State police investigative structure and the adoption of intelligence-led policing

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to provide an overview of organizational changes in the New Jersey State Police (NJSP) Investigations Branch and how the Branch has adapted to the paradigm of intelligence-led policing. The paper also reports on interviews conducted to assess the impact on key staff affected by the change, through the medium of a drug-gang investigation, Operation Nine Connect.

Design/methodology/approach – Both semi-structured and less formal interviews were conducted with 20 detectives, intelligence analysts and managers. Extensive quotes are employed to demonstrate key points. Furthermore, content analysis of documents related to organizational change in the NJSP and to a large drug-gang intelligence operation was conducted.

Findings – The paper identifies the key tenets of intelligence-led policing, and describes progress made both organizationally and culturally to move the Investigations Branch to an intelligence-led policing mindset. Organizational successes were reported, but more limited success was achieved in relation to changing police culture.

Practical implications – The paper clarifies the meaning of intelligence-led policing, and identifies potential road-blocks to implementation for police departments wishing to move to intelligence-led policing.

Originality/value – The paper identifies the key tenets of intelligence-led policing, outlines how these were used to determine greater geographic focus in the organizational structure of the New Jersey State Police Investigations Branch, and is a rare examination of the internal workings of a state police investigations branch in relation to a drug-gang investigation. The paper will be of interest to police executives and managers, and intelligence professionals.

Keywords Policing, Strategic planning, State police, Organizational change, Organizational culture, United States of America

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

A challenge for non-traditional police organizations is to take advantage of policing paradigms designed for conventional law enforcement bodies. For example, adoption of a community policing strategy designed to enhance police legitimacy in neighborhoods that have grown distrustful of police is fairly meaningless to purely investigative organizations that have no specific local geographic areas of responsibility. Similarly, while Compstat-style managerial accountability, with its

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focus on mapping and reducing reported crime (Eterno and Silverman, 2006; McGuire, 2000), features some meaningful managerial innovations, this reform is difficult to implement in agencies combating organized or conspiratorial crime networks. This is in part due to the technical limitations of mapping crime types that have low reporting rates and a geographic component less related to more traditional journey-to-crime or crime hotspot models (Chainey and Ratcliffe, 2005; Costello and Wiles, 2001; Rengert, 1992). As such, the adoption by a statewide investigative body of traditional managerial models poses challenges for the wholesale adoption of innovative approaches that use accountability of reported incidents as a central mechanism for crime control (Bratton, 1998; Maple and Mitchell, 1999; Moore and Braga, 2003; Silverman, 2006; Vito *et al.*, 2005).

Such a challenge was faced by the New Jersey State Police (NJSP) in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (hereafter 9/11). Tasked with a new role in homeland security, leadership in the state police recognized that the existing organizational structure was unable to adapt to the new policing environment, and as a starting point the agency began to address the need for organizational changes to the Investigations Branch. It is well established that organizational change is most effective when coupled with an overarching philosophy or conceptual framework on which to base change. The NJSP decided that an intelligence-led policing framework was the most appropriate operational model given the proactive demands of their new homeland security role, one that requires a distinctly preventative approach to counter-terrorism and other crimes of concern to a state police as opposed to a reactive, investigative response. The hopes of the organization thus rest with intelligence-led policing to provide the framework for tackling a wide array of crime problems and organized crime threats.

The primary aim of this article is to document the structural modifications made by the Investigations Branch of the New Jersey State Police in their effort to move to an intelligence-led policing organizational framework. The article identifies the changes that the organization deemed necessary, both technically and from a cultural perspective. It presents a short case study that demonstrates how the new organizational mechanism addressed a growing drug-gang threat, and concludes with a scorecard that attempts to summarize the progress made to date. In the following section, the article begins with an outline of the origins and central tenets of intelligence-led policing.

Intelligence-led policing

There are numerous reasons why interest in intelligence-led policing has grown in recent years. Certainly a central factor in the desire to explore new approaches to crime control (including problem-oriented policing and community policing) stems from the recognized ineffectiveness of the standard model of policing. The paucity of evidence that a reactive and investigative approach to policing has any impact on the level of crime has led to considerable exploration of alternative models of policing (Weisburd and Eck, 2004). The financial constraints imposed on police departments during the rapid increases in recorded crime in the 1970s and 1980s added further impetus to the search for alternative models (Ratcliffe, 2002). With demands on the police far outstripping the resources available, operational commanders looked to new policing methods to reduce crime in lieu of increased personnel and resources. New technologies

increased the volume of information and capacity of information retrieval and analysis services available to police chiefs, and these developments helped spur interest in analytical approaches to problem identification and definition commonly known problem-oriented policing (Eck and Spelman, 1987; Goldstein, 1979, 1990; Skogan, 1996) and Compstat (Bratton, 1998; Maple and Mitchell, 1999; Moore, 2003; Silverman, 2006; Walsh, 2001).

Lacking convincing evidence that community policing is effective in reducing crime (Mastrofski, 2006; Sherman, 1998; Sherman *et al.*, 1998; Weisburd and Eck, 2004) and knowing that Compstat is technically difficult to implement for an agency tasked with combating types of crime that are rarely reported, the management of the NJSP Investigations Branch was left with the choice of either implementing problem-oriented policing or exploring the tenets of intelligence-led policing. It has been argued that problem-oriented policing lacks the evidentiary base for widespread adoption (Sherman, 1998), and while a body of knowledge is certainly growing in this area, the adoption of problem-oriented policing has been at best one of slow emergence rather than one of rapid and enthusiastic embracing by law enforcement (Scott, 2000; Townsley *et al.*, 2003). By contrast, intelligence-led policing has been rapidly and enthusiastically adopted (for some of this literature see Cope, 2004; Gill, 2000; Heaton, 2000; IACP, 2002; Loyka *et al.*, 2005; Maguire and John, 2006; Ratcliffe, 2003; Smith, 1994).

Intelligence-led policing is a conceptual framework for conducting the business of policing. It is not a tactic in the way saturation patrolling is, nor is it a crime reduction strategy in the way situational crime prevention is. Rather, it is a business model (John and Maguire, 2003) and an information-organizing process that allows police agencies to better understand their crime problems and take a measure of the resources available to be able to decide on an enforcement tactic or prevention strategy best designed to control crime.

Intelligence-led policing has its origins in the UK where two influential government reports identified many of the problems associated with traditional policing noted earlier in this article (Audit Commission, 1993; HMIC, 1997). In suggesting a remedy, the Audit Commission recommended a focus on the offender rather than a focus on reported crime. As such, they recommended more resources be made available to support intelligence-gathering and the proactive targeting of prolific offenders (Hale *et al.*, 2004). A central tenet of a proactive approach to crime management is therefore the identification and targeting of the "criminally active" subpopulation as part of a broad crime reduction model (Amey *et al.*, 1996). This proactive approach has in recent years been tempered by language that suggests an adoption of some of the problem-solving benefits derived from problem-oriented policing (Maguire and John, 2006; Oakensen *et al.*, 2002), leading one researcher to propose a tentative definition of intelligence-led policing as "the application of criminal intelligence analysis as an objective decision-making tool in order to facilitate crime reduction and prevention through effective policing strategies and external partnerships drawn from an evidential base" (Ratcliffe, 2003, p. 3). With regard to this definition, evidence of the success of police to engage with partnerships for crime reduction is as yet a little elusive, and intelligence-led policing has also evolved from being an analytical tool to a fully-fledged business model for policing (Maguire and John, 2006). However, the definition recognizes that the central tenets of intelligence-led policing make

intelligence analysis pivotal to organizational planning and decision making, and these tenets have been articulated clearly, for example, within the UK National Intelligence Model (NIM) (NCIS, 1999, 2000; NCPE, 2005b; Ratcliffe, 2005). Since the implementation of intelligence-led policing in the UK its use has spread to a number of other countries, including Canada (Deukmedjian, 2006), New Zealand (Ratcliffe, 2005), Australia (Ratcliffe, 2003; Wardlaw and Boughton, 2006) and the US (IACP, 2002).

Intelligence-led policing is a policing philosophy that features the following traits: it is managerially centered and top-down in decision-making format; it is proactive; it is informant and surveillance-focused with heightened attention directed toward recidivists and serious crime offenders, and it provides a central crime intelligence mechanism to facilitate objective decision-making. As such, it is understandable why it would be of interest to the investigations branch of a state police. Problem-oriented policing has definite appeal to many police officers conversant with the complexity of community problems; however, to many officers it lacks the immediacy that the public demands when crime problems appear to be running out of control. Intelligence-led policing does not require a significant cultural change, at least for nominal adoption, given its popular central tenets relating to offender-based crime-fighting; however, it does require a change in thinking about information management and the role of officers in an intelligence-driven law enforcement agency environment (Collier *et al.*, 2004; Cope, 2004; Guidetti, 2006). Furthermore, the adoption of intelligence-led policing often requires an organizational change to deliver the promised crime reduction and offender focus. Evaluation of four British police departments found that agencies that made substantial organizational changes adapted to intelligence-led policing better than those which did not (Maguire and John, 1995).

Emerging from a rank-structured bureaucracy

The New Jersey State Police (NJSP) performs patrol, traffic, general policing, criminal investigative, technical services, and emergency management responsibilities for a state of about 8.5 million residents. Idiosyncratic features of the policing area include proximity to New York City, a vibrant shipping and port environment, a major casino center in Atlantic City, various organized crime syndicates (one of which has even had their own fictitious TV show), and numerous biochemical industrial facilities located near major urban centers and transport hubs.

Prior to 9/11, the Investigations Branch was one of three central units of the NJSP, along with Administration and Operations. All three branches reported to the Office of the Superintendent, the chief officer of the NJSP. The new challenge of homeland security was deemed to require significant reorganization at the branch level. The post 9/11 structure now sees the Investigations Branch as one of four branch units, with the addition of a Homeland Security Branch to the original core units. The new Homeland Security Branch absorbed numerous organizational sub-units that had a counter-terrorism response-related mission transferred from the other three sections, including the emergency management and special operations units. Despite these changes, the fundamental role played by the intelligence infrastructure still fell within the ambit of the Investigations Branch (Guidetti, 2006).

The established mission of the Investigations Branch is to protect New Jersey from organized crime, terrorism, violent criminals, and illegal activity. Its mandate required employing proactive investigative measures and forensic science techniques to gather

evidence, document illegal activity, and arrest those responsible for crime in these areas. Over the years, practitioners and commanders alike have generally considered the Investigations Branch to be an effective and efficient investigative entity capable of combating various traditional crime problems. Unfortunately, an efficient investigative ability is of limited value given the new contours of the policing environment. Being able to demonstrate efficiency in reducing forms of crime that are not reported to police, and as a consequence have no benchmark for comparison, is nearly impossible. Second, investigative ability may be inadequate when attempting to combat criminality of a terrorist nature; the offences in this area are best prevented or disrupted rather than investigated post-incident.

As shown in Figure 1, the NJSP Investigations Branch had previously been organized along two main strands; an Intelligence Services Section and an Investigations Section. Within the Intelligence Services Section, the previous organizational chart had five bureaus and the Intelligence Bureau was one of five sub-units alongside the Counter-Terrorism Bureau, the Street Gang Bureau, the Casino Gaming Bureau, and a unit that provided covert case support to ongoing investigations. This organizational architecture generated two negative outcomes. First, it separated the Intelligence Bureau both physically and organizationally from investigative units that could provide a significant understanding of the criminal environment in the state. Second, the creation of a separate unit for "intelligence" gave rise to a cultural atmosphere wherein the gathering of covert information and the timely processing of that information in the other bureaus could be sidelined on the assumption that this was the role of another bureau. This compartmentalization of the Intelligence Bureau away from more operational arms distanced the intelligence function from the command structure and created a situation wherein instead of complimenting other bureaus, the Intelligence Bureau had to battle for resources in competition with the Bureaus that it was designed to help. This had the rather bizarre, but in a perverse way organizationally understandable, outcome that allocation of extra personnel and equipment to the Intelligence Bureau could assist the work of other bureaus, but paradoxically meant that the other bureaus were less likely to receive additional resources as a result.

The pre-9/11 organizational chart was also organized such that while some units had contiguous geographic areas of responsibility, they were not in the same command structure. The most obvious example in this regard were narcotics and street gangs. Although there is a known relationship between street gangs and drug distribution in the United States (BJA, 2005; Fagan, 1989), this knowledge was not reflected in the old organizational chart of the NJSP (Figure 1). While both the Street Gang Bureau and the Narcotics and Organized Crime Bureau were sub-divided into more manageable geographical units, the Street Gang Bureau was within the Intelligence Services Section and the Narcotics and Organized Crime Bureau was located within the Investigations Section. This arrangement of offices created significant organizational barriers to the flow of information between units that in all likelihood had similar targets and might have been in the position to mount joint operations.

Furthermore, the Street Gang Bureau was in the Intelligence Services Section and had direct access to Intelligence Bureau resources, while the Narcotics and Organized Crime Bureau had to go all the way up to the second-in-command of the entire organization to get access to the resources of the Intelligence Bureau. This

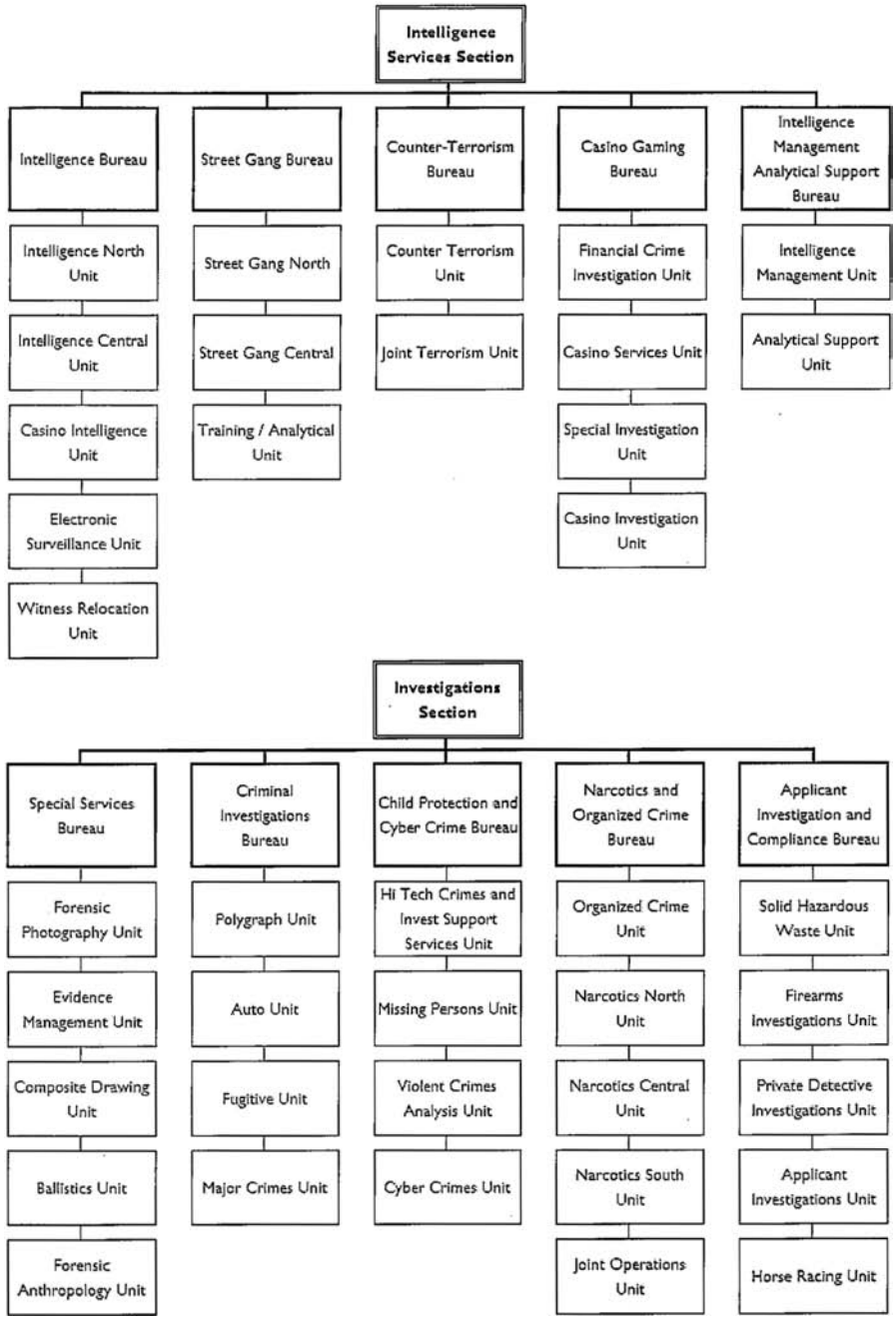

Figure 1.
Organizational chart of the NJSP investigations branch prior to the reorganization showing the intelligence services and investigations sections

organizational model generally works for police departments that are organized in an institutional manner (Crank, 2003; Crank and Langworthy, 1992) where the rank-structure largely dictates the bureaucracy (Sheptycki, 2004a) but it is relatively inefficient as a crime control model because the technical environment is one wherein the individual components are not efficiently geared to tackle the criminal environment within their collective domain. The vulnerability of this type of system to intelligence linkage blindness (Sheptycki, 2004a) is substantial as a general rule, and was certainly the case in the NJSP.

The following section documents the changes made to the organizational architecture of the NJSP Investigations Branch. The description that follows seeks to place the organizational changes made within the dynamic conceptual paradigm of intelligence-led policing. At best this study can be considered an action-research project rather than an objective assessment of the NJSP because both authors have been involved in the discussions surrounding, and the development of, the new investigative architecture. Further background is drawn from content analysis of numerous documents, most of which are not in the public domain. These documents include planning documents relating to the organizational changes, strategic assessments of the Nine-Trey Bloods gang set, an assessment of organized crime threats (NJSP, 2005), results from a number of gang surveys in the state (NJSP, n.d.), and early drafts of the "NJSP Guide to Intelligence-Led Policing" (NJSP, 2006).

Numerous additional interviews took place with detectives, managers and analysts in the NJSP who have been impacted by the move to intelligence-led policing. These interviews were informal in character and were conducted during January and February of 2007. The sections below report directly from these in-depth interviews with key actors. In total, the authors spoke to 20 detectives, managers and analysts within the NJSP in connection to the development of this article.

Organizing to be intelligence-led

In recognition of the new policing environment occasioned by 9/11 the leadership of the NJSP Investigations Branch chose to undertake a significant overhaul of their organization. The original structure lent itself to a host of architectural issues that impeded intelligence exchange and ultimately nullified the influence of the information milieu, both internally and externally, that is so critical for intelligence-led policing, counter-terrorism, and crime control initiatives alike. The old decentralized structure, which reflected a functional focus rather than a geographic one, tended to produce stovepipes within the organization, separating investigative specialties from one another. What resulted was a silo effect scattered throughout the Investigations Branch where the efforts of one element did not adequately draw upon or share resources with another.

The new architecture developed in the wake of 9/11 sought to link business planning directly with operational outcomes in much the same integrated way as the British NIM (NCIS, 1999, 2000). Instituted in the fall of 2005, the new Investigations Branch is now split into a Special Investigations Section and an Intelligence Section (the new organizational arrangement is shown in Figure 2). This time the organized crime, narcotics, and street gang units are organized along geographical hierarchies, and they are placed within the Intelligence Section. This was done to help support their primary mission to collect information and develop intelligence. There are three new

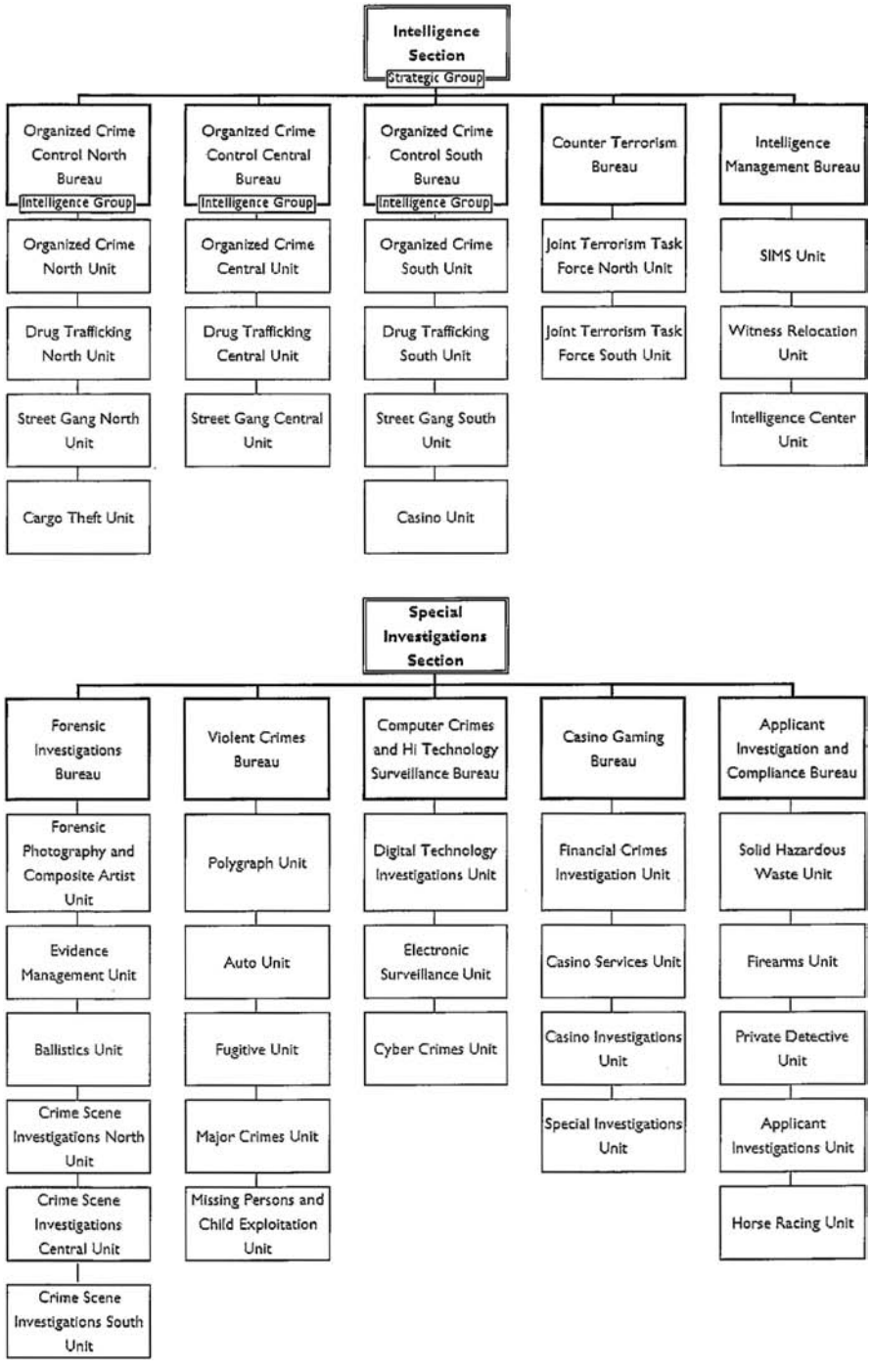

Figure 2.
Organizational chart of the NJSP investigations branch after reorganization

Organized Crime Control Bureaus reflecting geographic areas – North, Central and South Bureau – and within each bureau organized crime, drug trafficking, and street crime units are located together. It is hoped that this structure is sufficiently robust to better reflect patterns of offender activity in the state such that enforcement activity can be coordinated within and between different geographic and hierarchical levels of the State police. It is also anticipated that outcomes and activities are evaluated and results are fed back into the system, a process which constitutes a central aim of the NIM (Flood, 2004; John and Maguire, 2003).

The revised organizational chart (Figure 2) also reflects a new appreciation for strategic decision-making. Assisting each regional Bureau chief (at the rank of Captain) is a regional Intelligence Group, and in direct contact with the Intelligence Section Commander (at the rank of Major) is a Strategic Group. Strategic decision-making is a relatively new concept to law enforcement (Grieve, 2004; Ratcliffe, 2004; Sheptycki and Ratcliffe, 2004). These intelligence groups are not dissimilar to the tactical and strategic tasking and coordinating groups embedded into the decision-making structure of the NIM. Placing the intelligence community at such close proximity to the decision-making core of the organization is, at present, both a blessing and a curse. Having greater access to objective intelligence assessments of the criminal environment is a fundamental component of an intelligence-led policing system (Ratcliffe, 2003, 2005); however, it is fair to say that the NJSP organizational culture is still adapting to this significant shift in policing ethos.

This organizational approach aims to eradicate the notion that the intelligence function is a peripheral activity, one where intelligence can, at best, lurk in the "murky backwaters of policing" (Christopher, 2004, p. 179). Instead, the intelligence-led policing approach seeks to promote the notion that the organization is intelligence-led and engaged in targeting decisions which entail planned activity rather than haphazard reaction to problems. Second, and in a related fashion, the approach links targeting to intelligence, with a direct connection between intelligence flowing into the system and the targeting of policing objectives.

Beyond architectural changes, the adoption of a strategy of ongoing strategic planning documents, heavily influenced and drawn up by the intelligence analysts, is another component of the recent shift. A Statewide Intelligence Estimate is intended to be a regularly issued document that addresses strategic concerns for the State of New Jersey, and in line with current thinking on intelligence-led policing is "strategic, future-oriented and targeted" (Maguire, 2000, p. 316). This is especially important in an organizational environment that has moved to greater regional accountability. There is a recognition that the accountability of middle management has been a key component of the Compstat legacy (Firman, 2003; McDonald, 2002; Moore, 2003; Silverman, 2006; Willis *et al.*, 2003), and in that environment leadership is clearly essential so that middle managers are aware of their commander's intent. The priorities coming down from a Statewide Intelligence Estimate is one way to signal that intent, and this point will be more clearly demonstrated in the case study to follow.

Further changes to the NJSP include the development of a fusion center -the New Jersey Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (colloquially known as the Rock) - and a strategic intervention to transform and develop the NJSP's primary intelligence database, the Statewide Intelligence Management System (SIMS). The development of both entities was seen as fundamental in order to develop a shift towards

intelligence-led policing; however, it is also recognized that the Rock and SIMS place significant challenges in the path of the analysts. These features have the potential to develop many of the organizational pathologies that Sheptycki (2004a, 2004b) identified as barriers to effective intelligence management, including the production of noise, intelligence overload, duplication of activities, and defensive data concentration.

Further challenges are anticipated in this area. For instance, the risks of institutional friction, intelligence-hoarding and information silos still remain in any organization that has a hierarchical command structure. For example, in the area of counter-terrorism, the two investigative units (North and South) assigned to the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) in Newark and Philadelphia remain within a Counter-Terrorism Bureau located within the Investigations Branch, but remote from the Homeland Security Branch. Although this makes sense from an investigative position, this location poses a challenge for leadership to overcome intelligence hoarding, one of many natural tendencies in a broader policing domain such as American policing, a domain that has never done a very good job of rewarding information flow and intelligence gathering. On a more positive note, evidence from interviews and the content analysis of archived records suggests that the driving forces for change in the Investigations Branch are predominantly technical in nature and to a lesser extent a response to external pressures from the institutional environment, an aspect of an institutional approach to organizational demand that has been a feature of some police operations (Crank and Rehm, 1994) and documented organizational changes (Katz, 2001). By being technical rather than institutional, it is hoped that the new intelligence-led policing structure can overcome the cultural barriers that are known to hinder intelligence-sharing (IACP, 2002).

The following case study documents the flow of information, intelligence and decision-making outcomes resulting in a large gang bust, referred to as Operation Nine Connect. It also shows the impact that the Statewide Intelligence Estimate had on target selection, as well as identifies some of the principal lessons learned from the operation.

Nine-Trey gangsters, and organizational priorities

Nine-Trey are a subset of a large gang called the Bloods. The Bloods had come to the notice of the NJSP long before the move to intelligence-led policing, and the aim of this section of the article is to describe the combination of management leadership and intelligence flow that resulted in Operation Nine Connect and the arrest of some 60 members of the gang on July 25, 2006, with at least 30 others being arrested subsequently.

Semi-structured interviews with key analysts, detectives and management involved in the Nine-Trey investigation were undertaken. It became clear, due to the semi-structured nature of the interview process, that broader issues of organizational change were significant factors affecting intelligence management during the Nine-Trey investigation and beyond. Questions therefore addressed the investigation itself, but also drew out views on the impacts of the organizational changes that had taken place in October 2005. Furthermore, informal interviews were conducted with troopers and management figures less directly involved with the Nine-Trey investigation, but more significantly involved with the managerial reorganization. Most interviews took place in January and February 2007.

State police surveys of local law enforcement agencies in the state, conducted during 2001 and 2004 by the NJSP Street Gang Bureau, had clearly identified a gang problem in New Jersey. In 2004, municipal respondents to the NJSP survey noted the presence of 148 distinct gangs, of which 28 had more than 100 members. These gangs were responsible for over 500 gang incidents at schools, yet only seven percent of agencies required their personnel to contribute information to gang-information systems. Of the gangs identified, the Bloods were one of three consistently mentioned as a problem (along with Crips and the Latin Kings) and they were the largest gang in the state (NJSP, n.d.).

The Bloods again were featured when the Intelligence Section prepared the New Jersey Strategic Assessment of Organized Crime Threats (also known as the Statewide Intelligence Estimate) in December 2005. The Strategic Assessment bears many of the hallmarks of the strategic assessment document that is central to the work of the Strategic Tasking and Coordinating Group in the NIM. Both documents are used to provide "an accurate overview of the current and long-term issues affecting the police force, BCU or region" (NCPE, 2005a, p. 64). The Deputy Superintendent in command of the NJSP Investigations Branch used the document to select four strategic priorities:

(1) Identify, target, infiltrate, and disrupt organized criminal groups with a nexus to public corruption.

(2) Identify, target, infiltrate, and disrupt drug trafficking conspiracies engaged in the transportation and wholesale distribution of illegal drugs into and around the state.

(3) Identify, target, infiltrate, and disrupt the most violent and fear invoking gangs within the state.

(4) Strengthen the alliance between the New Jersey State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in all areas that may enhance the mission of the Joint Terrorism Task Force[1].

The New Jersey Strategic Assessment of Organized Crime Threats had already identified the Bloods as significant players in the retail distribution of cocaine, heroin and marijuana (NJSP, 2005), and their status as one of the most troublesome gangs in the state was addressed in the 2001/2004 survey results (NJSP, n.d.). The Nine-Trey set of the Bloods had been identified as attempting to establish statewide influence in an intelligence assessment distributed within the NJSP in July 2005, therefore the Nine Trey set fit perfectly into the criteria as targets for strategic priority three (above) directing the NJSP to "Identify, target, infiltrate, and disrupt the most violent and fear invoking gangs within the state".

In July 2006, the NJSP Investigations Branch culminated the eight-month investigative phase of Operation Nine Connect. Review of timesheets for the operation found that NJSP officers collectively conducted over 8,000 personnel hours of electronic surveillance, spent over 1,200 hours transcribing the wiretaps, and conducted over 2,300 hours of physical surveillance. Nearly 300 hours were spent developing and maintaining confidential sources. NJSP investigative resources from three regional bureaus centered on the statewide gang threat resulting in the arrest of nearly 100 Bloods gang members on charges that focused on racketeering, conspiracy, and drug distribution. Among the defendants arrested, at least one third served as leaders within the Nine Trey Gangsters command structure. At the time of writing,

these leaders remain incarcerated in jail, significantly weakening the leadership of the Nine Trey Gangsters across the state. Their inability to get bail is in part due to legislation in the State of New Jersey that requires people posting bail to demonstrate that they have a legitimate source of income from whence the bail money can come, if requested by the prosecutor.

Assessing the impact of the Nine-Trey investigation

In terms of numbers of arrests and incapacitation of a criminal gang, the investigation is clearly a substantial success. As a first test of the way that intelligence moves up and down the organization, the Nine-Trey investigation proved to be a qualified success, at least in terms of strategic imperatives. The use of a strategic assessment to set strategic priorities is certainly in the mould of an ILP/NIM structure, and the strategic priorities definitely filtered down through the organization. As one analyst noted:

> I think they [the strategic priorities] are great and definitely give us an idea of where we want to focus. The one for organized crime focuses on corruption and that helps us concentrate on a slimmer area: with our resource problems, that really helps (Analyst).

As the commander of the Investigations Branch observed, in regard to the strategic assessment:

> It provides direction. I think the biggest thing is, leadership higher up the food chain were held more responsible than ever before. We were made responsible for dismantling Nine-Trey whereas before, leadership were happy when people below them just brought in arrests (Lt. Colonel).

The strategic assessment was also deemed to be an actionable, strategic document. According to a detective involved in the Nine-Trey case:

> Because of that assessment, [the Nine-Trey investigation] took on a different life. The higher-ups saw that Nine-Trey were a real problem and importantly, they gave us their backing (Detective).

The new organizational structure that ties analysts to a region has helped analysts get better access to the information that already exists within the organization, as the analysts are now placed in the direct line between detectives and decision-makers:

> We go to central bureau and [a covert location] where the detectives are actively working on the wires and we sit down with them and talk with them there, and that is very helpful (Analyst).

Furthermore, the overlap of criminal activity across street gangs, narcotics, organized crime and street crime is reflected in the decision to make analysts more generalist in their orientation:

> With the [Nine-Trey] street gang investigation we see a lot of narcotics as well. There is definitely a lot of overlap (Analyst).I think it is better to be together. The new organizational model makes sense to me (Detective).

However, this advantage is perceived to come at a price in some cases:

> Now that we are moving around on different tasks it is difficult to work on a strategic assessment because we are now generalists. I don't have the long-term expertise with one topic (Analyst).

> I think there is a value in being a generalist, but I come from a background where I've always been specialized. However, I do like being at the captain's level because I like having that access and influence (Analyst).

> I know less about street gangs in other parts of the state, but I do know more about cross-over activity of the targets in my area. You know, there is definitely cross-over with narcotics and gang (Detective).

The generalist nature of the new structure for analysts better reflects the criminal environment that is being interpreted. For example, Petersilia (1980) found that offenders tend towards generalization, with few offenders specializing in a particular crime type. However, analysts did miss being the lead expert on a particular topic (such as a particular crime family). The move to a more generalist position generated considerable increase in work, and this coincided with an increase in information from the field as a result of the new organizational structure. It also increased the amount of knowledge that a regional commander was expected to master, a factor recognized by the Investigations Branch commander:

> Accountability is now on the bureau chiefs. This system requires more from management. They are expected to know their areas of responsibility and now they have more programs in their regions, with narcotics, organized crime, street gangs. I expect them to know their commands (Lt. Colonel).

Relationships with decision-makers

Analysts reported a significant increase in contact with decision-makers, and the corollary of increased influence:

> We do have that access now. Prior to the reorganization, I didn't feel we had access to the decision-makers. Now it has put me right in there. The Captain is down the hall (Analyst).

This has impacted both in terms of direction to analysts, and information flow:

> I didn't get much (information) prior to the reorganization, but now I'm definitely in the know. Prior to the reorganization, I didn't know command staff and I felt a disconnect in terms of what was going on. It is definitely much better. We need to fine tune our role in terms of products and what we produce and what balance of [strategic] assessments and tactical products (Analyst).

Some analysts are still reticent about exercising their increased influence:

> We are not at the point where we go in and tell them what to do, but we make recommendations with products that maybe influence what they think (Analyst).

> Analysts are terrified of making recommendations. I can only think they are terrified of being slammed, or so insecure about their own inabilities (Analyst).

Yet where analysts did make recommendations, they were often acted upon:

> I think we produced a lot of products throughout the Nine-Trey investigation that helped identify targets (Analyst).

Where analysts were traditionally involved in case support, they are now being driven towards a more strategic role. This involves a loss of expertise in particular areas, a move resisted by a number of analysts as their preference was clearly for a case

support role rather that a more strategic function. To some degree, any reticence on the part of the analysts about making recommendations could also be because the management are still finding their role within an intelligence-led policing framework. This may be understandable in the short-term, given that the management are still coming to terms with analysts playing a more pivotal role in decision-making:

> It is still early days and we need to work with commanders to develop these ideas and get the commanders to think about different ways to interdict on crime… Even though we've reorganized, I think unconsciously commanders are still seeing things through a street-gang lens or a narcotics lens. Some commanders are getting it. [A particular commander] is asking the right questions and asking for links between street gangs and corruption, or narcotics and organized crime (Analyst).

An additional issue may be that most of the analysts in the NJSP are civilian, and traditionally civilians have only fulfilled a peripheral support role to sworn officers. Moving analysts closer to the center of activity has ruffled some feathers in the organization:

> I know there is a big resistance in the state police to having analysts direct the work of the organization. We definitely need to have a cop face on things that come out (Detective).

Lessons learned and challenges ahead

The Nine-Trey investigation demonstrated that intelligence products can influence the thinking of a key decision-maker, and that strategic priorities flowing from a Statewide Intelligence Estimate can filter down to analysts and operational staff to the level where operational outcomes can be shown. The document analysis undertaken for this study was sufficient to trace that intelligence/influence pathway. There is, as yet, a lack of follow-through to determine what lessons from the Nine-Trey gang investigation can be learned and applied to the next investigation or to other gangs, though intelligence gathered from the Nine-Trey investigation has already been used to identify the (unsubtly-named) "Sex-Money-Murder" gang as new targets.

The move from policing-led intelligence (Cope, 2004) or worse, investigation-led intelligence, is proving to be a challenge for both analysts and commanders. Intelligence analysts have traditionally gained the trust of detectives and proved their worth by providing case support for individual investigations, however the move to providing more strategic products is being implemented into a police service that is not yet used to using these products to influence resource decisions. While the situation is improving, there still exists in the NJSP what Christopher (2004, p. 177) referred to as an "intelligence lacuna":

> There is a lot of subliminal resistance. A lot of people see this as the latest fad and if we wait it out it will go away. There is a lot of passive resistance – pockets of resistance. Nobody will tell the Colonel to his face, but there is passive resistance (Analyst).

> Some guys popped up with a couple of kilos [informants offering to deliver quantities of drugs], but none of this information was in SIMS. They tried to hold us to ransom because no one wanted to turn that down. But we gave away a couple of these jobs to outside agencies, and it sent the signal that we wanted no silos (Manager).

> These people showed the institutional attitude of how you demonstrated your competency – how many arrests you made. The people who did well in that system took some time to come

> around. But they also had the greatest work ethic and if they can come around, you'll have good workers (Manager).

Clearly, the leadership of the NJSP will have to remain steadfast in committing to intelligence-led policing into the long-term. This will have major implications for a number of areas within the organization. The Nine-Trey investigation originated in the southern region, but it quickly spread to a statewide operation. In this environment, individual detectives contribute a smaller piece to a larger pie, rather than break a small, individual case. As a lead detective said:

> Our investigation used Essex County CIs [confidential informants], CIs that weren't ours. So we each had pieces of the puzzle and fitted it together. . .That was the success of the case! We each had a piece and we worked together and focused on the goal (Detective).

Reward structures will have to be redesigned to incorporate this change in operational emphasis, both for the detectives working the cases and for commanders who demonstrate a greater strategic awareness of the criminal environment:

> Its not about numbers and arrests, it is about having an impact on the criminal entity. . . In the past a lot of guys, myself being one of them, were rewarded by the number of scalps brought in. Now, I never ask for quantity of drugs or number of arrests. But I look at the number of intelligence entries going into SIMS (Lt. Colonel).

If the NJSP Investigations Branch were assessed against a scorecard, a suitable metric could be the three-i model employed to assess the New Zealand Police (Ratcliffe, 2005). With regard to the ability of the intelligence arm to interpret the criminal environment, it would be reasonable to give the NJSP a positive score. Although there is some loss of expertise with the move to generalist analysts, the loss is in the area of specialization of particular crime families, a specialization that would only influence individual investigations and in an analytical role that was not structured to understand the wider criminality of particular groups across various crime types (narcotics, corruption and so on).

There has definitely been a change for the better with regard to the ability of analysts to influence decision-makers. Although this is an improvement and worthy of a positive mark, there is significant work to be done on both sides. Analysts have to be retrained, or hired, with a view to better exercising their influence and using their knowledge to provide objective advice to decision-makers. The training of analysts to this point has been a case-support one, and future training needs to reflect this new role. Similarly, the command structure is as yet unsure of the right balance of using analysts for strategic assessments or to support case investigations. Adoption of the term intelligence-led policing is sometimes easier than the management ethos that it embodies:

> We published the intelligence-led policing guide partly because people were using the term but not understanding the meaning. They were using it incorrectly (Manager)[2].

These findings clearly mirror similar concerns voiced by police officers and analysts across two UK forces interviewed by Nina Cope (2004). Cope correctly emphasized the need to clarify the distinction between making recommendations based on research and analysis and making decisions about adopting recommendations and directing action. Some leaders in the NJSP are embracing the new approach, others are being

more reticent, waiting to estimate the commitment of the NJSP leadership so they can react accordingly. As one analyst noted:

> The culture still hasn't shifted yet. You need [a leader] who is going to demand [intelligence-led policing] and kick people's ass when they don't do it, or someone who is going to prevent promotions when they don't do intelligence-led policing (Analyst).

As a manager also pointed out:

> A critical element of what is missing here is leadership training and professional development (Manager).

Either way, example studies such as the Nine-Trey investigation can be used as training aids to demonstrate how intelligence products can influence operations. Cope (2004) noted a paucity of training for police officers that affected their ability to use intelligence productively and use products in an operational capacity, an issue for the NJSP.

Finally, it is too early to score the NJSP in regard to the use of intelligence to direct police resource decisions (impact on the criminal environment). The Nine-Trey investigation shows positive signs, but the Nine-Trey Bloods set had already come to notice and been the target of an intelligence assessment prior to the move to the new intelligence-led policing organizational structure. That being said, this case appears to have worked at the strategic level and may work as a good demonstration case for the future.

To proceed, the NJSP will have to tackle a number of implementation roadblocks, such as resistance from both analysts and operational officers, and a "wait-and-see" attitude from some middle managers. If the NJSP is to capitalize on the new paradigm then training at all levels of the organization will have to reflect the new model, with special emphasis on the relationship between analysts and decision-makers. The improved organizational structure will allow the police to better prioritize and tackle organized groups of offenders who invest in a variety of criminal activities and the revised intelligence analytical framework is now better suited to monitoring offenders who are generalist in their offending. Robust leadership that will strive for change will be the necessary glue to hold the NJSP organizational enhancements together.

Conclusion

Given the new operating environment for police services post-9/11, the significant organizational changes undertaken by the NJSP Investigations Branch can certainly be considered audacious. Many organizations would be tempted to tweak their existing structure and try and force it to adapt, but the NJSP changed the whole architecture of the Investigations Branch. It will take some time for these changes to settle and for officers and civilians to adapt to the new structure. The early signs are that this innovative approach from leadership is having some positive effects on the influence of analysts, but there are a number critical areas that need to be addressed. Training and resources are still limited, for analysts and commanders alike, and the internal culture of the organization – as with police organizational cultures just about everywhere – is still of an uncertain mindset: Some are onboard, others not. For those who have embraced the changes, there is greater reward in feeling that the organization is more focused than before:

> I pissed away half my career chasing people that were not worth it. I'd like at least the illusion that we are now chasing the right guys, and that is certainly the case (Manager).

This research has only examined the Investigations Branch in a single state police entity, and clearly there is a need for more research into not only the appropriate organizational model for intelligence-led policing within state police units, but also within municipal, tribal and local police departments. As intelligence-led policing extends beyond the confines of the UK different policing styles and models will have to adapt intelligence-led policing to their own operational environments. Next to nothing is known about this area and best practice does not exist. For intelligence-led policing to succeed in the NJSP, they are going to require robust leadership, greater clarity of roles and responsibilities within the new domain, and a culture that is relatively open to innovation and change. With the move to intelligence-led policing, the NJSP has broken new ground and laid a positive foundation stone. It remains to be seen if the NJSP of the future is able to construct the rest of the building.

Notes

1. Letter to the Intelligence Section from Lt. Col. Frank Rodgers, Deputy Superintendent of Investigations, 2 February 2006.
2. The manager is referring to the 'NJSP Practical Guide to Intelligence-Led Policing', published in 2006 and made freely available on the Internet by the New Jersey State Police.

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