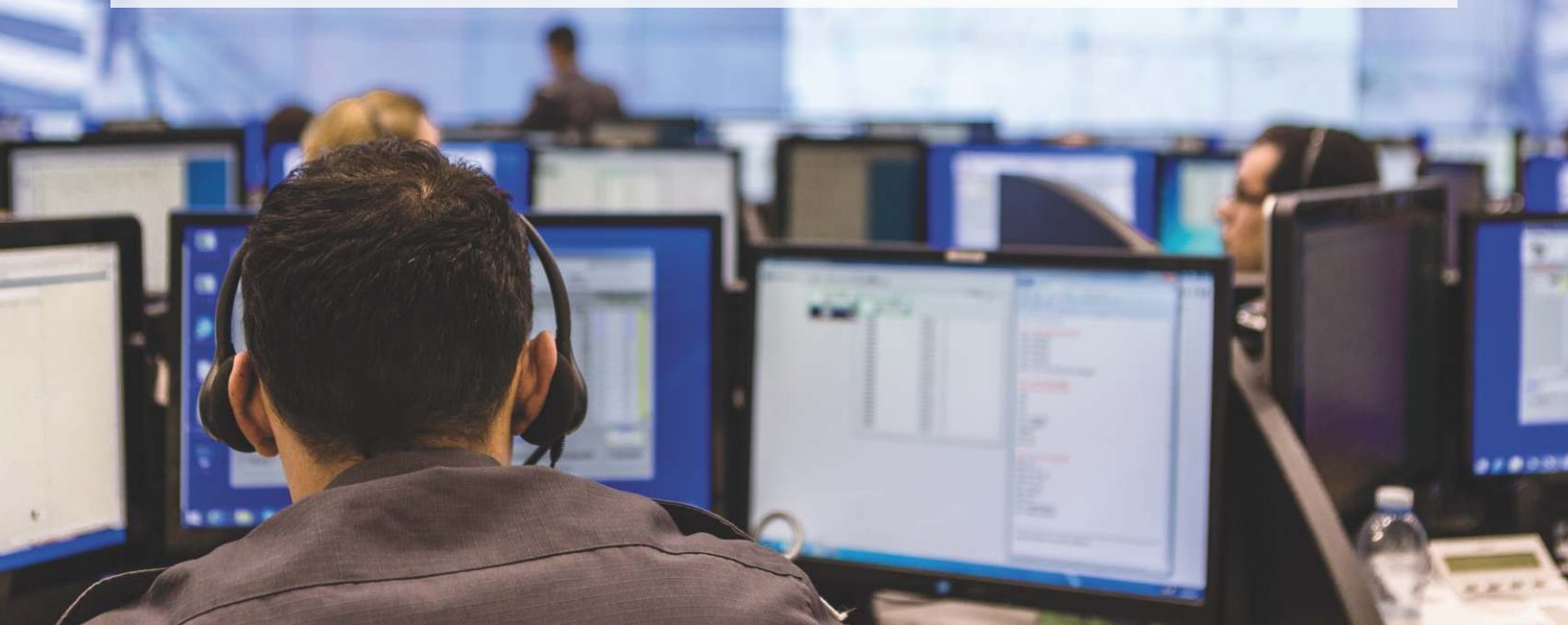


# COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTERS

By: Ivan Kraljevic - Business Development Manager for Command and Control for Latinamerica



## What exactly is a Command and Control Center?

A Command and Control Center is an organizational public safety division that manages the resources used to address emergencies in a city, dispatching the units that have the ability and authority to respond to them and provide a solution.

A Command and Control Center handles situations that impact city residents' lives and property and are caused by crime, accidents, disasters, etc. In other words, it deals with all the emergencies that people call 911—or the equivalent number in other countries—about.

## Just to reinforce that, would you please tell us what a Command and Control Center is not?

A Command and Control Center is not a division that can only receive calls and collect information but not respond by, for example, sending resources and units—such as police officers, ambulances, fire fighters, or others—to handle an emergency. That would be a data collection center.

In short, a Command and Control Center is one that has the capacity to receive and dispatch.

## What ingredients—aside from technology—are needed to operate these centers?

In addition to technology, which is the main component, there are two other crucial ingredients:

- **Personnel:** The human resources who receive the emergency calls that come into Command and Control Centers and dispatch the appropriate resources. In Latin America, more investment is still needed to provide adequate training and offer people career paths that encourage them to stay in the job and continue developing expertise.
- **Processes:** The steps that define how institutions should respond to effectively address residents' needs.



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## **Can all cities—regardless of their size—have a Command and Control Center?**

Yes, they can all have Command and Control Centers, because there are different ways of providing the center's services.

## **There is a lot of locally-developed software in Latin American countries and public agencies. Is that a solution for tight budgets?**

The question is: Which institution is developing it? We have seen that, when an institution decides to develop software on its own, it comes up against two problems:

- 1) The resources invested in locally-developed software usually far exceed those paid to companies that specialize in software development, have a large number of clients and dilute the costs among them. And the results of locally-developed software rarely stand up to those of specialized companies.
- 2) Plus, maintenance difficulties necessitate new investments.

In sum, if the local development or product designed in-house is not a robust commercial endeavor, the institution will get a short-term solution that will soon become obsolete. What seems cheap at first ends up being costly.

## **What are the responsibilities of a CCC provider? Can any technology company offer a CCC?**

The provider should be a company with experience so that it is possible to verify which other public safety agencies use their system and can testify to the benefits of their solution. It should have a large installed base, with technical characteristics that permit integration with other systems; in other words, it should be able to communicate with other platforms such as radio, video surveillance systems, etc.

Given the type of operations the center handles, it should be a truly robust platform with high availability standards to ensure that the system does not collapse. This is very important because, for every minute the system is down and calls cannot be answered, lives are at risk.

## **The terms C3, C4 and C5 are sometimes used in relation to CCCs. What does those terms mean?**

Those are all terms or acronyms that define the capacities of a Command and Control Center:

C3: Command, control and communications center

C4: Command, control, communications and computers center

C5: Command, control, communications, computers and quality center

C4I: Command, control, communications, computers and intelligence center

### **Are there CCCs in the cloud? Are they used in Latin America?**

Yes. There are Command Centers in the cloud in Latin America. Every public safety or governmental organization must objectively analyze the best solution for their needs. Everything depends on the scope of their operations, the way they work and the applicable regulations.

### **Do you have any recommendations for a technology leader that is interested in deploying a CCC?**

In the first stage, the acquisition stage,

- They should be very well-informed and consult various sources. Suppliers should be interested in helping the client understand the different options available on the market.
- Verify; visit other clients who have similar systems. Understand which functions are valuable in day-to-day operations, and what impact they will have, in order to evaluate different technologies.
- Confirm that the solution offers a long-term vision; designate budgets so that, over time, the CCC can evolve and expand its capabilities.

In the deployment and commissioning stage, we come back to the human resources issue. In addition to the best technology and well-designed processes, it is important to have human resources that are trained to implement the project and provide the level of service that the community requires.

### **Is there any way to obtain the service without having all my own infrastructure and without spending too much?**

Of course. There are suppliers who can offer these solutions as a service with a periodic (annual or monthly) recurring cost. In that case, the system is provided as a "Managed Service":

### **Aside from reception and dispatch services, CCCs can also handle complementary processes. Briefly, please tell us about some of them.**

One complementary and very important function of a Command and Control Center is the production of reports and statistics that help the municipal, regional or national government understand the situation on the ground, so they can identify different aspects—such as where the most crimes occur and what response times are—and use that data to set aside or assign the resources needed to improve public safety.

Another complementary function is the analysis of patterns in which emergencies occur. For example, tasks that have to do with prediction, such as criminal analysis, in order to determine exactly where there is a higher possibility of criminal activity.

