



MARYLAND COORDINATION AND ANALYSIS CENTER  
Intelligence Analysis Section

## Officer Safety Bulletin

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# (U) Criminal Use of Police Scanner Apps

(U//FOUO//LES) During several recent contacts with criminal gang members, an identified Maryland law enforcement agency has heard their radio transmissions broadcast over a suspect's smartphone. In one incident, officers pursuing a suspect on foot overheard the suspect listening to the pursuing officers' radio transmission over a smartphone. The radio broadcasts of the agency's primary secure law enforcement channel had an approximate delay of three seconds on the suspect's smartphone.

(U//FOUO//LES) Further investigation revealed that the general public, as well as criminal gang members and associates, are utilizing the website [www.radioreference.com](http://www.radioreference.com) to listen to law enforcement secure channels streaming via the Internet. Registration and access to the site is free, with advanced features available to premium subscribers. A customer is able to search radio frequencies throughout the country by state, metro area, city and/or zip code. The website advertises a search for trunked frequencies as well. The frequencies are obtained over the Internet and any cell phone that has web access can listen in.

(U) As of 2010, there were at least 20 scanner applications (apps) on the market for download to smartphones. Some examples are iScanner and 5-0 Radio Police Scanner for iPhones and Police Stream for Android phones. The 5-0 Radio Police Scanner app advertises access to police, fire, aircraft, railroad, and marine frequencies. These apps can be downloaded to the smartphone and at a touch of the screen will allow the user to listen to emergency frequencies via their mobile device.

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The screenshot displays five mobile applications related to police scanners. Each entry includes an icon, the app name, developer, category, user rating, and a brief description.

- iScanner**: Fusion Mobile Solutions, Inc. / News & Magazines. Rating: 4.5 stars (26). Price: \$0.99 BUY. Description: "iScanner! The portable police/fire/EMS scanner to take with you anywhere you go! iScanner allows you to bring a portable police / fire / EMS scanner with you wherever ..."
- Listen In (Full)**: Tekno Logic Appz. / Entertainment. Rating: 4.5 stars (381). Price: \$0.99 BUY. Description: "\*\*\*\* New Features\*\*\*\* \*Can Now Bookmark Favorites\* \*Lookup Police Codes\* A police scanner to listen to all 50 US States and most of the counties. Trial period is re..."
- PoliceStreamFree**: Andrei Goumelevski. / Communication. Rating: 4.5 stars (1,010). Price: FREE (INSTALL). Description: "Supported by ads Even cops get it Listen to 1800+ mostly US police/fire/ems stations streams almost in real time Streams come from independent providers and may be ..."
- Police Scanner**: Juicy Development LLC. / Entertainment. Rating: 4.5 stars (125). Price: \$2.99 BUY. Description: "Listen to police, fire, and EMS radio band broadcasts from around the world Top seller for iPhone - Now available for Android. Upgraded monthly! Police Scanner has th..."
- Police Scanner Codes**: Simpadico. / Books & Reference. Rating: 4.5 stars (26). Price: \$0.99 BUY. Description: "Figure out what all of those police codes really mean! Police Scanner Codes is a fully-featured flash card app that is a powerful reference and a great way to learn p..."

(U) A few examples of police scanner applications and their descriptions.

(U//FOUO//LES) This situation presents a concern for officer safety. A criminal who is able to listen to law enforcement radio transmissions in near-real time could use the information to further their criminal activity, hide criminal activity, assist in a get-away, gain investigative information or set up an ambush position. Law enforcement needs to maintain a heightened awareness that criminals may exploit emerging technology in order to gain an upper-hand during the planning, execution, and escape phases of their crimes.





# MCAC Customer Satisfaction Survey



Return to: Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center  
7125 Ambassador Rd. Ste 130 Baltimore, Maryland 21244 Fax 443-436-7748

Marking Instruction: Circle the appropriate response  
Accordingly

- 1 Strongly Agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Neither agree nor Disagree
- 4 Disagree
- 5 Strongly Disagree
- N/A Not Applicable

Dear Customer,

Please take a moment to complete this survey and help evaluate the quality and value of MCAC products. Your response will help us serve you more effectively and efficiently in the future.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance

Product Title: Criminal Use of Police Scanner Apps  
Product Date: 09 December 2011

Customer name/agency: (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

### Quality

1 2 3 4 5 N/A This product was delivered within established deadlines.

1 2 3 4 5 N/A The product was timely and relevant to your mission, programs, priorities or initiatives.

1 2 3 4 5 N/A The product was clear and logical in the presentation of information.

1 2 3 4 5 N/A The product is reliable i.e., sources well documented and reputable

### Value

1 2 3 4 5 N/A This product contributed to satisfying intelligence gaps.

1 2 3 4 5 N/A The product resulted in change in investigative or intelligence priorities.

1 2 3 4 5 N/A The product resulted in more informed decisions concerning investigative or intelligence initiatives and/or resource allocation.

1 2 3 4 5 N/A The product identified new information associated with pending matters.

### Comments