



SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

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MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT

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SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES SUCCESS OF REAL TIME INFORMATION CENTER (RTIC)

Innovative technology hub strengthens real-time response, enhances officer safety, and improves community protection

San Mateo, CA- December 2025 - The San Mateo Police Department is proud to report on the progress of its RTIC, a major step forward in how the Department uses technology to support public safety. Since launching in 2024, RTIC has quickly become a key part of SMPD's efforts to better support officers in the field, respond to emergencies, keep the community safe, and respect the privacy interests of our residents and visitors.

The RTIC serves as a central hub where critical information comes together in one place. With tools like real-time mapping, drone support, live camera feeds, and integrated databases, RTIC staff can provide officers and investigators with the information they need as incidents are happening. This real-time support improves situational awareness, helps officers respond more quickly, and allows for smarter, more informed decision-making.

"The Real Time Information Center has changed the way we respond to emergencies and assist our officers," said San Mateo Police Chief Ed Barberini. "Its success over the past year reflects our commitment to modern, effective policing that puts community safety, accountability, and innovation first."

Mission and Capabilities

RTIC's mission is to deliver real-time crime data and analysis, both before incidents occur and as they unfold. Operators keep an eye on developing situations, help coordinate resources, and provide officers on the ground with timely information that supports quick and safe resolutions. By bringing multiple streams of information together in one place, the RTIC bolsters safety for both the public and officers.

Key RTIC functions include:

- Citywide surveillance camera integration that gives operators the ability to relay real-time visuals to officers during active incidents.
- Automated license plate reader (ALPR) technology that quickly identifies vehicles linked to crimes, missing persons, or public safety alerts.
- Real-time officer location tracking and emergency call mapping, allowing for smarter deployment and better situational awareness.
- Access to criminal justice and other critical databases, providing investigators and first responders with essential information when it's needed most.

2025 RTIC Highlights

Throughout 2025, the RTIC played an essential role in a wide range of significant public safety operations. Highlights include:

- Assisting in the apprehension of multiple felony suspects, including cases involving firearms-related offenses, narcotics violations, and felony evading with wanton disregard for public safety.
- Supporting successful search and rescue operations, providing real-time data and camera access to guide locating missing or endangered individuals.
- Identifying a spilled toxic chemical posing an immediate potential hazard to the public, enabling swift response and mitigation.
- Providing intelligence that contributed to enforcement of fireworks ordinance violations, improving safety during high-risk holiday periods.

Statistical Data

In 2025, the San Mateo Police Department's Real Time Information Center (RTIC) played a key role in supporting day-to-day police operations, assisting with more than 1,000 incidents. Most of these cases began as calls for service from the public, while about 7% were officer-initiated, such as traffic stops. Incidents supported by the RTIC were more likely to result in identifying a suspect, with 294 individuals identified over the past year, leading to 103 arrests so far in 2025. The RTIC most often assisted in cases involving violent crimes, followed by drug-related and property crimes, demonstrating how central RTIC has become in improving safety across the community.

The RTIC also continued expanding its capabilities through the Drone as a First Responder (DFR) Program, which remains an important tool for improving officer safety, speeding up response times, and giving officers a clearer picture of unfolding situations. During the most recent reporting period, the DFR Program completed 974 flights in support of public safety operations. In more than 70 of those cases, the drone arrived first and provided officers with real-time information before they reached the scene.

DFR personnel also conducted aerial overwatch on more than 200 calls for service, helping officers safely manage rapidly changing situations. On 39 additional calls, drones performed area-passing checks, giving patrol units broader visibility of active locations.

One of the most meaningful impacts of the DFR Program was its ability to locate people who needed immediate police or emergency assistance. DFR operators successfully located individuals on 157 calls, including fleeing suspects, missing or at-risk people, and individuals in medical emergencies. These results highlight the program's growing value as a force multiplier for the department and an important resource for the community.

The DFR program is an important tool that supports the Department's mission to protect lives and property. All DFR operations are conducted in compliance with federal aviation requirements, privacy laws, and Department policies.

The Department retains DFR data in accordance with the following schedule:

1. Non-criminal evidence: 1 year
2. Traffic stops: 1 year
3. Criminal—Misdemeanor: 3 years
4. Criminal—Felony: 6 years

Per San Mateo Police Department policy, the DFR program shall not be used for the following:

- To conduct random surveillance.
- To target any person based solely on actual or perceived characteristics
- To harass, intimidate, or discriminate against any individual or group.
- For any purpose other than legitimate Department operations.

Recorded DFR content may only be reviewed for criminal investigations and preparing official reports, to prepare courtroom testimony or courtroom presentation, following a critical incident, and for potential training purposes.

ALPR information is used for official law enforcement purposes, including identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates, and for missing persons investigations. ALPR data is stored for a minimum of 30 days from the collection date, and ALPR information being used as criminal evidence is retained until the criminal matter is resolved.

Looking Ahead

The San Mateo Police Department remains committed to using the RTIC and other modern tools, technologies, and advanced training to strengthen our ability to protect the community. Through professionalism, integrity, and proactive policing, we will continue to provide the highest level of assistance, safeguarding the residents we proudly serve.

We also remind everyone: *If you see something, say something.* Reporting crimes or suspicious activity helps us maintain the strong partnership between the community and the Police Department—an essential part of keeping San Mateo safe, connected, and resilient. Together, we can continue building a community where safety and trust remain top priorities.

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