

What Is Criminal Intelligence?

Information

We are often concerned whether information we come by can be used by enforcement agencies as crime intelligence in order to target offenders suspected of committing offences. It makes no difference in the collation of information relating to a specific crime or person whether the person to be targeted is committing thefts, selling drugs or committing wildlife crime offences. For policing purposes “information” and “intelligence” are two separate and distinct things and understanding the difference is crucial to knowing what criminal intelligence is.

Information has been defined as knowledge acquired through experience or study; facts or knowledge provided or learned; knowledge of specific and timely events or situations, news¹. Information can relate to all forms of processed data and can include intelligence.

Criminal Intelligence

This is information compiled, analysed, and/or disseminated in an effort to anticipate, prevent, or monitor criminal activity.

The National Intelligence Model (NIM) defines “Intelligence” as information that has been subject to a defined evaluation and risk assessment process in order to assist with police decision making.

Although that sounds simple enough the collation and use of information is governed by the code of practice in the Management of Police Information (MOPI)². For the purposes of this Code, police purposes are:-

1. Protecting life and property,
2. Preserving order,
3. Preventing the commission of offences,
4. Bringing offenders to justice, and
5. Any duty or responsibility of the police arising from common or statute law.

In collating information the police follow a set of guidelines contained in Guidance on The Management of Police Information³ and the rules it sets out. The most important step for us is to supply robust, verifiable information which can be evaluated, assessed for risk and then acted upon. It is not enough to think that someone must be the person responsible for a crime because we, for whatever reason, have formed an opinion that they are guilty.

Criminal intelligence is developed by using surveillance, informants, interrogation and research or may be just picked up on the "street". Once the enforcement agency is in possession of information it has a duty to follow the above mentioned guidance.

Evaluating Intelligence

On receipt of information the police follow a series of prescribed actions. The two actions they perform that concern us are: -

¹ Harfield & Harfield. 2008. Intelligence & Investigation, Community and Partnership. Oxford

² <http://library.college.police.uk/docs/homeoffice/codeofpracticefinal12073.pdf>

³ https://www.cambs.police.uk/about/foi/images/MoPI_03.03.06.pdf

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1. Quality assure the original submission for its completeness and accuracy in the 5x5x5 form⁴ they are required to fill in.
2. Re-evaluate the reliability and the source of the information

These are the first steps taken in developing criminal intelligence. The source of the information will need to be assessed to determine into which of five categories it falls: always reliable, mostly reliable, sometimes reliable, unreliable or untested. People supply information to the police for all sorts of reasons and sometimes what they say is completely untrue in an attempt to harm others or escape justice themselves.

The second test is to ascertain whether the information is verifiable. In the following three examples only one statement is verifiable and actionable: -

I saw John Smith buying dog food at the local supermarket.

I saw John Smith who owns a number of dogs buying dog food at the local supermarket

I saw John Smith who owns a number of dogs buying dog food at the local supermarket. He keeps the dogs on an allotment near his house. The dogs are carrying injuries which I have seen being treated by him at the allotment.

We have to be sure of what we say in relation to allegations that someone has been involved or might be involved in criminal activity. In the third example if the information given is thought to be from a reliable source and true then the police/enforcement agency can begin to develop the information in relation to that person with a view to gathering sufficient verified intelligence to allow them to mount an operation to target the offender.

It is important to understand that police information/intelligence can be sensitive for many reasons and that we, as civilians, will not be party to any operational actions that are taken by the enforcement agencies who are restricted by law as to what information they can disseminate to us.

You should at a local level make sure you have a close relationship with your wildlife crime officers and even enter into working protocols (see appendix B) which may or may not include a section on information sharing. From time to time agencies such as the National Wildlife Crime Unit may issue information that has been “sanitised” and is therefore unrestricted.

If you have information relating to badger persecution that you want to pass on then phone the police on 101 and ask to speak to a wildlife crime officer. If you wish to pass that information anonymously then phone Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. You may prefer to speak to the RSPCA 0300 1234 999 or the on SSPCA 03000 999 999

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⁴ See Appendix B

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Appendix A

National Intelligence Model 5x5x5 form.

SOURCE EVALUATION

- A Always reliable
- B Mostly reliable
- C Sometimes reliable
- D Unreliable
- E Untested source

INTELLIGENCE EVALUATION

- 1 Known to be true without reservation
- 2 Known personally to source but not to officer
- 3 Not personally known to source but corroborated
- 4 Cannot be judged
- 5 Suspected to be false or malicious

HANDLING CODE

- 1 May be disseminated to other Law Enforcement and Prosecuting Agencies including EEA and EU
- 2 May be disseminated to UK non-prosecuting parties
- 3 May be disseminated to non-EEA enforcement agencies
- 4 May be disseminated within originating agency only
- 5 No further dissemination. SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIREMENTS IMPOSED**

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Appendix B

Working Protocol between *Name of Badger Group* and the *Name of Police Force* for dealing with badger-related incidents

Introduction

1. *Police have a statutory duty to investigate crimes against wildlife. All police forces have wildlife crime officers (WCO) who are specialist contacts in relation to wildlife crime*
2. *Name of Badger Group have a good knowledge of wildlife crime and associated issues, especially crime regarding badgers. Name of group does not have full time investigations staff, but can provide expert advice in matters relating to badgers*

Scottish Badgers and the Badger Trust role

To help with the detection of badger-related wildlife crime and provide expertise, assistance and advice to police on these issues and to maintain a persecution database recording all badger incidents.

Police role

*Investigation of all crime and subsequent reporting to the appropriate prosecution service
Reduction of all aspects of crime
Formation of effective partnerships to investigate and reduce badger persecution*

Badger Group expertise

*Extensive knowledge of all badger-related issues, including sett locations, identification, handling, field craft, ecology, and legislation
Some knowledge of police and court procedures and requirements in relation to evidence gathering and standard of proof.*

Police expertise

*Evidence gathering and standard of proof
Good knowledge of farms, farmers, gamekeepers and estates
Planning and execution of operations*

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Main areas where the badger group can help police

Provide expertise, assistance, advice and information in relation to badger-related crime investigations, and contribute to police training in relation to the deployment of relevant legislation

Main areas where police can help the badger group

Where data protection permits, provide feedback on badger crime-related casework in order to produce accurate badger crime statistics.

Joint initiatives to counteract badger-related crime.

Reporting of badger road kills to help identify sett locations

Working Protocol

1. Incidents initially reported to the badger group which, on the basis of the information available, are suspected of being crimes, will be reported to the police. The police will provide an incident number relating to that report. If the police are notified of an incident by means other than contact from the badger group they will inform the badger group of the occurrence as soon as reasonably possible and ensure the incident number is passed to the group at that time.
2. The police will follow up reports of suspected badger persecution, including a scenes of crime examination if appropriate, within a time-scale appropriate to the effective investigation of the type of incident. The police will ensure that if badger group members are to be used as expert witnesses then they will be called to the locus as soon⁵ as reasonably practical in order to help gather evidence.
3. If a suitable response to an incident by the police is not possible within the time-scale needed for effective investigation, the police may request that an initial corroborated assessment of the incident be undertaken by the badger group, and that, if relevant, the crime scene is preserved until a scenes of crime examination can be carried out
4. Evidence obtained by the badger group will be preserved in a manner compatible with the standards required for admissibility as evidence in court and wherever possible taken to an appropriate police station for labelling and recording. Scottish Badgers and the Badger Trust will endeavour to ensure that all personnel who may from time to time find themselves handling potential evidence will follow the same guidelines.
5. Where there is evidence of an offence, costs of any necessary examinations will be met by the police. Scottish Badgers and the Badger Trust will fund the examination of items in other instances as they consider appropriate.
6. Scottish Badgers or the Badger Trust collates and assesses reports of badger-related incidents. When investigating a badger-related crime, the police will request from Scottish Badgers or the Badger Trust any information held by them which may assist the enquiry,

⁵ It is vital that, when an incident involving offences at a badger sett is reported, an expert witness is called in to confirm that it is a badger sett and to assess the status of the sett.

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including relevant information on wildlife biology. The police may also request corroboration of their enquiry from Scottish Badgers or the Badger Trust. Information given to the police in confidence from Scottish Badgers and the Badger Trust will be treated as **RESTRICTED** unless a higher classification is deemed necessary.

7. Scottish Badgers and the Badger Trust will not disclose information that becomes available to them in the course of an investigation where this would compromise the integrity of the investigation and prejudice the success of any resultant court hearing

8. Information passed to Scottish Badgers and or the Badger Trust from the police will have a protective marking of **RESTRICTED** or **UNCLASSIFIED**. **RESTRICTED** information must be secured under lock and key when left unattended. When it is no longer required it must be destroyed by shredding or in a manner that makes it unlikely to be reconstituted. **RESTRICTED** information from the police is not to be passed to any non-law enforcement third party except with the written authority of the originator of that information.

9. Police will ensure, within the restrictions of the Data Protection Act that the badger group is informed of the progress and outcome of badger-related crime enquiries and will provide regular updates on the progress of investigations.

10. Principle 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998 must be adhered to by all parties. This includes appropriate technological and organisational measures against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data, security measures and requirements of a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998.

11. Any application made under Section 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998 (subject to access provisions) received by either party to this protocol is to be referred to the Data Protection Officer of the party originally owning the information in order that due consideration can be given to the relevance of any exemption contained in the Act.