

RISE Award Winner Talks About Using Electronic Stake Out®

The Annual RISE Award is presented by Taser and PoliceOne to recognize law enforcement officers and agencies that have demonstrated extraordinary effort and served their communities with honor.



We sat down with Special Operations and Investigations Lieutenant Travis Martinez of the

Redlands Police Department who won the "Agency of the Year Award" for deploying a GPS tracking strategy that didn't just target and minimize theft, but put career criminals behind bars by using 3SI's Electronic Stake Out®.

3SI: When did the Redlands Police Department (RPD) decide to find an affordable solution to solve the town's burglary problem?

Martinez: In 2011, our police department's budget was cut significantly. The number of sworn personnel decreased by 22%, and overtime funds were restricted to only high profile cases. Everyday crime was frustrating the common hard-working citizens of our community and traditional police stakeouts were deemed to be too costly. RPD needed to find an affordable solution to address the growing number of property crimes being committed.

3SI: In your initial trial run using ESO, RPD determined that one of the town's biggest problems was car burglaries. How did you deploy ESO to combat this problem?

Martinez: We outfitted a laptop with an ESO device and left it sitting, visible, inside an unmarked locked car in a gym parking lot where there had been many vehicle burglaries. The laptop was stolen in less than 45 minutes, and the device tracked the suspect to a gas station parking lot.

Within ten minutes of our first activation, police located two career criminals along with the stolen laptop computer and several other stolen items in the vehicle.

3SI: How are you catching so many criminals using ESO?

Martinez: The RPD ESO program is managed by the officers of the Community

Policing Bureau. Working directly with detectives, crime analysts, and first responders, the devices are quickly deployed as crime trends emerge. RPD has now made 195 arrests thanks to ESO.

3SI: What other successes have you experienced with ESO?

Martinez: We have deployed the ESO tracking device to address several crime trends in the community and have made arrests for such crimes as robbery, commercial burglary, pharmacy burglary and theft of tires, bikes, laptops, metal and wire, fire hydrants, cemetery, vending machines, mail, cigarettes and packages. The devices have even been used to arrest credit card skimming suspects and people stealing third row seats from SUVs. We have successfully used the devices to track vehicles under a court order and to voluntarily track informants that have led us to murder and robbery suspects.



3SI: What are some recommendations you can offer to others trying to champion the use of ESO?

Martinez: The key to a successful ESO program is creating a "One Team" philosophy between the police department and the community. The ESO strategy embraces the community policing concept of partnering with business owners and residents to solve crimes. As partnerships grow, police agencies will likely see that community members are willing to donate "bait" items to be used in deployments. Community stakeholders are just as eager to apprehend those that are driving up the crime rates as the police are.

3SI: What challenges did you face in implementing ESO, and how did you overcome them?

Martinez: In our agency, like many other agencies I have spoken to, there were some that challenged the idea. Some administrators were reluctant to risk trying a new strategy. Some officers insisted that their department did not have enough time to conduct ESO operations on a daily basis. In our agency, we discovered that one patrol sergeant was bringing in the bait cars during his shift so he did not have to deal with apprehending vehicle burglars. However, once implemented, the success of our program quickly overcame these obstacles. It was clear that we had discovered a strategy that put officers in direct contact with those individuals who are driving up crime rates.

The ESO devices manufactured by 3SI Security Systems clearly enable law enforcement to quickly address all sorts of crime occurring in the community.

At a cost of less than \$2.00 a day the first year and less than \$1.00 a day every year after, police now have an effective way to provide 24/7 surveillance on hot spot areas. We often ask ourselves why we didn't start using Electronic Stake Out sooner.

3SI: What would you say to agencies who are interested, but aren't sure that ESO is right for them?

Martinez: ESO has helped us to promote police legitimacy and enhance public trust which, coincidentally, is the first pillar in the Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. When people call us with problems, whether felonious or petty, the Redlands Police Department

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now has an effective and very affordable tool to address their issues. For those still on the fence, I ask one simple question: "If you were experiencing theft in your neighborhood or at your house, would you expect and appreciate your local law enforcement deploying a similar program?" If the answer is yes, then you owe it to your community to implement a similar type of program at your agency.

For further information on the Redlands Police Department's ESO program, please contact Lt. Travis Martinez at tmartinez@redlandspolice.org. 3sisecurity.com/eso