



The role of strategic intelligence in anticipating transnational organised crime: A literary review

John William Coyne, Peter Bell*

*School of Justice, Faculty of Law, Queensland University of Technology, GPO Box 2434,
Brisbane Qld 4001, Australia*

Abstract

Transnational Organised Crime (TOC) has become a focal point for a range of private and public stakeholders. While not a new phenomenon, the rapid expansion of TOC activities and interests, its increasingly complex structures and ability to maximise opportunity by employing new technologies at a rate impossible for law enforcement to match complicates law enforcement's ability to develop strategies to detect, disrupt, prevent and investigate them. In an age where the role of police has morphed from simplistic response and enforcement activities to one of managing human security risk, it is argued that intelligence can be used to reduce the impact of strategic surprise from evolving criminal threats and environmental change. This review specifically focuses on research that has implications for strategic intelligence and strategy setting in a TOC context. The review findings suggest that current law enforcement intelligence literature focuses narrowly on the management concept of intelligence-led policing in a tactical, operational setting. As such the review identifies central issues surrounding strategic intelligence and highlights key questions that future research agendas must address to improve strategic intelligence outcomes, particularly in the fight against TOC.

© 2011 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Strategic intelligence; Transnational organised crime; Intelligence-led policing; Law enforcement intelligence

1. Introduction

Over the last twenty years sovereign states, international bodies and non-government organisations alike have increasingly described TOC as a threat to national security and

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: p6.bell@qut.edu.au (P. Bell).

regional stability (Woodiwiss, 2007). While not a new phenomenon, what is new is the rapid expansion of TOC activities and interests, and the increase in the complexity of TOC structures (Hill, 2005).

In contrast to more recent media reporting, the problem of TOC has been on the political, professional and academic agenda well before the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (Felsen and Kalaitzidis, 2005) which further highlighted the complex decision making context that governments face in responding to rapidly evolving non-state threats such as TOC and the important role of strategic intelligence.

For almost ten years the concept of intelligence, and its inherent value in improving law enforcement performance, has dominated academic discourse on police management methodologies (Ratcliffe, 2008a, 2008b). Whilst law enforcement management has been preoccupied with managing the day-to-day conduct of tactical law enforcement activities their operating environment has drastically changed. Furthermore the public's performance expectations for law enforcement have evolved to a point where they expect police organisations to make objective decisions on strategy development and be accountable for such decisions (Verfaillie and Beken, 2008).

The application of strategic intelligence in law enforcement has been viewed by some as the means by which decision making on strategy setting and policy, using incomplete or complex data sets, can be made more objective (Ratcliffe, 2008a, 2008b). In this situation intelligence is used to make 'sense' of a dearth of information. This becomes increasingly important in an age where the role of police has morphed from simplistic response and enforcement activity to one of managing human security risk. In this evolving paradigm shift it is argued that intelligence can be used to reduce the impact of strategic surprise from evolving criminal threats and environmental change (Sheptycki, 2009).

Intelligence has been a field of academic study for over fifty years and now plays a central role in decision making in both the private and public sector (Kahn, 2009). The very public critiques of the 9/11 and Weapons of Mass Destruction assessments in Iraq indicate that the intelligence profession is no longer free from public scrutiny and academic critique (Davis, 2003a). This review specifically focuses on discussion of research and studies that have implications for strategic intelligence and strategy setting in a TOC context. In doing so it contributes to the field by identifying the central issues surrounding strategic intelligence and highlights clear research gaps that should be addressed by future research agendas in order to improve strategic intelligence outcomes in anticipating TOC.

The majority of the material included in this literature review has been undertaken using qualitative research methodologies. In the qualitative tradition it is appropriate for the researcher to declare any pre-existing biases; the author has three specific biases:

- That law enforcement and private sector intelligence studies are not a subset of national security intelligence rather military, national security, law enforcement and private sector intelligence are of the same genus and could be theoretically positioned as different families in an intelligence studies field.
- That although intelligence professionals work with information and knowledge their primary focus is not in collation of raw data as a product, in and of itself, but rather the generation of analytical context and prediction.
- That policing in liberal democracies is a networked activity in which LEAs play a central coordinating role especially with respect to responding to TOC.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1098034>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1098034>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)