

## **Mason County Sheriff's Office To Purchase Mobile Data Terminals**

### **Local News**

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**SHELTON, Wash.** - As previously announced in the Sheriff's press release dated April 29, 2009, the Mason County Sheriff's Office was allotted \$77,445 through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). The uncertainty of the current budget revenue streams for the Sheriff's Office made a decision as to the best use of these funds difficult at best. However, in a review of the Department's operations, Sheriff Salisbury has determined that an initial purchase of 12 mobile data terminals (MDTs) and 15 software licenses along with applicable hardware for installation in Deputies' patrol vehicles would be a solid investment. This will not provide every vehicle with their own MDT but most vehicles will be outfitted with the mounts so that units may be transferred at the end of a shift.

Prime consideration of this use of funds is the safety of county citizens and Sheriff's Deputies. The MDTs will permit the dispatching of officers to calls for service without broadcasting over the radio. Further it will permit responses to be coordinated with other Deputies and agencies without warning lawbreakers who monitor police frequencies. The MDTs will also provide the capability of instant access to state and federal databases while in the field to determine the status of suspected persons and vehicles.

The County's dispatch service, MACECOM, is already capable of using this equipment. The Squaxin Island Tribe purchased the server software that is required to utilize the MDTs. Local law enforcement agencies who are partnering in this endeavour need only to purchase unit licenses and hardware to be operational. The Mason County Sheriff's Office Traffic Unit purchased laptop computers as part of the initial outfitting of their vehicles. They are seeking funding for the communications software. Several Deputies with experience in other law enforcement agencies have used this equipment and can speak to its value in providing effective, efficient law enforcement.