

Next-generation fusion centers

Beyond information sharing toward information analysis and predictive alerting—“Intelligence-Led Policing”



Viewpoint Paper

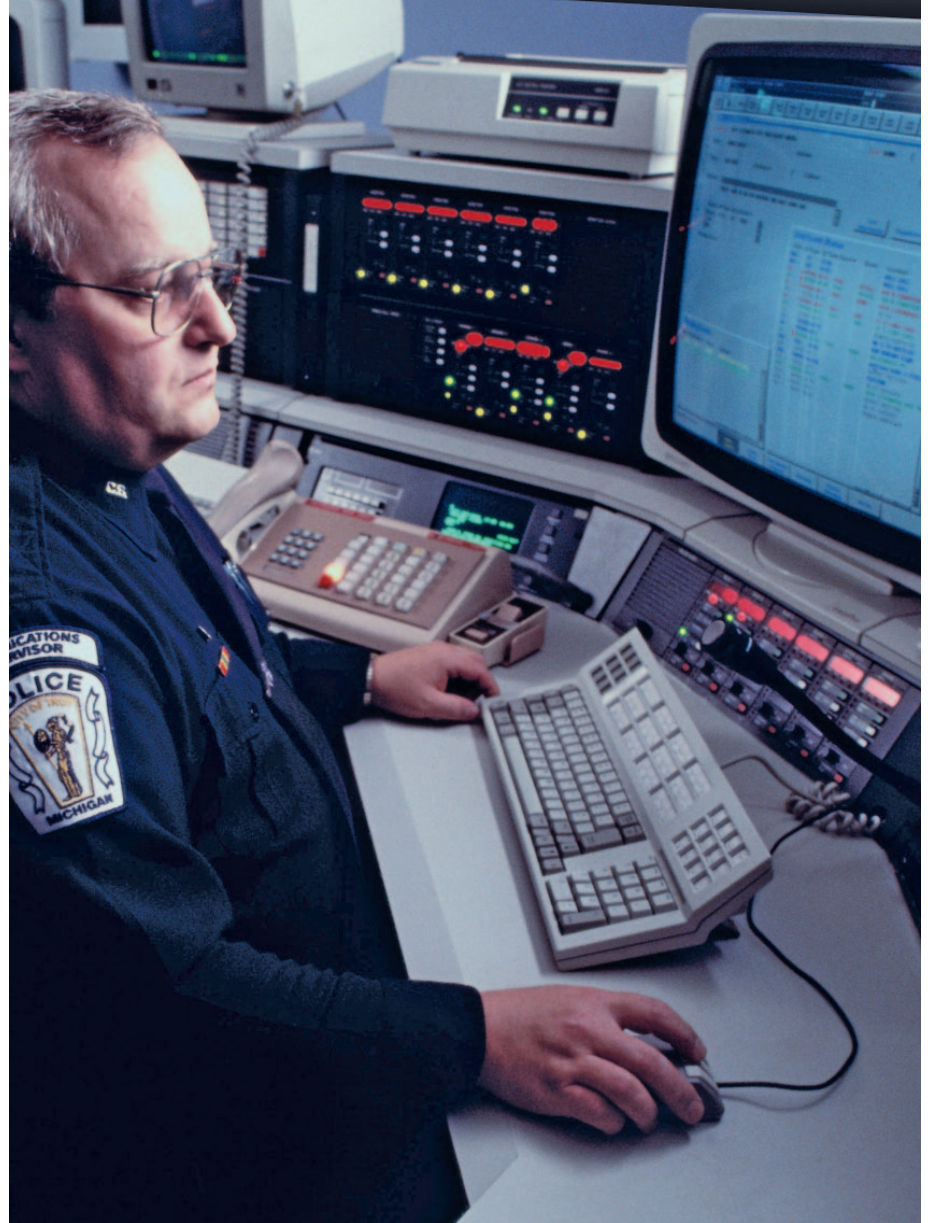


Table of contents

Introduction	1
Historical background	1
Intelligence-Led Policing and its connection to information sharing	2
HP solutions, values, and unique perspectives	3
Team HP understands the issues and risks fusion centers face:	3
Conclusion	4

Today, our nation faces an overwhelming issue of effectively preventing the next terrorist attack on the United States. The driving force behind this effort has been the creation of numerous fusion centers to collect, analyze, and develop actionable intelligence. But how does any fusion center manage the massive amounts of information that must be ingested, filtered, and processed without missing the most important indicators of future crimes or worse? This paper will discuss and provide recommendations from our subject matter experts at HP for the next generation of fusion centers supported by Intelligence-Led Policing.

Introduction

The term “Intelligence-Led Policing” originated in the UK and evolved in the 1990s as an effort to use intelligence, surveillance, and confidential informants to target recidivist offenders, and to be more effective in fighting crime.¹ Since September 11, 2001, Intelligence-Led Policing has become a frequent topic of discussion by national-level law enforcement leaders in the United States, leading many agencies to consider its implementation in their long-term planning.² Further, vast networks of information must be correlated, analyzed, and filtered to ensure that meaningful “intelligence” emerges. What can be done to improve this process? Can information systems assume a greater role to relieve the law enforcement analyst? Can systems become “predictive” to alert analysts before the next event occurs?

Historical background

Community policing, or neighborhood policing, is a policing strategy and philosophy based on the notion that community interaction and support can help control crime, as community members help identify suspects, detain vandals, and bring problems to the attention of police. This is also the basis for “community watch,” or the ability to deter crime based upon the notion that events “don’t look right.” The fact is that numerous potentially catastrophic events have been prevented based on the “tips and leads” that come from watchful neighbors or citizens.

¹ Edmund F. McGarrell, Joshua D. Freilich and Steven Chermak, “Intelligence-Led Policing as a Framework for Responding to Terrorism,” *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, Vol.23, no.2 (May 2007): 142-158

²Ibid, p. 142-158

Problem-oriented policing is a policing strategy that utilizes the identification and analysis of specific crime and disorder problems to develop effective response strategies in conjunction with ongoing assessment.³ This strategy places more emphasis on research and analysis in addition to crime prevention and the engagement of public and private organizations in the reduction of community problems.⁴

Intelligence-Led Policing is a policing model which is “... built around risk assessment and risk management.”⁵ Although there is no universally accepted understanding or guidelines of what Intelligence-Led Policing entails,⁶ the leading definition explains it as “... a strategic, future-oriented, and targeted approach to crime control, focusing upon the identification, analysis, and management of persisting and developing problems or risks.” In simpler terms, “... it is a model of policing in which intelligence serves as a guide to operations, rather than the reverse.”⁷ Intelligence-Led Policing has gained considerable momentum globally following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States and is now advocated by the leading police associations in North America and the UK.

³Center for Problem Oriented Policing (HYPERLINK “http://www.popcenter.org/about-what-isPOP.htm” http://www.popcenter.org/about-what-isPOP.htm) What is POP

⁴Ibid, What is POP

⁵Willem de Lint, “Intelligence in Policing and Security: Reflections on Scholarship,” *Policing and Society*, Vol. 16, no 1 (March 2006): 1-6

⁶Ibid, Lint, p. 1-6

⁷Royal Canadian Mounted Police, “Intelligence-led policing: A Definition,” RCMP Criminal Intelligence Program, June 2007

Intelligence-Led Policing builds on the earlier paradigms, including community policing, problem-oriented policing, and the continuous improvement or partnership models of policing.⁸ However, while it incorporates elements from these two building blocks, it remains distinct from problem-oriented policing and community policing in a few specific ways: Problem-oriented policing emphasizes the identification, response, and mitigation of the underlying problems that cause crime. These causal factors are surfaced through effective crime analysis. Intelligence-Led Policing similarly defines a strong role for analysis, establishing it as the basis for the decision-making that follows. However, where problem-oriented policing is a bottom-up philosophy that places street-level police officers at the forefront of problem identification and resolution, existing implementations of intelligence-led policing are more hierarchical and emphasize the top-down, rank-oriented nature of law enforcement. Criminal intelligence flows up to decision-makers at the executive level, who then set the priorities for enforcement and prevention and cascade them to lower levels of the organization as operational tasks.

It is well known that Intelligence-Led Policing works. The real question is, can information systems assist the analyst by reducing some of the burdensome workloads and allowing for more focused attention on areas of specific interest? HP has built our solutions for fusion centers on the historical practices of Intelligence-Led Policing and the integration of advanced analytic cards for fusion centers.

HP believes that this top-down approach of Intelligence-Led Policing and its need to push intelligence up to the decision-makers is well-aligned with the fusion center mission and provides additional rationale for their existence.

Intelligence-Led Policing and its connection to information sharing

The post-9/11 environment in the United States—the “era of Homeland Security” for American policing,⁹—has increased demands for law enforcement to build global partnerships and work more closely with fellow agencies to expand the capacity of the state to fight crime and terrorism. A key difference with Intelligence-Led Policing from earlier strategies is that intelligence is no longer considered a specialized function for crime analysts or intelligence units.

Since 2001, states and various U.S. localities have established information fusion centers to coordinate the collection, analysis, and sharing of homeland security, terrorism, and law enforcement intelligence. Today there are more than 50 operational centers in 46 states. These fusion centers play an ever-increasing role in the development of the law enforcement intelligence discipline as they evolve to support an all-crimes, all-hazards approach. They will be key to the maturation process Intelligence-Led Policing will go through during the next 30 years.

⁸ Ibid, McGarrell et al, p. 142-158

⁹ Willard M. Oliver, “The Fourth Era of Policing: Homeland Security,” *International Review of Law Computers and Technology*, Vol. 20, nos 1&2 (March-July 2006): 49-62

A significant issue that is of concern to state and local governments is the long-term funding of fusion centers. When federal funding ends, either significant operational cutbacks will have to be made or efficiencies developed that leverage the fusion centers' capabilities to provide value to the taxpayer. HP proposes that long-term funding for fusion centers would be justified from the local or state viewpoint if Intelligence-Led Policing is incorporated into the fusion centers' daily activities.

Agencies participating in the designated state-lead fusion center would be provided with regular reports addressing crime trend analysis and current crime statistics. The leaders of these agencies could then use this information for the assignment of resources against specific current crime issues. As a result, the agencies would be able to more efficiently and effectively allocate their limited resources. Through the more efficient use of law enforcement resources, fewer resources would be needed to ensure a reduction in criminal activity. An increase in preparedness would make it easier to detect, prevent, and deter potential terrorist activity.

HP solutions, values, and unique perspectives

HP provides a holistic approach to Intelligence-Led Policing. Our Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) come from careers in law enforcement and have brought

practical experience and operational expertise into our fusion center solutions. HP has SMEs that have participated in the evolution of information sharing and law enforcement intelligence since the 1970s. From working on the Governors' Strike Forces in the 1970s, Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETFs) in the 1980s, and Safe Streets Violent Crime Task Forces and HIDTAs in the 1990s to breaking ground for today's fusion centers, they can draw upon 94 years of law enforcement and intelligence community experience. HP SMEs have participated in writing the national fusion center guidelines and helped lay the foundations for the national initiative.

Team HP understands the issues and risks fusion centers face:

- Long term funding—sustainment funding
- Interoperability of state and local systems, access to federal systems
- Threat reporting
- Information sharing, horizontal and vertical, classification issues, role-based access
- Privacy issues
- Mission—scope, the need to strike a balance between national needs and state and local needs
- Operational vs. analytical, proactive vs. reactive

Team HP works with you to address these issues within your environment. The HP “National Integrated Intelligence System (NIICS)” solution will enable a fusion center to produce strategic and tactical intelligence products for community distribution, senior leadership briefing, and the efficient and effective allocation of resources in an Intelligence-Led Policing environment. It will address all regional privacy considerations while facilitating the role-based sharing of information and intelligence horizontally and vertically throughout the law enforcement community and with the private sector as appropriate. The HP solution ensures a more unified, coordinated and effective intelligence enterprise that supports Intelligence-Led Policing.

HP can provide visualization and analytic tools that are web-based and configured to meet the internal reporting and record-keeping needs of the component agencies, all while facilitating the fusion centers, analysts in the production and dissemination of tactical, operational, and strategic products. The HP NIICS solution ensures that the collection, submission, access, storage, and dissemination of information conforms to Criminal Intelligence Systems Operating Policies (28 CFR Part 23) and provides an auditing function.

Conclusion

The HP NIICS solution is a Services-Oriented Architecture technology that can provide secure, seamless sharing of information among systems and users. The architecture leverages existing systems and networks, yet allows flexibility for technology and process enhancements. NIICS usage will result in a sound system of intelligence analysis, and will facilitate a trusted partnership among agencies and the community at large. It will utilize structured and unstructured data for finished intelligence products to address Intelligence-Led Policing needs, ensuring the fusion center fulfills its role as a valued partner in the community.

About the author

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Rod Morgan is a 34-year law enforcement professional. He spent 10 years with the Delaware State Police during which his assignments included road patrol, TAC Unit, fugitive investigations, and undercover work in the vice and narcotics unit. In 1983 he entered the FBI as a special agent. Serving in New Orleans, Miami, and FBI headquarters, he worked on organized crime and international drug investigations. In 2003 he was promoted to Unit Chief in the newly formed FBI Directorate of Intelligence and was responsible for implementing and developing the FBI's interaction with fusion centers.



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