



Regional police get new mobile data service

WONGAN Hills police officers have been given a new tool in fighting criminals.

Officer in charge of the Wongan Hills Police Sergeant Steven Dixon said the station was allocated a TADISLite system as part of the initial country roll out.

The TADISLite is a handheld mobile data device which gives officers access to names and criminal history records, addresses, offender photographs and vehicle registration details.

It can also receive task dispatch information, allowing police to respond to incidents more quickly and effectively.

The devices also have an inbuilt global positioning system that displays the officer's location on electronic mapping systems.

"It is a really great tool to have to assist us with our duties providing frontline policing services in a more professional manner," Sgt Dixon said.

"It is more efficient for us to be able to access necessary data while on the road without refer-

ring back to the Wheatbelt operational centre in Northam."

Agricultural Region MLC Brian Ellis, who has lobbied vigorously for improved regional police communications, said the new system would improve police safety, maximise resource management and fast-track deployment to emergencies.

Mr Ellis said the need for access to a data base came to public attention several years ago after a Karratha police officer was seriously injured while apprehending a person he did not know was wanted for a murder enquiry in another State.

"The previous government installed an in-vehicle data system called TADIS in hundreds of metropolitan police cars," Mr Ellis said.

However, it was not rolled out to country officers.

"Now WA police officers can receive task details, as well as an offender's background, record and location history before attending an incident, and will be better informed of the situation they are confronting," Mr Ellis

said.

"City police under assault can call for a back-up team, but in the bush the nearest police officer is probably in the next town, or out patrolling the main highway," Mr Ellis said.

"It is therefore even more crucial for regional officers to have a clear understanding of the circumstances they are confronting."

Mr Ellis said the improved communications system was a win for the police and a win for the public.

"Country families can now feel safer out on the road," he said.

"A total of 225 handheld TADISLites will be given to police officers across the State, including those in Geraldton, Northam, Kalgoorlie, Albany and Broome.

"In addition, the State Government has funded an extra 350 TADIS in-vehicle devices which will be progressively installed in regional police vehicles from next month."