



VICTORIA POLICE

MEMORANDUM

State Crime Squads
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To: Ag Commander Wilson
From: Acting Commander Biggin
Date: Monday 30 August 2004
Subject: Informer Management Training – Critical issue confronting Victoria Police.

Background

The management and use of criminal informers (human sources) has been identified as a critical issue for Victoria Police. Issues arising from the Task Force Ceja investigation have reinforced that Victoria Police members have entered into a number of relationships that at best are inappropriate, at worst should be described as criminal enterprises.

Review of Drug Squad

The former Drug Squad was reviewed by a team headed by (now) Commander Terry Purton between August and September 2001, whereby a number of issues relative to good management were identified.

One issue identified was the handling and control of human sources, and the Review Team recommended that an advanced informer management training package aimed primarily at controllers be developed by the Crime Courses Unit (recommendation 68 – see folio 1).

As a consequence of other recommendations, the Informer Management Unit (IMU) was established under the management of the State Intelligence Division. The IMU is a small discreet Unit, whose primary function is to ensure compliance with Force policy.

Training

To date no training has been delivered by the Crime Courses Unit, albeit their accommodation was utilised by the Human Source Training Course during 9 to 13 August 2004. The training was delivered by the permanent IMU staff backed by staff from the proposed Dedicated Human Source Management Team aided by members from South Australia Police.

21 members from Crime Department and Region 1 were trained and the feedback relative to the course has been positive.

Review of Human Source handling

As a consequence of a National approach to human source management, Victoria Police conducted two reviews, into identification of the best practice approach to human source management. These reviews (by IMU and MDID) identified a training gap to all members – not just detectives – that leaves Victoria Police exposed as we move towards an intelligence based model in line with our five year plan.

The Crime Courses Unit provides currently training to members undergoing Detective Training School. Dialogue with Chief Inspector Eadon reveals that Crime Courses Unit intends to move away from informer training as the IMU are presently providing (limited) training.

It is a finding of the reviews that Victoria Police should adopt a [REDACTED] to human source training – [REDACTED]. The training provided so far has been [REDACTED]. It's proposed to conduct another [REDACTED] in the short term, again delivered by the IMU.

Force-wide issue

Furthermore evidence provided by an audit conducted by the CMRD in May 2004 reveals that most members are attempting to comply with the new policy, but knowledge is low.

The use of human sources is “an age old” investigatory tool, that is not totally the domain of Crime Squad investigators, in fact Crime Department members whilst encouraged to recruit human sources generally tend to deal with high risk individuals. The majority of human sources are recruited and managed by staff from the Regions.

Ceja Task Force

As identified by the Ceja Task Force and reported upon by the Ombudsman the management of human sources is a critical issue for Victoria Police. New policy was introduced on 23 September 2003, to assist in limiting the risk.

Current training essentially addresses issues of registration and the processes to be followed, it does not address the “trade-craft” knowledge required by police.

Conclusion

The management and control of human sources is a critical issue confronting Victoria Police. Education Department have a critical role to play in educating members in order to protect themselves, the human source and the Force against allegations.

Responsibility for human source training, at [REDACTED] should, in my view, rest with that Department to deliver.

Recommendation

It is recommended that this file be forwarded to the Education Department for consideration and comment.

Without the support of the Education Department I suspect training in the critical dimension will remain at a level that doesn't address the risks.

A. M. Biggin
Acting Commander