



AS IT IS

US Launches App to Fight Terrorism

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More than ten years ago, the American technology company Apple began telling its smartphone users that if something was worth doing, "There's an app for that." Now, there is an app for fighting terrorism.

The U.S. National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) recently launched its aCTknowledge mobile application, or app. It can be downloaded from Apple's App Store and from the NCTC website.

"The app is a one-stop shop to get **unclassified** counterterrorism information," one NCTC official said. The official did not want to be identified in order to discuss the center's move into mobile apps.

Something that is "a one-stop shop" is something that enables people to do many different things in one place.

Officials said a version should be available in the coming months from the Google Play app store. The information will also be available in a version for personal computers.

The app is being made available to the public. However, only counterterrorism professionals will be able to use all its **features**.

NCTC officials said officials within the U.S. federal government and the U.S. military can use the app now. State and local counterterrorism officials will be able to use the app in the near future.

"This is a **tremendous evolution** of our information sharing efforts," a NCTC expert who helped develop the aCTknowledge app told reporters.

“We're moving from a weekly, **regularized** information sharing effort (via email) to a daily, near real-time effort,” the expert said.

Like other apps, NCTC's aCTknowledge will permit users to get notifications, search and follow the latest news and information.

The NCTC said the new mobile app will also permit the center to see what kind of information its government partners are looking for. In addition, the center will be able to make sure that information or training is made available.

Officials are taking steps to protect the system from those who might try to misuse it.

“You're required to use your official government email address to register,” a second NCTC expert said. That expert also did not want to be identified.

The expert added that there is a system in place to make sure users are approved to receive the information.

Officials said many of the app's features were designed with the help of police and fire departments from across the United States.

Christy Abizaid is the director of NCTC. She said in a statement, “With the release of aCTknowledge, NCTC is **delivering on** our mission to **innovate** how we share intelligence products with our partners.

She added, “The app empowers its users with the information they need to protect their communities from **potential** threats.”

I'm Jonathan Evans.

Jeff Seldin reported this story for the VOA News. Jonathan Evans adapted this story for Learning English.

Words in This Story

unclassified *-adj.* not kept secret by the government

feature *-n.* an important part, quality or ability of something (often a product)

tremendous *-adj.* very large or great

evolution *-n.* a process of slow change or development

regularized *-adj.* to make sure something is regular, normal, legal or officially accepted

deliver on *-v. (phrasal)* to do what you say you will do or what people expect you to do; to produce what is promised

innovate *-v.* to do something in a new way; to have new ideas about how something can be done

potential *-adj.* able to become real; possible
