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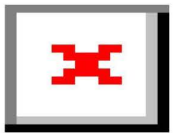

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Intelligence Appraisal of the Covert Services and Surveillance Services Divisions

Intelligence and Covert Support Department

August 2012

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(This report contains 15 pages)

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1 Methodology

In March 2012, Assistant Commissioner Jeff Pope, Intelligence and Covert Support Department, commissioned a review of the Covert Services and Surveillance Services Divisions.

As part of the overarching review, an examination of the intelligence processes, structures, and functions was requested to be undertaken in June 2012. Two subject matter experts were enlisted to assist with the findings and recommendations to be incorporated into the final review to be presented in August 2012.

The team interviewed and consulted with current Covert Services and Surveillance Unit managers and a sample of managers and investigators with experience in requesting and utilising these services. Intelligence practitioners were not consulted as part of the review but are encouraged to be engaged should the findings of this review be adopted or progressed further.

Where specific themes emerged the team expanded the scope of their interviews to examine these issues and this report outlines the findings in respect of these themes and the objectives of the analysis.

The overall aim of the intelligence review component of the Covert and Surveillance Services Division Review is to analyse the current intelligence processes and functions adopted within the units to ensure use of the resources is maximised. The specific objectives are as follows.

Terms of Reference:

- To examine the flow of intelligence material that the units obtain in the course of service;
- To determine whether the intelligence or information gathered reaches the Victoria Police holdings so that, where appropriate, others may utilise the information for further investigation or evidentiary purposes;
- Identify any legislative inhibitors to the use of intelligence obtained in the course of the units' services provision, and
- Explore options for enhancing the efficiency of existing processes.

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The team considered the terms of reference during all facets of the examination. This approach enabled identification of key issues; an opportunity to identify any risks and enabled consideration of opportunities to contribute to workplace efficiencies and enhanced business results.

This report provides the full explanation of these issues and the rationale behind the formulation of the findings.

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2 Background

Current Structure

Since the inception of the Covert Services Units in July 2002, the units have had some form of analytical and intelligence support.

With the exception of Special Projects Unit (SPU), all units within the Covert and Surveillance Services Divisions have tactical intelligence operatives or unsworn analyst positions attached:

- State Surveillance Unit (SSU): 1 X S/Sgt Intelligence/Administration manager, 1 X Sgt Supervising Analyst, 1 X VPS-4 Strategic Analyst (new position), 3 x VPS-3 (2 positions are vacant & 1 position is new) and 3 x TIOs (2 positions are new)
- Technical Support Unit (TSU): 1 x S/C TIO
- Source Development Unit (SDU): PII [redacted] TIO (since 2007)
- Undercover Unit (UCU): 1 x S/C TIO performing an administrative support role

The way in which the analysts and TIOs are managed within these areas varies. Some of the TIO/analysts work as an analytical unit which are specifically utilised to support intelligence functions and operations. The SSU intelligence component has recently been enhanced and is now configured to provide intelligence support to deploy operatives, minimise operational risks and assist to ensure effective management and dissemination of intelligence. There are no allocated intelligence supervisors within the Covert Division Units.

These varying arrangements are required depending on the workload priorities, focus and nature of the workgroup.

Position Duties and Other duties

With the exception of the SSU, the position descriptions for the roles vary and are not aligned to the current intelligence model or doctrine.

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3 Findings

The matters discussed under the terms of reference have been consolidated into the below findings to meet the outcomes required which are:

1. Improved provision of intelligence and information from investigators to support the request and application process.
2. Enhanced intelligence support by intelligence practitioners to Covert and Surveillance Services Divisions.
3. Formalise and enhance the intelligence management processes of the Covert and Surveillance Services Divisions.
4. Enhanced intelligence sharing between covert units.
5. Improved dissemination to and use of covert intelligence by the organisation.

The detailed findings which led to the development of the above recommendations are discussed below:

Intelligence and information provided by investigators to inform the provision of covert services

The absence of a structured application process for requesting covert services whereby a minimum standard of information needs to be conveyed by investigators is evident. In October 2011, the Surveillance Module via Interpose was implemented at the SSU for all applications for surveillance assistance and requests are not accepted in any other format. The information provided by investigators in requests for service applications can vary greatly in terms of quality and detail. At the other covert units, the lack of a quality assurance process and standards such as minimum fields requiring completion has the potential to be problematic and often results in inefficiencies as managers and investigators are often required to spend time clarifying or obtaining further information.

Information which could greatly assist effective deployment of covert members is often not included in applications from investigators (e.g. existing TI material or known intelligence on entities and associates). Reasons for this are likely to relate to a perception that this material is not important, it is overlooked in the haste of making the application or it is included in a request for one unit but not the other (double handling issue explained below). Inclusion of this material is important as it may also assist the covert units with conducting risk assessments. The absence of critical information has the potential to lead to less effective deployment of operatives, intelligence gaps creating risks and lost opportunities for further intelligence gathering.

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Some duplication is occurring when more than unit is requested and investigators are required to complete different application processes. This can be time consuming and lead to relevant information being left out of some applications. A similar situation can occur once the application is in progress as the ability for investigators to simultaneously update Interpose shells with new information or intelligence is lacking, resulting in the shells for some covert units not always being updated.

In some cases (particularly at the UCU), the information provided by investigators is relied upon solely and not validated by the unit managers, operatives or the analysts/TIOs. With the exception of possibly an ISYS check, no further analysis is undertaken by the controllers/handlers, presenting a high risk to the operation. This may stem from the fact that in many units, the managers (particularly at Sgt level) lack knowledge and skill sets in utilising the current organisational systems. Systems such as Interpose and LEAP are not utilised to undertake checks and risk assessments do not appear to be completed. This indicates that some handlers may have become complacent to the risks.

That the extent to which the requesting area's TIOs are engaged in the application or deployment process is unclear. Minimum standards of intelligence support such as completion of a target profile or similar by the respective intelligence area to support the request may be worth considering. The suitability of TIOs assisting to play an ongoing role could also be explored.

Requirements:

- ***Improved application processes (including minimum standard of information and intelligence to be provided)***
- ***Enhanced application process (which is aligned where possible) for requesting and tasking the resources of several covert units at once***
- ***Consider the role and responsibilities of the requesting area's TIO***

The support role of intelligence practitioners

It was difficult to measure the functions and outputs of the intelligence practitioners in the covert units and identify a set standard as these vary between workgroups. This is despite the fact that a critical need for quality intelligence support exists. There are

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inherent risks also associated with this function not being provided. Proper processes for tasking of analysts and TIOs are required to be developed to achieve this.

The need for dedicated analytical positions to provide this support within each of the covert and surveillance units is clear. The ability to undertake valuable deployments, maximise interactions and reduce potential risks rests greatly on the effectiveness of the intelligence support provided. Without this support it is unlikely that the potential value of these units is being reached and that risks are mitigated effectively. The units would likely benefit from more extensive checks being undertaken which would assist to identify weaknesses and opportunities. Risks have also been identified associated with lack of support provided to some covert units such as the UCU. TSU members also undertake their own intelligence gathering and checks.

Consideration should be given to expanding the process adopted by the SSU across the other units. This would include wider application or development of the use of an Interpose module, such as that implemented in October 2011 at SSU. It is likely that the units would need additional intelligence resources to support this function if it were introduced.

The usual suite of intelligence products, as set by the Victoria Police Intelligence Model (VPIM) and Doctrine, are rarely produced. Often when products such as target profiles or intelligence assessments are completed, it is in an ad hoc manner and these are investigation specific. Products are not sanitised and made available to other members as they are stored within the covert intelligence holdings within a caveat group. The capability and skills set of the TIOs in utilising organisational intelligence systems also varies and personal development opportunities for intelligence practitioners within Covert Services appear to be lacking.

Despite the evident need for sound intelligence support, some TIOs within the Covert Divisions are performing a role which does not strictly meet their position descriptions. With the exception of the SSU, the PDs are not currently aligned to the doctrine or HR practices. For example, the TIOs at SDU are performing roles which include assisting [redacted] delivering training and some administrative support. TIOs at other units are performing data entry or administrative roles. This difference in work functions partially stems from the TIOs having limited opportunity to fulfil these tasks because of lack of time, another critical business need or the way in which the role of the TIO has evolved at specific units. This, however, appears to be occurring despite ample intelligence work being available to be undertaken. Another contributing factor identified

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is the lack of a supervising analyst to provide direction and support to members on their intelligence roles and functions.

The TIOs should play a role in assisting to validate information and intelligence provided on applications as well as undertake analysis to assist the deployment of the covert operatives. The TIOs in some units generally complete checks and produce some charts and profiles to directly support the initiation of covert services and to support investigations. At SDU, the TIOs assist controllers by providing charts and intelligence to help [redacted] sources. Whilst this appears to occur on a somewhat ad hoc basis this provides invaluable support.

The intelligence support provided to the units has not been reviewed since the Covert Divisions were created in 2002 and there is likely to be emerging requirements and needs which the current intelligence structures and models do not support. One example is the growing need which exists for tactical intelligence support to monitor [redacted] Initiatives such as [redacted] also have the potential to greatly assist deployments. There is potential to increase the "value-adding" undertaken by the TIOs post covert deployments. At present, SDU do not further "value add" to information provided by investigators or to the information collected at a source meeting.

Requirements:

- ***Updated PDs to align with the VPID, HR policy and ICSD.***
- ***Retention of dedicated analytical positions attached to each of the units with enhanced flexibility***
- ***Consideration be given to creation of a enhanced supervision structure (additional Sgt) to assist with oversight, tasking and development of all covert intelligence practitioners.***
- ***Exploration of opportunities to create additional analytical and administrative support to enhance covert deployments (particularly if additional interpose modules are developed)***
- ***A structured tasking model to enhance effectiveness of the covert intelligence practitioners***

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- ***Minimum standard of analytical checks and intelligence support to be undertaken before operational deployment***

Intelligence Management Process within Covert Services and Surveillance Services Divisions.

The lack of a structured tasking and coordination process within the units (with the exception of SSU and SPU which utilise a tasking and coordination process and a prioritisation model to assess applications) which would assist to determine which requests should or should not be serviced has the potential to be problematic. Fortnightly updates on how tasked deployments are tracking are generally held, however these are utilised to discuss "actioned" applications. The prioritisation processes utilised to assess new applications are not evident or transparent. A number of the units do not apply a filter or implement an approval process to provide a quality control over applications to be serviced. Some units service all of the requests received (regardless perhaps of quality). Although the respective Superintendent approves the deployment in most cases, the provision of some advice from the unit managers to assist this decision making process is likely to provide value.

The SSU Interpose module has greatly enhanced the way the SSU obtains information and/or intelligence to deploy their operatives and the consequential capture of intelligence. The other covert units are likely to also benefit from access to a similar module to support their deployments. There are some issues associated with covert members utilising Interpose and being able to be identified, however, the current method of updating manual logs and then transposing this same information onto Interpose (e.g. from investigation cell to TSU cell) means that inefficiencies exist. This often also results in manual investigation log being maintained instead of IRs being produced.

A lack of a process or structured intelligence provision to operatives is apparent in some units. There is also an absence of unit SOPs or guidelines for consistent capture of information. Manual logs are often utilised and non-evidentiary information and intelligence is not captured in Interpose or disseminated despite no apparent reasons prohibiting this from occurring. A defined or standardised risk assessment process is also lacking which is problematic given some of the inherent risks involved with the deployment of all of the covert units.

Opportunities for further intelligence gathering exist. For example, during longer term deployments by the UCU information may be regularly provided which could assist other

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intelligence development or investigative units. De-briefs are not always conducted at covert units and those that occur are generally not captured in an accessible format. There is potential to enhance and maximise the value of existing systems such as [redacted] to capture information and intelligence through the development [redacted] This may enable efficiencies to be gained for surveillance and other units. In addition, the UCU is developing a [redacted] which will enable operatives to check [redacted] providing a resource to inform future deployments.

Requirements:

- ***Development of SOPs for managing intelligence and a standardised risk assessment and prioritisation process***
- ***Enhance the tasking and coordination process applied***
- ***Explore opportunities to enhance recording of intelligence***

Information and intelligence sharing between covert units.

There appears to be limited coordinated or regular contact between some of the covert and surveillance units despite often working on the same operation/investigation and targets. Opportunities exist for the units to assist each other to reduce risks and enhance the effectiveness of deployments, particularly units which are likely to have the [redacted] targets (for example, UCU, SSU and SDU). The same situation exists for the TSU which may be able to provide intelligence or images of premises etc.

There is potential for a process to be developed which would facilitate and assist units to share intelligence. Information and intelligence gleaned by a unit (for example, registration numbers identified by TSU members at a job which may assist SSU) should be able to be conveyed to other covert units or investigators in a timely manner and recorded for future reference. A concept raised was the development of "Daily logs" or briefings which are made available to all managers for relevant operational matters for joint investigations.

Valuable contemporary data is not shared despite units often working on the same jobs. Often because of the nature of their deployments, the SSU receive more timely updates from investigators which may not be conveyed to the other covert units such as the TSU.

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Some of these issues could be addressed in the interim by facilitating TSU (and potentially other units) management access to the SSU Interpose Operation.

There are potential risks associated with the way in which some of the intelligence and information is stored at covert units. In addition, it is problematic that this intelligence is not made accessible to other units. The TSU collection is retained on an internal computer drive despite no restrictions to these images being able to be shared more widely. The information is provided to the relevant work unit but it is not clear whether it is then made available others. This increases the likelihood of duplication of effort and risk that linkages between jobs will be overlooked or not identified. Information sharing between covert units regularly occurs verbally and a mechanism of recording this is not implemented.

Interactions between covert units and other agencies can occur but this is also not coordinated. Regular intelligence sharing no longer exists and there is potential for overlap or intelligence which could assist not being shared.

Requirements:

- ***Explore opportunities for improved ability to share timely intelligence between units (adoption of SOPs for capture and recording will assist this)***
- ***Development of a minimum standard of recording intelligence sharing between covert units***

Dissemination of intelligence and information to investigators and Victoria Police intelligence holdings.

Legislative restrictions guide how information can be released (e.g. only those investigators listed on the warrant), however, it appears that there is greater intelligence potential which could be reaped from the information and intelligence gained from covert deployments. While some legislative inhibitors exist, there is also a lack of policy or process for the management of intelligence or dissemination of information returned to investigators or Victoria Police intelligence holdings. Whilst care needs to be taken not to expose methodology or entities there may be potential to do more with the intelligence and information gathered. Opportunities exist to enhance the intelligence holdings within Victoria Police. This may require consideration of an organisational viewpoint in relation to creation of IRs and collation/retention of SPU info. Whilst use of this information is

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bound by legislative restrictions, new information can be confirmed through other means and conveyed in an IR on Interpose.

Onus should be placed back on the investigators to progress this. Sanitised intelligence is sometimes provided verbally to investigators and verbal briefings are also regularly provided after [redacted] by [redacted] It is not known whether investigators follow this up.

At present, profiles developed by units are not sanitised and made available to investigators or intelligence practitioners through Interpose (although some are made available to HSMU). There is opportunity that this could be rectified and the profile contents made accessible more widely.

The compliance of investigators with security policy is yet to be audited and this may pose a risk for the organisation. Generally a culture of risk aversion exists and sometimes this is warranted. Investigators, however, may not be aware of current policies for information disclosure, dissemination and security which can cause investigators to be reluctant to release information. This may be resulting in information and intelligence which should be made available to organisational intelligence holdings being withheld. The development of organisational guidelines on the use and dissemination of covert information and intelligence may assist.

With the exception of storage and evidentiary guidelines, there are no standard operating procedures guiding how the "end product" should be utilised or managed. This, often combined with late requests for assistance, results in a less than ideal product being presented to the investigators. The management of this product in terms of "value adding" or capture on Interpose then becomes the responsibility of the investigators and their TIOs. Current practice for the SSU Intel Unit provides the investigators with surveillance logs via Interpose however what investigators do with the information/intelligence gleaned from the logs may vary from each member. This is currently no accountability once the logs have been disseminated.

- ***Explore the feasibility of an organisational policy or guideline for the use and management of covert intelligence material***
- ***Consider the development of a training and education package for recipients of covert intelligence and information.***

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4 Summary of Findings

Enhanced provision of intelligence and information to support the request and application process.

- Improved application processes (including minimum standard of information and intelligence to be provided)
- Enhanced application process (which is aligned where possible) for requesting and tasking the resources of several covert units at once
- Consider the role and responsibilities of the requesting area's TIO

Enhanced intelligence support by analysts and TIOs to Covert and Surveillance Services Divisions.

- Updated PDs to align with the VPID, HR policy and ICSD.
- Retention of dedicated analytical positions attached to each of the units with enhanced flexibility
- Consideration be given to creation of a enhanced supervision structure (additional Sgt) to assist with oversight, tasking and development of all covert intelligence practitioners
- Exploration of opportunities to create additional analytical and administrative support to enhance covert deployments (particularly if additional interpose modules are developed)
- A structured tasking model to enhance effectiveness of the covert intelligence practitioners
- Minimum standard of analytical checks and intelligence support to be undertaken before operational deployment

Formalise and enhance the intelligence management processes of the covert units.

- Development of SOPs for managing intelligence and a standardised risk assessment and prioritisation process
- Enhance the tasking and coordination process applied
- Explore opportunities to enhance recording of intelligence

Enhanced intelligence sharing between covert units.

- Explore opportunities for improved ability to share timely intelligence between units
- Development of a minimum standard of recording intelligence sharing between covert units

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Improved dissemination to and use of covert intelligence by the organisation.

- Explore the feasibility of an organisational policy or guideline for the use and management of covert intelligence material
- Consider the development of a training and education package for recipients of covert intelligence and information.