



Department of Homeland Security



U.S. Attorney's Office District of Arizona



Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center



Arizona Criminal Justice Commission



Tucson Police Department



Phoenix Police Department



Mesa Police Department



Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

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**ARIZONA LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE LAUNCH OF "AZLINK" AS A CRIME FIGHTING PARTNERSHIP**

PHOENIX - In February 2008, ICE agents investigating a suspected marijuana smuggling ring used "AZLink", a program that provided a secure cyber connection to federal law enforcement databases to determine that the individuals in the ring had a history of weapons possession and violence. Armed with this information, ICE deployed the Tucson Special Response Team to serve the high risk warrant. Agents recovered numerous weapons, including a Thompson Machine Gun, over 1,000 pounds of marijuana and \$21,000 in cash. Two suspects were arrested for drug and firearms offenses. What could have posed a major danger to these agents and officers ended with a peaceful arrest.

Today, that same capability to communicate and share intelligence in real time with federal agencies is available to Tucson police officers and other southern Arizona law enforcement agencies, and will soon after become available to state and local police throughout Arizona. "AZLink" is an Internet-based, law enforcement information sharing program that gives federal, state, and local law enforcement a major edge in the fight against crime. Launched in 2007, AZLink allows connected partners to share investigative, booking, incarceration, weapon, drug, warrant, immigration status, and other law enforcement data in a secure cyber environment. It's a two-way street that also gives federal agencies instant access to street-level information and intelligence collected by state and local police.

Law enforcement officials from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC), and the Tucson Police Department (TPD) welcomed today the completion of this Law Enforcement data sharing initiative for southern Arizona. Officials say pooling information resources has lead to enhanced

criminal arrests and prosecutions, increased border security and will also lead to more effective counterterrorism efforts.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has been the lead agency for DHS in the AZLink information-sharing collaboration. ICE and the Tucson Police Department have been piloting the AZLink program since 2007. ICE is now contributing automated law enforcement information from the DHS Law Enforcement Information Sharing Service to the Tucson Police Department through AZLink. In the future, AZLink will support two-way information sharing between DHS and the AZLink Regional partners. AZLink has proved to be a very successful law enforcement program. The 2008 ICE drug investigation in Tucson is but one example of how AZLink played a critical role in protecting officer safety and developing intelligence.

The AZLink program will now provide access to both state and federal law enforcement information as part of a collaborative information sharing effort. AZLink has partnered with the OneDOJ/N-Dex system managed jointly by the DOJ Law Enforcement Information Sharing Program (LEISP) and by the FBI at the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) facility. OneDOJ/N-DEX collects data from DOJ components (the FBI; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the U.S. Marshals Service and the Bureau of Prisons) and participating state, local, and tribal agencies, then shares with all partner law enforcement agencies. The system also allows federal officers to view data collected by Arizona agencies and use that information in the course of their own investigations.

For additional information about OneDOJ/N-DEX, please visit:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/jmd/ocio/leisp/>

The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission has been leading efforts to coordinate criminal justice information sharing in Arizona for nearly two decades. ACJC is the overall coordinator for the AZLink program, which provides the architecture for standardizing information sharing across four regional data centers:

- AZLink Central Region - Phoenix Police Department
- AZLink Southern Region - Tucson Police Department
- AZLink Northern Region (including the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center) - Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
- AZLink Eastern Region - Mesa Police Department

Each AZLink partner has established a secured connection through the OneDOJ system, allowing access to a multitude of federal criminal data.

For additional information on ACJC, visit [www.azcjc.gov](http://www.azcjc.gov).

This collaborative sharing initiative illustrates the continuing efforts and willingness of Arizona law enforcement agencies to pool resources and combine networking capabilities to provide a single, integrated approach to law enforcement functions. The connection of AZLink South Region is the first step towards connecting all AZLink regions to Homeland Security and Justice Department databases. AZLink Central, AZLink Northern, and AZLink Eastern Regions are expected to become active over the next year.

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**Public Affairs contact info in Arizona:**

U.S. Attorney's Office: WYN HORNBUCKLE - 602-514-7573

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement: VINCENT PICARD - 602-514-7321

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission: MARY MARSHALL - 602-364-1156

Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center - LORI NORRIS - 602-721-3882

Mesa Police Department: ED WESSING - 480-254-4012

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office: AARON DOUGLAS - 602-876-1801

Phoenix Police Department: CHUCK MILLER - 602-262-4841

Tucson Police Department: FABIAN PACHECO - 520-837-7740

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