Intelligence-Led Policing

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List of acronyms

ABCI   Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence
ACC   Australian Crime Commission
ACPO   Association of Chief Police Officers (UK)
BCS   British Crime Survey
CISC   Criminal Intelligence Service Canada
DEA   Drug Enforcement Administration (US)
FBI   Federal Bureau of Investigation (US)
HIDTA   High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (US)
IACA   International Association of Crime Analysts
IACP   International Association of Chiefs of Police
IALEIA International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence
            Analysts
ILP   intelligence-led policing
JTTF   joint terrorism task force
NCIS   National Criminal Intelligence Service (UK)
NCPE   National Centre for Policing Excellence (UK)
NCVS   National Crime Victimization Survey (US)
NIM   National Intelligence Model (UK)
NJSP   New Jersey State Police (US)
NPIA   National Policing Improvement Agency (UK)
NYPD   New York City Police Department (US)
POP   problem-oriented policing
RCMP   Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SOCA   Serious Organised Crime Agency (UK)
ViCAP   Violent Criminal Apprehension Program

Preface and acknowledgements

The central aim of this book is to bring the concepts and processes of intelligence-led policing into better focus, so that students, practitioners and scholars of policing, criminal intelligence and crime analysis can better understand the evolving dynamics of this new paradigm in policing. The main audience is professionals within the law enforcement environment; senior officers, middle management, analysts and operational staff. With this in mind, each chapter contains a 'Viewpoint' from a professional in the field. These expert views are drawn from specialists from around the globe, and I am indebted to the authors for agreeing to share their insight.

The book also aims to be a resource for the growing number of academics and students interested in intelligence-led policing. To enable readers to make more effective use of this book as a learning resource, a series of PowerPoint slides is available on the publisher's website at www.willanpublishing.co.uk and mirrored at the author's website (www.jratcliffe.net). These slides reproduce many of the tables and graphics found in the book. The websites also contain suggestions for further reading and some related links.

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Introduction

What is intelligence-led policing? Who came up with the idea? Where did it come from? How does it relate to other policing paradigms? What distinguishes an intelligence-led approach to crime reduction? How is it designed to have an impact on crime? Does it prevent crime? What is crime disruption? Is intelligence-led policing just for the police? These are questions asked by many police professionals, including senior officers, analysts and operational staff. Similar questions are also posed by students of policing who have witnessed the rapid emergence of intelligence-led policing from its British origins to worldwide movement. These questions are also relevant to crime prevention practitioners and policymakers seeking long-term crime benefits. The answers to these questions are the subject of this book.

Questions of how the police should respond to crime have plagued scholars and practitioners of policing for decades. It is still a constant source of discussion and is perhaps debated more so now than at any time in the history of law enforcement. When the first officers of a modern police service walked out on to London's streets in September 1829, one of their first commissioners stressed that the primary role of the police was the prevention of crime (Mayne 1829), and the job of the police officer remained – at least until the 1960s – a relatively simple one. In these halcyon days, the constable or patrol officer (often on foot) had to avoid getting into trouble with the sergeant, and then take care of two constituent groups; local offenders and potential victims. His (all early police officers were male) job was to inhibit the former and reassure the latter (Flood 2004). This required the officer to develop community contacts, act to prevent crime, reassure local people, and catch offenders when crime occurred.

The police officer was the epitome of the Hobbesian ideal, the thin blue line that represented societal order and governmental legitimacy in the face of crime and anarchy (Wood and Shearing 2007). However, since the 1960s, many aspects of the policing world have changed. Society transformed rapidly, criminals developed new ways to commit crime,

public expectations changed, and the police adjusted in response. Radio-directed rapid response, criminal investigations and crime fighting became the dominant model of law enforcement. Public attitudes to the police changed, as did their attitude to the role of the police. With rising crime rates and greater information availability regarding police performance, the job of a police chief became one of managing risk, trying to keep the public happy, and responding instantly to crime threats once they emerged. Crime fighting and making arrests came to define the role of the police, while crime prevention was relegated to an occasional hobby. To put this gulf in perspective, one survey of UK police forces found that, while 40 per cent of personnel were assigned to investigation, only 1 per cent addressed crime prevention (Audit Commission 1993: 14).

Reactive, investigative policing became the order of the day and, at least in the US, this is still the dominant model of policing (Weisburd and Eck 2004). This strategy is founded on the assumption that more detections will reduce the number of offenders and act as a deterrent to the criminal still at large; thus having a preventative role. To the public and many within policing it seems a simple argument: increased crime detection will lead to increased crime prevention, and therefore increasing the number of arrests will prevent crime. Unfortunately, the police do not arrest at a rate even close to making this a reality. If they did, the jails would overflow and the criminal justice system would grind to a standstill.

Clearance rates have stayed steady over the last few years in both the US and the UK, with rates hovering between 20 and 26 per cent, leaving the vast majority of crime unsolved. If police were to increase arrests, the criminal justice system would certainly need more resources and funding. We would need more courts and jails, more probation staff and more parole boards. Police stations would need to be larger and the police would need more staff.

Irrespective of the almost perpetual law and order debate that sees politicians and the media exploiting public fears on a regular basis (Weatherburn 2004), recent trends suggest that taxpayers are unwilling to fund the substantially greater numbers of police that are necessary to reduce crime simply through a universal increase in incarceration. For while police strength in England and Wales increased 50 per cent from 1970 to 2004, recorded indictable offences increased by over 250 per cent in the same period.

This explosion in criminality did not affect the UK alone. From the 1970s, in both the US and the UK, crime rates soared and public confidence in the police was eroded as a result. With the crime problem outstripping the available resources, many in policing began to recognise that the traditional role of reactive, investigative policing was not a satisfactory response. There is a common saying within law enforcement that 'you can't arrest your way out of a problem'. If not, then what options are left to the police?

Reimagining policing

The first attempt to 'reimagine policing' (Wood and Shearing 2007) took law enforcement back to a mythical age of cheerful beat cops chatting with store owners and clipping misbehaving kids around the ear. Community policing initially appeared to hold the promise of reconnecting the police with the public, and through this increased contact would flow greater information about crime problems, a re-engagement of neighbourhood issues by police, and an improvement in police legitimacy. In the UK, progressive officers such as then Chief Constable for Devon and Cornwall, John Alderson, not only moved their forces toward a more community-oriented organisational structure, but were also highly vocal advocates for community policing, engaging in considerable public debate about styles of policing. By the 1980s, most police agencies in the UK claimed to be committed to community policing (Morgan and Newburn 1997). In the US, the breakdown in the relationship between many communities and the police in the 1960s and 1970s drove American police – with considerable support from the federal government - to embrace the community policing ethos to a far greater extent.

With the primary aim of restoring police legitimacy, community policing is a partnership philosophy that increases collaboration (or at least consultation) between the community and the police, decentralises police organisational hierarchy, gives greater discretion to lower ranks, places greater influence in the hands of the community in determining police priorities, and promotes a social service ethos (see, for example, Bennett 1994; CPC 1994; Trojanowicz 1994; Cordner 1995; Skogan and Hartnett 1997; Edwards 1999; Skogan 2006b). While many police departments have more or less subscribed to this philosophy, research evidence suggests that police departments that have moved to a general community policing ethos have not been successful in converting that strategy into measurable crime reduction (Sherman *et al.* 1998).

Police chiefs, while retaining the rhetoric of community policing, are now exploring different managerial styles and strategies. New strategies have been made possible through a broad movement in policing that has discovered the benefit of using data to influence decisions and drive crime control strategy. This movement has produced problem-oriented policing, Compstat, and now intelligence-led policing.

The problem-oriented policing approach recommends that police identify clusters of repeat crime incidents and use these as indications of underlying problems within the community (see the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing at www.popcenter.org). Police – armed with the results of a thorough analysis of the crime problem – target the specific cause of the problem, often (though not always) with the help of the community both to identify problems and figure out solutions (Goldstein 1990; Leigh *et al.* 1996). Problem-oriented policing has been instrumental in educating a

generation of police leaders in the importance of analysis as a foundation for decision-making (see Chapter 4).

Originating in the New York City Police Department in early 1994 Compstat is an accountability process that seeks to empower mid-level commanders to seek a rapid response to emerging crime problems and hotspots. The central medium is crime mapping, where recent crime data are mapped, viewed and discussed by police commanders. After a much-publicised drop in crime in New York City, interest in Compstat sprea around the world (again, see Chapter 4).

Most recently, intelligence-led policing has become the latest wave in modern policing: 'intelligence-led policing does not re-imagine the police role so much as it re-imagines how the police can be "smarter" in the exercise of their unique authority and capacities' (Wood and Shearing 2007: 55). Intelligence-led policing has a lineage that can be traced back to many of the same key drivers that influenced the development of problem-oriented policing and Compstat. Originally formulated as a law enforcement operational strategy that emphasised the use of criminal intelligence when planning police tactics, in the last few years it has come to take on a broader definition and scope. While still stressing that police should avoid getting fixated on reactive case investigations, intelligence-led policing has evolved into a management philosophy and movement.

Intelligence-led policing holds out the promise of a more objective basis for deciding priorities and resource allocation, and many in policing are beginning to see the benefits of using an analysis-driven approach to decision-making. As one of the latest analysis-driven models, intelligence-led policing has commonalities with problem-oriented policing and targeted, proactive policing. These strategies attempt to be 'strategic, future oriented and targeted' in their approach to crime control and are more than just catchy phrases; they are representative of a significant and widespread change in the business of policing (Maguire 2000: 315–317).

Intelligence-led policing has become a significant movement in policing in the twenty-first century. In the UK, the concept is enshrined in legislation that demanded all forces adopt the National Intelligence Model by April 2004; by 2003, every police service in Australia, including the Australian Crime Commission, had reference to intelligence-led policing on their websites (Ratcliffe 2003); the New Zealand Police were committed to intelligence-based policing by 2002 (NZP 2002); and in the US, a 2002 summit of over 120 criminal intelligence experts brought together by the International Association of Chiefs of Police called for a national policing plan to promote intelligence-led policing (IACP 2002).

Intelligence-led policing has emerged at a time when crime threats have become less parochial. The growth of international organised crime continues to defy any attempts by national and locally organised police bodies to contain its pervasive tentacles. Organised crime groups now

dominate the illegal arms, drug and people smuggling industries and provide significant challenges to containment, let alone suppression: 'Locally based policing, although it has a role in tackling organised crime … is not structured to combat transnational and global-scale criminality' (Harfield 2000: 109–110). And international organised crime is not the only significant new challenge to policing.

Since 11 September 2001, the task of terrorism prevention has challenged all aspects of the criminal justice system, creating a post-9/11 homeland security era where the focus continually threatens to shift from everyday crime to terrorism, and where information needs are deemed to be real-time. Information and intelligence sharing has emerged as a key element in law enforcement strategies to prevent terrorist incidents and control organised crime. The growth of regional information-sharing partnerships and the recent development of 'fusion centers' in the US suggest the promise of real-time data sharing and access in the near future, with real-time intelligence linkages expected to play a key role in preventing future terrorist incidents. These intelligence linkages rely on agencies sharing information among themselves, yet a key shortcoming recognised by the 9/11 Commission was the failure of agencies to share vital information. They identified not only the technological barriers to information sharing, but, perhaps more importantly, also the organisational and cultural barriers. Their recommendations spoke of 'unifying strategic intelligence' (p. 399), yet the barriers to be overcome are sizable.

> Current security requirements nurture overclassification and excessive compartmentalization of information among agencies. Each agency's incentive structure opposes sharing … [and] few reward for sharing information. No one has to pay the long-term costs of over-classifying information, though these costs – even in literal financial terms – are substantial. There are no punishments for not sharing information. Agencies uphold a 'need-to-know' culture of information protection rather than promoting a 'need-to-share' culture of integration. (9/11 Commission 2004: 417)

The 9/11 Commission could easily have been discussing the wider field of criminal intelligence and the way that many police services currently handle information. The 9/11 Commission's concerns led them to propose that 'information be shared horizontally, across new networks that transcend individual agencies' (p. 418). The structure of law enforcement in most places militates against horizontal information sharing, both between agencies and within. The challenges for information sharing, arguably a component of a strategic, intelligence-led crime control strategy, are therefore substantial; but (contrary to the views of some in US federal law enforcement) intelligence-led policing is not just about better information

sharing or information collection. It is also about better resource allocation, priorities and crime reduction decisions.

Law enforcement is being asked to tackle a range of threats and risks that were never an issue when the current crop of police leaders entered the police service. These managers are having to adapt rapidly to the new policing environment. It is certainly a challenging time to be in policing.

What is intelligence-led policing?

When first proposed, intelligence-led policing was an operational tactic that would reduce crime through proactive policing targeted by criminal intelligence. Kent Police (UK), under the leadership of Sir David Phillips, moved resources from reactive, crime investigation departments to proactive units, began tactical operations that were directed by criminal intelligence analysis, and promoted greater intelligence gathering. As a whole department, they were among the first to practise 'genuine' intelligence-led policing (John and Maguire 2003). This information-based strategy focused heavily on active and prolific offenders.

Some began to see that the business model required to manage crime analysis and criminal intelligence would also work as a broader management model for policing in general. From these early UK developments in intelligence-led policing grew the National Intelligence Model, which has evolved into a business and management model for resource decisions affecting a wide range of police activities. As a result, the interpretation of intelligence-led policing appears to be broadening in scope, and has evolved into a management philosophy that places greater emphasis on information sharing and collaborative, strategic solutions to policing problems at the local and regional level.

While it now appears clear that intelligence-led policing is evolving into a framework to encompass most operational police activity, police departments are at varying stages of development. Furthermore, the paradigm of intelligence-led policing is being interpreted differently in some places. While there is certainly a lineage that can be traced, a single unifying definition may prove elusive under these circumstances. In case the reader is seeking a quick answer, I will endeavour in this book to argue that intelligence-led policing is a business model and managerial philosophy where data analysis and crime intelligence are pivotal to an objective, decision-making framework that facilitates crime and problem reduction, disruption and prevention through both strategic management and effective enforcement strategies that target prolific and serious offenders. This definition (explained and expanded on in Chapter 4) recognises the evolution from whack-a-mole policing that arrests offenders with no overarching strategy, to one that places significant emphasis on data and

intelligence analysis as the central component of police strategic thinking. This requires a wider interpretation of the information resources that police can draw upon. In this book, 'crime intelligence' is used as a collective term to describe the result of the analysis of not only covert information from surveillance, offender interviews and confidential human sources (informants), but also crime patterns and police data sources as well as socio-demographic data and other non-police data. It also centralises the role of the crime intelligence analyst (or police analyst) at the core of police decision-making.

What makes intelligence-led policing unique?

The next chapters go into greater depth in attempting to clarify what intelligence-led policing is, and how it compares with other crime-control strategies. However, at this point, it is necessary to state what it is not. This book is about intelligence-led policing. It is not about intelligence-led police. The police are a specific institution common across the world, whereas 'policing' is a term that suggests a set of processes within society that fulfil specific social functions related to regulation and control (Reiner 1997). As such, it is theoretically possible to conduct intelligence-led policing without involving the traditional public police force. Policing is now being widely offered by institutions other than the state, including private companies and community volunteers (Bayley and Shearing 1996). To understand the role of analysis in this expanding security field, it may be necessary to pay as much attention to 'knowledge and power, information and action' (Ransom 1980: 148) as to the formal structures of the policing environment.

Some of the perceived problems with intelligence-led policing lie with the name. Some people have a tendency to see the word *intelligence* and assume it has negative connotations, suggesting activity that is secretive, subversive and possibly illegal. There is an implication of dubious and immoral activity used to protect a police state. When the word is used in conjunction with the police, they fear the worst. However, intelligence-led policing actually develops data and information analysis into crime intelligence processes to the point where, 'as opposed to being a marginalised, subordinate activity, mythologically and furtively pursued by a caucus of officers, the collection and analysis of intelligence has become central to contemporary policing' (Christopher 2004: 117). When practised properly, intelligence-led policing provides an objective mechanism to formulate strategic policing priorities. The difficulty is that few outside law enforcement are aware of this broader interpretation of the term. As Grieve notes, 'The word intelligence needs to be reclaimed from the secret world, made less threatening to communities and used in their service' (2004: 26). Within the conceptual framework of intelligence-led policing, intelligence