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By Deputy Chief Brad Duncan, London Police Service

What Senior Police Managers Should Expect from their Versadex System

Delegates were so impressed with the insight that Deputy Chief Duncan delivered in his presentation at the 2006 Versadex Users Conference, that we felt it would be great to share it in our newsletter. The following is Deputy Chief Duncan's discussion on how to maximize the potential of a policing system by integrating both the Administrative and IT roles of an organization:

I want to thank the organizers of the conference, Versaterm and the Halifax Police Service, for providing me with the opportunity to speak with you today. What I hope to do this morning, within the time that I have, is to give you my perspective as to where information and technology staff can best make contributions to a police organization, what our information systems should be able to do for us, and finally how some of the current and future developments will impact the manner in which we do business.

Let me state at the outset, that based on my personal experience as an administrator and from my conversations with like minded police professionals, it is my firm belief that police administrations must reevaluate the extent to which IT staff are operationalized within their respective organizations. We must move from viewing IT participation in police management as a reactive and consultative process to one that is proactive and participative. We need to do this to ensure that we employ technology for the right reasons and at the right cost. The business of policing is ultimately tied to the receipt, evaluation, and dissemination of information for a variety of reasons all of which is for the express purpose of ensuring public safety. Because of the critical need to have strong information exchange processes we need to be very much aware of the interactions between technological applications and organizational design. We must also consider, once appropriate organizational relationships are established, what our systems can then provide in order to sustain and improve our productivity and service.

Many of you are responsible for ensuring that technological applications can provide solutions for improving work processes. This is most often done at the direction of your respective administrations. What you endeavour to accomplish, within your police services, can have far reaching impacts both from a human resource perspective as well as financially. It is therefore incumbent upon both the administrative, operational and the technology sides of our respective houses to understand each other's perspectives and challenges.

It is clear that we are in an environment that is fast paced and that technology continues to offer solutions for a variety of complicated situations. One of the dangers faced by all of us is the tendency to make assumptions about what can or can't be done. We can all recount stories of technology solutions that have gone awry because of a lack of clearly defined project scope coupled with participants who are not fully aware of organizational needs or direction. I have always tried to be non-assumptive when it comes to technology solutions. At times I am sure that I appear to be, for a lack of a better description, slow to grasp the proposed technologies and I proceed in this fashion for good reason. If administrators and senior police staff do not fully understand the functionality or utility of a process and their Information and Technology staff assumes that they do, the results can be rather disastrous and embarrassing. I emphasize this point because I have heard some command officers make comments that although they do not fully understand how something works they know that it is of benefit to

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the organization because it is a technological advancement. This is a very dangerous assumption. I need to be assured that I understand the need for an application and what it can do for the organization so that I can then evaluate the overall worth both economically and from the perspective of the net gain for the organization. The delicate part for IT personnel is to ask the questions of command officers that would elicit the response that would indicate that the administration does in fact understand the utility of an application and the total impact to the organization. I am not speaking of the nuts and bolts of an application from a “how it works” perspective but rather the impact of the application to the overall effectiveness for the police service. This requires some measure of tact and diplomacy and I understand the unwillingness to ask questions that may cause some level of discomfort among senior management staff. It still remains that these discussions must occur and the problem of how to do this can be made less difficult if the IT personnel are provided the opportunity to dialogue in an open forum. I will speak of this further.

I am very aware of the concept of diminishing returns to the extent that I want value added progression each time a decision to invest in technology solutions is made. To do otherwise is abdicating my responsibility as a senior administrator. The returns, like personal investments, have to provide organizational growth without substantial risk to the extent that monies applied to the technology bring only positive returns to the service. Members of police services boards and commissions do not want to learn that budgeted technology money has been spent without any net gain. We are not in the business to apply experimental applications in the hopes that our problems will be solved. We need real time solutions resulting in observable, measurable and positive change.

By way of example, I am continually inundated with information from prospective vendors offering a variety of technology solutions for issues facing policing organizations. All of them promise to provide innovative solutions which, in some cases, promise changes that will miraculously alter the course of policing thereby resulting in tremendous financial and work process savings. All of you are familiar with these offerings. Snake oil sales continue to thrive even in the 21st century. Through all of this I am reminded of what has always been the mandate of the London Police Service – integrated processes designed to allow for seamless movement between applications with the end user, our police and civilian members, receiving the maximum gain. This is not to say that we turn a blind eye towards innovation and new product offerings but rather we consider our needs both from a fiscally sound perspective and one that asks what are the integration issues and long term value in making changes. The old adage “if it sounds too good to be true, it likely is” holds true for all of us today. Promises of better processes and improved work performance must be continually evaluated.

It would follow then, that I have obligations to those individuals within my organization to have a clear sense of where we expect technology to take us both in the present and future. I must comment on my personal experience within the London Police Service as this will tie in with some of my later observations and comments. I first became involved with our move towards a new records management system in the early 90’s. In the beginning development stages we employed a strategy that ensured that all elements of the organization contributed to an overall needs platform prior to any discussions as to what system would best serve those needs. To that end, every area of the organization was represented to provide input as to the type of system we would require. From the outset our philosophy has always been that technology solutions must be driven by the needs of the organization, especially for the officers on the street, and that all applications, although they may appear to be slick and spectacular, must serve a need. We also were guided by the principle that we must strive for complete integration such that all areas benefit from the technology. The London Police Service has been fortunate in securing the talents of individuals who have grasped this philosophy and understand the needs of our policing organization. This is an important and critical component of successful technological implementations. Your technical people must understand the police business and current police issues to be of value to the organization.

We hear time and time again that communication is the key to success in any endeavour. The key has always been the communication of organizational intent to those who can create the solutions for identified service gaps and needs. What I think is absolutely critical is the framework in which our communications take place. So we come to two key discussion points for consideration. The first related to how your organization is structured to ensure individuals, working within the IT environment, hold positions that are provided with the opportunity to receive and offer input to the overall management of the service. The second related to what extent these positions are truly allowed to participate at the senior command level. It has been my experience that many technology personnel are given a consulting role within the organization such that they are provided with window views rather than the entire picture. Organizations must move from consultative management practices to participative. As one technology author notes,

“Transitional change requires explicit and ongoing examination and adjustment, where and when necessary, of the technology and the organization. As such, mechanisms and resources allocated to ongoing support of the change process

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are critical. Tracking and noticing events and issues as they unfold is a responsibility that needs to be owned by appropriate members of the organization. Along with the responsibility, these organizational members require the authority, credibility, influence, and resources to implement the ongoing changes.” (Holt, 1992).

As an example, we include our Senior Director and Director at all morning meetings and senior management meetings including operational strategy sessions. This includes discussions pertaining to strategic directions, staffing needs, calls for service, call times, crime stats, beat patrol plan development, and the list goes on. We do this because the use of technology should be focused on the improvement of processes within the organization and in order to do this the business of policing must be clearly understood. If we are going to become misguided or unfocused it will be as a result of our inability to properly communicate or understand where we want to go as an organization. The only way to effectively manage the relationship is through an organizational structure that empowers managers to the extent that dialogue is permitted in an open and respectful environment. This should not be seen as a threat to the autonomy of senior police executives but rather an opportunity to make decisions that are based on valid input resulting in very positive outcomes.

The acquisition of technology is expensive and in my position I am obligated to ensure dollars spent are done so in a fiscally responsible manner. It is therefore critical that decisions are made in an atmosphere of clarity of purpose coupled with a complete understanding of the expected end results. There are too many examples of technology solutions that were not in fact solutions but rather colossal wastes of time, human resources and cash. In this year’s Spring Versaterm Newsletter, Warren Loomis wrote that there is a difference between “this is why we do it” versus “how we do it.” The understanding of the why is the critical component of a solution that will best suit the organization. Once the why is clearly understood by all participants the how can be developed in conjunction with a business case and funded accordingly. The “why question”, once answered thoroughly, puts all the participants on the same page. It sets the direction for all decisions. This brings up a side point regarding how we view IT. Typically information technology people or systems cost significant dollars, so it is easy to consider IT only as an expense line-item. However, based on demonstrated and tangible benefits to the organization, IT should also be viewed as an investment. There should be a return for every investment in IT staff or software. This is the critical place from which all other discussions can then take place.

Policing is about service delivery in an environment that is increasingly expensive, more transparent from a governance perspective, and requiring senior executives to be accountable to a number of external oversight bodies. As an administrator, I am continually looking for data that will allow me to make cogent arguments for staffing, equipment and other resources to assist with our ability to provide quality service to our public. I have always appreciated that our Versaterm system can be a powerful ally in terms of providing hard data to support identified needs to the extent that I make demands upon our IT staff to provide me with efficiency data that assists in our service delivery. I also use our system to determine trends that can have a direct impact on resources and ultimately budgets. We all know that response times, the length of time spent on a call and efficient beat patrol plans are essential elements of an effective deployment strategy. We have found that our RMS provides us with the tools to do just that. We have also found that questions have to be asked and to challenge our technology staff to provide data that at the outset may seem to be impossible to provide. I have come to very much appreciate and rely on our staff to provide the technical expertise and data that will assist me in my role. I would like to provide you with a few examples of how your system can be a valuable asset to your organization.

While it is clear that public expectations as to how a service patrols its community can vary from municipality to municipality there are certain standards of response that are considered to be important for all police services. First and foremost, the public demands an immediate police response and presence for calls involving danger to life – the code 1 response. Second, the public demands a certain amount of visibility from the members of the service as this evokes a sense of comfort and security. Finally, the public expects that a request for a police response should be met in a somewhat timely manner for those annoying, quality of life calls, such as noise, trouble with youths, property damage and others of a similar nature. When any of the above expectations become eroded, the reputation of the service is affected which can lead to reduced morale, over worked officers and lack of public confidence. In 2001 the London Police Service faced this situation and recognized that one of the key issues was a marked lack of police officers to handle the workload. We knew that we needed to undertake a workload analysis that would provide data that would support substantial personnel increases which could result in significant budget increases. I was tasked with pulling the study together and I knew that our technology staff would have to be involved from the beginning in order to provide us with the supporting data.

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We used our system to provide key data for the following:

- Historical response times for code 1, 2 and 3 calls for service
- Analysis of occurrence reports and changing reporting requirements
- Proactive and reactive patrol time hours demonstrating an erosion of proactive time
- Average call times indicating dramatic increases in officer spent time on calls
- The effect of code 3 calls for service on a daily and weekly basis and the impact to the patrol strength
- The creation of tables showing the relationship between increased call times, follow-ups and code 3 response times

The London Police Service has always paid strict attention to our average time per call data as this can have a dramatic effect on our human resource needs. During the mid 90's our average call time was steady at 85 minutes per call. In 2002 we experienced a dramatic rise to 119 minutes per call based on the averages of five patrol sections. Our beat patrol plan relies on a mathematical model in order to determine staffing. A critical portion of the formula takes into account how long a call for service takes to complete. Based on our beat patrol plan calculations, a 2 minute increase has the potential to require an additional 5 officers or one per patrol section. The problem was our inability to explain the increasing times and thereby provide a business case for the hiring of additional staff. This begins to have serious budget implications when administratively you are unable to provide compelling, well reasoned arguments for staffing increases. At the same time, our proactive and reactive ratios had been eroded to the extent that proactive time had been reduced from the ideal of 40% to just under 25%. Proactive time, to some extent, is the time that the officers can make individual decisions about their daily work and spend time addressing community needs and taking enforcement action. Our officers were spending so much time reacting to calls for service that morale was suffering and they felt as though they had become report takers rather than police officers. There were noticeable reductions in traffic enforcement and other proactive activities making it clear that workload was impacting on efficiency and our members were questioning their own roles. Of course one of the fallouts was the impression, among some officers, that the records management system was to blame for what was perceived to be increased workload associated to the reporting requirements of the system. This assumption was not grounded in fact but rather an expression of frustration and looking to place the fault somewhere. As senior managers, we had a clear sense that the issue was attributable to inefficient work practices as a result of over a decade of governmental, legal, and legislative impositions and not problems with how our records management system was working. We knew that our work, while expanding to meet external demand, had eroded our ability to effectively respond to calls for service.

All of this resulted in a workload study that provided strong arguments for staffing increases backed with reliable statistical data demonstrating this need. Our information and technology branch through the use of the Versadex system proved to be invaluable in our desire to get at the root of the problem. We were able to demonstrate that although our code 1 and code 2 calls for service were reasonable, our code 3 response times had deteriorated. We mapped when this was occurring on a daily and weekly basis which provided us with data justifying the creation of an Alternative Response Unit that investigates code 3 calls thereby alleviating the workload of the general patrol officers and reducing the wait time for complainants. Ultimately, this aspect of the Workload Analysis, along with other findings, resulted in our ability to successfully argue for and add 85 officers to our overall complement. We could not have accomplished this without the assistance of our records management system and the staff who worked very hard to extract the necessary data to provide hard evidence to support increased staffing.

I want to emphasize that effecting organizational change can be a long process. While recognizing that change needs to occur is the essential first step, the subsequent actions whereby the organization embraces what needs to be done can be extremely time consuming. There are also other considerations such as convincing your Boards and Commissions to supply the necessary funds for this to occur. The increase to our complement took four years, due to budget considerations, with a corresponding length of time for us to statistically demonstrate improvements to our service delivery. An example of one of our positive results was the effect that the proper allocation of resources has had on our average time per call. Our latest review has found that our average time per call is now at 101 minutes. This is an 18 minute reduction from what we were experiencing in 2002. This reduction has had favorable impacts for our resource deployment, beat patrol planning and budgeting.

From the foregoing we learned that it is incumbent upon us to log changes to our organization so that we can appreciate the long term impacts that could follow. During the workload analysis we found that there were over 135 impacts to our business practices from a variety of sources including legislative, legal and technological. We have now implemented an annual tracking document that requires that each Division Commander note changes to how we do business and ensure

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that appropriate resources are in place, and in cases where workload has increased, examine the need for additional staffing.

Those of you involved in developing and presenting budgets appreciate the need to provide numbers, facts and figures that are pulled together in an accurate and comprehensive manner. As we have seen spiraling costs in health care and education impacting on provincial, state and federal dollars, the same can be said of the police sector. In the past we may have been able to rely on the fact that as an essential service the police should be entitled to dollars because of the need to ensure public safety. This is clearly no longer the case and the public is demanding value for money spent. How we go about what we do is very much the subject of public discussions and we are required to be far more transparent in terms of our operations. I currently chair an Expert Police Panel that provides information to an organization that is entitled the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative. The organization is composed of municipal CEO's and managers who are actively seeking the means to increase efficiencies and reduce costs in all aspects of municipal infrastructure. Versadex has proven to be, in my experience, a great source of supporting data which has been used in our budget presentations and to answer questions from outside agencies.

As an aside to the workload analysis we also reviewed the amount of data collected per call type and were somewhat astounded by the volume of text associated with certain call types. It was clear that officers were capturing and entering lots of information because they could and not necessarily because they had to. This caused us to completely review all statements relative to the call types in an effort to streamline the officer workload with an eye to what is actually of use to the organization. The entry of statement data had slowly evolved to the extent that data entry was impacting on call times. This of course translates into considerable cost, because as I indicated earlier, the deployment of our personnel, within the beat patrol plan, is based on a mathematical formula which takes into account the average time per call. The longer the time it takes to complete a call can have an impact on how many officers are required to patrol a specific beat or zone. If you can't determine why call times are increasing then you are required to increase the staff to meet the demand. The result was a rather different mandate for our frontline officers in that we gave them permission to not provide so much detail for occurrences where there would be little consequence. It became apparent that just because you can capture a lot of data doesn't mean that you should from an efficiency or evidentiary point of view.

The latter finding also caused us to review supervisory practices in relation to data collection, multiple attendances of officers on calls, and standardization of occurrence reporting. We realized that even with template usage we needed to ensure that standards were communicated as to what the templates should contain and that all members were cognizant of the direction we were heading.

More recently we experienced increases in our actual calls for service since the beginning of 2006. There was also a spike in our proactive hours available which may have indicated an increase in officer generated occurrences and therefore an increase in the calls for service. It was important for us to be able to explain this increase in order to determine if resources were needed as the trend had resulted in an 18% increase in calls. My first instinct was to turn to our technology staff to pull apart our calls for service to try and understand the increase and to determine if there were specific call types contributing to this increase. After a relatively short period of inquiry it was determined that 4% of the total increase was attributable to administrative calls. A further examination demonstrated that all car messages were being coded as calls for service. We had responded to our officers requesting that all car broadcasts be sent through the system because officers might miss the auditory broadcast which could result in a safety issue. Through an examination of the call types we were able to correct this practice resulting in a significant reduction in call time. It also prompted us to do a complete review of our call types and the coding of entries which is ongoing at this time. I am confident that further reductions in the number of calls for service will take place.

I highlight all of the foregoing because I have experienced and have come to appreciate the extent to which Versadex, and our technology staff, can assist me in the administration of the London Police Service. Obviously we need to continue to strategically examine our practices and to always be vigilant in terms of our performance. I would ask the administrators and police personnel in our audience to maximize the utility of your system and to thoroughly avail yourself of the IT staff who fully understand your system's capabilities and the ability to extract supporting data. I would ask the IT staff to thoroughly learn the police business so that you can provide the maximum value to your police organization. This will build your credibility within the organization and thus enhance your role in management.

Now I turn briefly to the future and what I expect we should be able to do with Versadex. One of the most useful of the proposed developments has to be the dashboard or "myVersadex" a process whereby information relative to your area of operations will be available on your desktop. This would allow managers to have, not only a tactical view of day to day operations, but will result in more strategic approaches to our daily work. It will focus our stated business priorities, literally in front of us each and every day. The Sexual Assault Staff Sergeant, for example, could access clearance rates, specific

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sexual assault codes, or the overnight log in the event of a reported incident. The Patrol Inspector would have access to the number of calls for service, patrol section statistics, average call time, proactive and reactive times, as well as patrol section strengths for deployment purposes. This would negate the need to search for information or to continually and manually update information that you require on an ongoing basis. To be able to have, at your immediate disposal, information from the system that is directly related to your particular area of operations will be invaluable. We have all been caught in situations, especially when contacted by the media, when the ability to support your comments with statistics would be a great advantage. With the dashboard I would have all of the information, which I access on a regular basis, at my fingertips. This will prove to be a profound asset when dealing with media inquiries at my desk, tracking projects of interest from a statistical perspective, and generally having access to information that would normally require a period of time to research and acquire.

I am excited about developments in the area of voice recognition software as I see this as a means to reduce some of the physical and time demands placed on our staff. Keyboarding is an issue from the perspective of space within the confines of a cruiser and it also can be problematic physically in terms of carpal tunnel and other related health concerns. Voice reporting would certainly save time on the street and could be useful in navigating our RMS and reducing keystrokes in a patrol vehicle environment.

Real time identification for fingerprints is a significant development in the field of forensics. The sooner that we can have our investigators confirm or eliminate suspects has an impact on solvability and investigative direction. Although we may not reach the speeds at which Gil Grisholm of CSI solves crime, the ability to place a suspect at scene as quickly as possible can reduce public safety concerns and reduce costs associated to police investigations. To give you some sense of the cost of the average, smoking gun homicide, I reviewed our workload analysis as we had previously calculated costs associated to several types of investigations. In 1991 a straightforward, uncomplicated, suspect in custody, homicide averaged 144 hours of investigation at a cost of \$3,363 based on a first class constable salary. In 2001 the same investigation, with the added impacts of legislative and investigative changes, took 714 hours to complete at a cost of \$20,329 which is a 604% increase. In 2006, the cost is \$25,257. It is easy to see, from a pure budgeting standpoint that the faster one solves a crime the less impact there is to our respective budgets. Any technological advancement that can reduce personnel expenditures for unpredictable occurrences, such as homicides, will assist in stabilizing police expenditures. Even during CSI episodes the dreaded "overtime" word is often mentioned striking fear into every administrator's heart.

Information sharing is the basis for most of our efforts and the establishment of the Police Information Portal or PIP for national sharing across Canada has to be one of the most important developments in policing in the last several decades. The extent to which this will advance the ability for us to solve crimes is being realized on a national level. We have already seen great successes and I envision a policing strategy that will break down our traditional geographic barriers, providing a network that will prevent criminals from using distance as a means to escape detection and arrest. If I was told, even 10 years ago, that we would reach a point where beat officers could query records of other departments across Canada, to the extent that we could actually read occurrence reports from within another department, I would have had trouble believing it. It is now a reality that will prevent distance from being a factor in the apprehension and prosecution of offenders. I participated in the development of the Ontario Major Case Management Standards Project in the mid 90's which focused on the ability for police services to achieve greater co-operation on high profile cases through the application of standard procedures and technology both of which are now standards for all Ontario police services. Access to police information systems was a key finding of Justice Campbell as it was clearly recognized that police records management systems had traditionally operated as silos. What PIP has done is moved our ability to not only link identified serial investigations but to also allow for routine inquiries that may lead to the apprehension of criminals before they have the opportunity to commit serial crimes. History will demonstrate that PIP will be one of the most important advancements in Canadian policing. I must also state that this would not have been possible if there had not been the vision of many individuals, such as Eldon Amoroso, and a company such as Versaterm. A company that truly understands the needs of policing today with an exceptionally acute horizon view which ensures that the future of policing is further secured with effective technological advancements.

In terms of other exciting developments the use of Blackberry devices for a variety of front line positions such as walking beats, mobile surveillance and traffic officers is proving to be a great enhancement providing our members with the ability to connect to the RMS from positions that previously did not have this type of access. It will greatly reduce the need to carry extra materials such as wanted pictures, stolen car sheets, short form charge wordings etc. It will also reduce the reliance on radio communications to conduct checks or seek information. The day of the Dick Tracy watch is, with the exception of a few more technological steps, here.

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I have spoken of the need for excellent customer service delivery as the cornerstone for any police service. The landscape for the manner in which we provide this service is changing dramatically. Web based incident reporting, civilians taking stolen property reports and online request for background checks and vulnerable screening are part of today's reality and will only increase in the future. While many of these processes are designed to free up patrol time they also come with a cost. The majority of people only come into contact with police officers as a result of minor incidents such as thefts, property damage or noise complaints. Minor as these events are they do provide an opportunity for a personal, one on one interaction, where the police officer is observed first hand by the citizen. These interactions help to humanize us and provide a real sense of safety and security. When we turn to technology to ease the burden of paperwork we want to ensure that we do not erode our positive relationships with the public.

Mobile data networks are certainly an essential part of our communications infrastructure. They enable us to quickly provide information to the front line officer to assist with investigations and decision making. Networks are becoming faster and faster enabling us to push more information but I also want to emphasize that we need to be cautious. We have entered an age when accessible information is everywhere and there is very little knowledge that we can't acquire with minimal effort. The issue is our ability to process all of this without becoming overloaded to the extent that we become counter productive. We have seen the physical ramifications of our fascination with technology – carpal tunnel, eye strain and now the Blackberry devices are being held responsible for thumb pain. But what of the mental strain and associated fatigue that goes with trying to make sense of all of the information that is being provided to us. As I indicated at the outset, we must evaluate the effectiveness of our technology applications and continually evaluate the concept of diminishing returns as it applies to our human resources. There is no sense pushing applications, just because we can, without looking at how it impacts the officer's overall work processes. Reviewing work processes and providing ongoing evaluations of effectiveness is not an easy thing to accomplish because we are spending considerable time actively involved in creating the very thing that I am now asking you to evaluate. But the ability to step back and analyze our net gain is as important as the application itself.

I offer another cautionary perspective. As technology continues to develop data accessibility and reduce the amount of associated hardware to do this we will see our own equipment needs change and it is important to have an eye to the future to gauge the kinds of dollars that will be required to support these developments. Administrators will continue to rely on good intelligence in terms of what we need to purchase to remain current and at the cutting edge. The need to look forward is important from the standpoint of applying technology to mitigate potential problems or to increase efficiencies. It is also critical that police administrators be advised of cost estimates associated to future software and hardware development as soon as is practical. Most capital budgets are now being developed with 5, 10 and 20 year projections and the competition for these dollars is stiff, especially in a municipal setting where police services are competing with other departments, boards and commissions. If a project is not placed within the projections in a timely fashion it may be difficult, if not impossible, to secure the funding. The issue will always be the evolving nature of technology that should cause budget managers and financial officers to be extremely vigilant when it comes to anticipating project costs. I have personally experienced the difficulty of having to reintroduce costing strategies for previously approved capital technology projects because the landscape had changed so dramatically.

I have been fortunate that my staff, and this is where I provide my thanks to Eldon, Jeff and Annette, have been able to provide timely information which has assisted me in securing adjusted funding. It is incumbent upon all of us to strive to anticipate change and, as I said at the outset, engage in open dialogue to ensure that our business needs are met. Knowing the business is all about having open and frank discussions between IT and the operational and administrative areas of your police organization. A police organization is a very diverse entity with many complicated needs requiring the attention of the executive administration. Resource integration is a key component in terms of reducing costs, increasing efficiencies and reducing complexity since well over 95% of our costs for many police organizations are related to personnel. It is for this reason that the policies of the London Police Service will continue to place integrated solutions at the forefront of any technology application. End solutions do require a great deal of thought, study and most importantly understanding. At the outset I spoke of the importance of communication and the strategic placement of IT professionals within a police organization. We all need to be able to step outside our positions and ask ourselves if what we are doing within our individual areas of responsibility is being truly understood within the broader organizational context. We also need to look towards our information management systems to provide us with not only critical operational infrastructure but also as a source for information and statistics to assist in measuring trends and as a part of our strategic planning processes. The full utility of the Versadex system is yet to be realized because we haven't completely explored what it may be able to do for us. Within our respective services we need to be continually asking for information and relying on our IT staff to provide insight based on extracted data. We also need to ensure that technology professionals are included and entrenched at the operational level. It is only when the business of policing is fully understood that we maximize our

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returns on investments in technology. This is made abundantly clear in the following statement,

“Almost every business today must have some level of IT capacity to do business outside of itself. The tasks for principal owners are to understand the relationship of technology to their core business and then to manage that relationship.”
(Smith, 2001)

Managing the relationship is critical and if done effectively will ensure that each of our police organizations continue to be effective and efficient through the provision of excellent service delivery to the communities we serve.

Presented by:

Brad Duncan

Deputy Chief, Administration

London Police Service

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