an event. They take a lot of resources, and it can't be replaced, that unified command approach, but just for your day in and day out kind of approach, the command center is always on duty, and it's a lower entry point for personnel and resources.

**Dustin:** Kalli, did you have any other questions?

**Kalli:** No, thank you. That was very interesting.

**Dustin:** Okay, to wrap up. Any advice for people getting set up? Anything that you've learned in hindsight that you wish you had been told when putting together the operation center.

**Darin:** Well Lt. Thorpe always tells me, we need more electrical outlets. We built the op center and realized we needed more outlets. What I take away from that is 2 things. 1. Visit as many crime centers as you can. We've taken the opportunity to visit as many as we can. I think the first was in Orlando that has a more mature center than ours. We always write pages of notes. This technology hasn't been around for 40/50 years. There is no standard way found in a textbook. We are all trying to figure this out together, so listen to those out there in your community that are sharing what they are doing. That would be number 1. That collective wisdom. That can be done through the national real time crime center association (NRTCCA), or visiting other crime centers.

The other thing is, we call it a 'crawl, walk, run' approach in Cobb County. People often see these functioning centers and think 'I need that'. Well you may need that, but you don't need it on Day 1. We started with one person, one computer, and one radio. The first win that we had was a burglary case when we had a huge lead before the officer had even taken the report, and it came from that one person and computer.

You can go to all the fancy ones and see all the bells and whistles but start small and build it up. We explain it like climbing Mt Everest, no one just starts walking and hits the summit. It involves planning and going to base camps and acclimating. You get used to what you're doing and then you move on upwards. Get an idea of what you're wanting to do, make a plan, take each step and take a pause, acclimate, adapt, and then keep moving forward.

**Dustin:** I love it, great advice! Thank you for joining us.