

# Intelligence and Drug Operations Division Intelligence cycle helps to beat crime

A key factor of the Intelligence and Drug Operations Division's (IDOD) success has been the intelligence component incorporated in Intelligence Branch, Target Development Branch and Portswatch Branch.

An 'intelligence operations cycle' (see diagram) was introduced during 1990-91 to improve the capability of each intelligence unit to complement operational functions.

The cycle commences with new information being assessed and validated by the Intelligence component.

A Selection Evaluation Committee established within IDOD monitors the progress of investigations throughout this 'cycle'.

Important as this process is in the effective fight against major drug importers, so too is the staffing of the intelligence component of IDOD.

## Investigator Development

Southern Region has introduced the process of 'grounding' new members initially in Fraud and General Crime investigations before they move into IDOD.

The process is an integral part of the development, motivation and preparation of investigators to the rigours of major crime work and serious drug importation investigations.

This longer term approach is aimed at developing a capable and balanced investigator with broad experience in the Commonwealth investigations sphere.

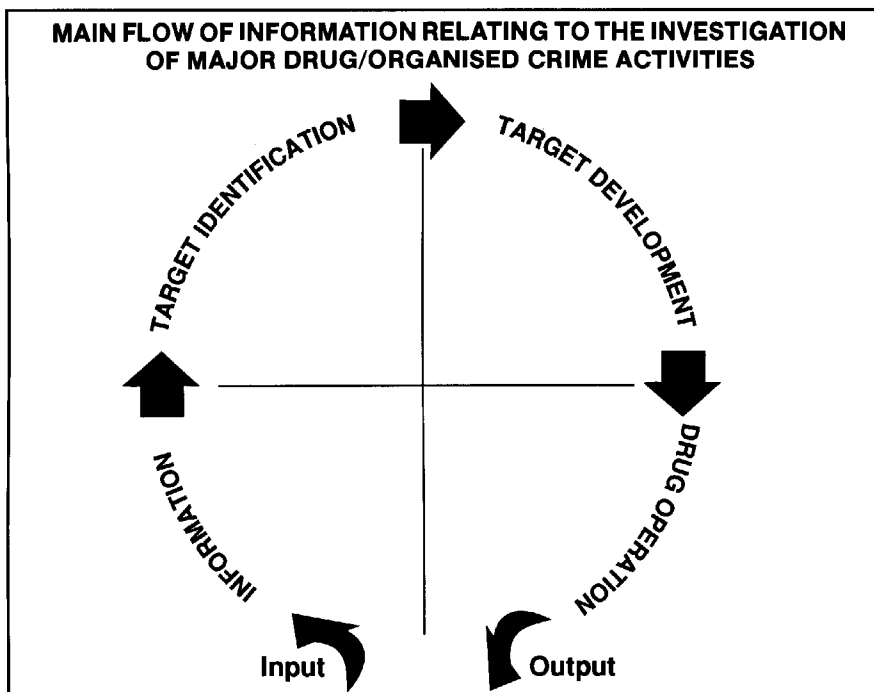
## Intelligence Branch

The Intelligence Branch has eight sub-units, each a mixture of members and staff members.

The eight units that make up the Intelligence Branch are:

- Information Evaluation Unit
- Information Development Unit
- Target Identification Unit
- Response Unit
- Special Intelligence Unit

Information is the vital ingredient in all investigations. The fundamental element to the success of any investigation is the flow of accurate, relevant and timely information that produces sound criminal intelligence.



- Cash Transaction Reports Unit
- Crime Analysis, and
- National Projects Unit.

They bring to the Branch expertise in computer operations, analytical ability and investigative skills.

One unit is headed by Detective Sergeant Doug Seymour, who has completed post-graduate studies for a Diploma in Criminology as well as a Bachelor of Arts (Criminal Justice Administration).

At 35 years, Detective Sergeant Pat Myers, who also has tertiary qualifications, supervises the activities of three units: Target ID, Response and Special Intelligence, while Greg Miller, 22, who has extensive computer skills, is an asset

to the Cash Transaction Reports Unit.

The decision to incorporate the Cash Transaction Reports Unit within the Intelligence Branch is another Southern Region initiative. This development enabled the full Cash Transaction Reports Agency (CTRA) database to be accessed by a dedicated unit, resulting in informed decisions about the worth of committing resources to an investigation.

Liaison officers from other agencies have also been positioned within the Branch, facilitating the flow of information between relevant agencies and providing an avenue to deal quickly and efficiently with any difficulties which may arise.

### Target Development Branch

The Target Development Branch provides the link between the intelligence process and operational units, focusing on the development of investigations of quality targets initially identified by the Intelligence Branch. Once a viable investigation has been confirmed, the matter is referred to an operational unit.

In mid-1989, senior management initiated a study which identified the need to improve the link between intelligence and investigative areas.

Accordingly, the Target Development Branch (TDB) was established within IDOD with the aim of further developing criminal intelligence and to provide investigative units with well-defined targets that stood a high probability of being prosecuted.

A separate TDB has recently been set up in the Fraud and General Crime Division to further develop the positive information flow between intelligence and investigative areas in that Division.

Historically there has been a gap between the intelligence gathering function and investigative areas, but the establishment of the TDB, containing members chosen for their proven abilities and skills in both intelligence and criminal investigations, has seen this gap disappear.

This initiative has seen increased results in both the quality of information gathered and targets identified.

Since its inception the Branch has chalked up an impressive list of operations and with the enthusiasm displayed by young team members, such as Detective Constables John Eyers, 23, Peter Kocalidis, 23, and Peter Kowal, 29, playing no small part in the successes which have justified its creation.

Successful operations include 'Teacup' and 'Windmill'. Operation 'Teacup' gathered information about a conspiracy to import 40kg of heroin.

The investigation into Operation 'Windmill', referred to the Branch in December 1990, resulted in the seizure of 227kg of cannabis resin (hashish) and the sentencing of three men to lengthy terms of imprisonment.



*Constable Tina Westra displays the shoes used to import high grade heroin. Note the hollowed-out sole area of the shoe on the left. The shoe on the right is also hollowed but has the insole in place.*

### Portswatch Branch

An important function of Portswatch Branch is to respond to the Passenger Automatic Selection System (PASS); however, the range of work facing the Branch requires officers to have many talents. Duties include intelligence operations, narcotics investigations and fraud and general crime investigations.

The Branch includes a Special Duties Team specialising in identifying individuals leaving Australia who may return as drug couriers.

Portswatch Branch routinely collaborates with other AFP Branches and other law enforcement agencies including the Australian Customs Service Sierra Team and Intelligence Group at Melbourne

airport and the Victoria Police.

This has resulted in the efficient and successful resolution of both response and investigative action, especially when more than one branch or service is involved.

A 'collator' position is being created in Portswatch Branch to ensure cohesion between the rotating shifts.

The Branch also gathers criminal intelligence.

One project involved identifying common aspects of drug seizures at Melbourne and Sydney airports.

The project has been active for more than 18 months and has resulted in fewer, but better quality, alerts being raised.

## **Drug Operations**

Branches One, Two and Three make up the drug investigations component of the Division.

Branch activities ensure continued and increased effectiveness and a number of major operations directed at high level organised crime targets.

Each Branch has a clearly defined role.

Branch One concentrates on long-term investigations of major sophisticated organised crime groups.

Team member, 23-year-old Constable Susan Driessen, said, "In the eight months I've worked in Branch One I've found the work interesting and the challenge really enjoyable."

Branch Two works on investigations of a medium-term nature involving drug syndicates identified by both the Intelligence and Target Development Branches.

Branch Two member Tina Westra, with only three years in the AFP, is one of the constables who arrived in the Branch from the Fraud and General Crime Division with a well developed knowledge of investigative techniques.

She was the number two case officer for an investigation into a sophisticated and well established heroin importing syndicate responsible for importing a total of 2.5kg of high grade heroin into Australia over a number of years.

The syndicate imported the narcotic to Australia from Thailand via Japan in the soles of specially designed shoes. All of the principals, including the Japanese organiser, have been arrested and charged. The majority of the Australian based syndicate members and a Japanese courier have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms while the remainder await trial.

Constable Westra received praise for her efforts and professionalism from Case Manager, Detective Superintendent Alan Hicks.

He said, "With her selfless attitude toward team work, Tina exemplifies the high standards being achieved by the young members of IDOD."

Tina said, "The most enjoyable aspect of IDOD is working on operations as a team. Without close teamwork no operation would be successfully completed."

Branch Three maintains a re-

sponse capability related to those matters that require attention 'now'.

The Branch was recently involved in one of the Region's most significant drug seizures which resulted in six arrests and the seizure of almost 13kg of high grade heroin at Melbourne airport.

The drug was concealed in the lining of suitcases which allegedly belonged to members of a tour group. The value of the seizure, about \$13 million, was the largest seizure of heroin in personal passenger luggage at any Australian airport.

### **Parcels Post - the first step**

The Parcels Post Section of Southern Region Intelligence and Drug Operations Division provides new investigators with a grounding in drug investigation work.

As a training ground it is valuable for its interesting and challenging work, while also providing the opportunity to liaise with other departments.

This was illustrated recently during the importation of narcotics in books. While examining a parcel of four books from South America, a Customs officer working at the Melbourne International Mail Exchange discovered a plastic pocket filled with white powder hidden in a recess in the back cover of one of the books. The powder was tested and found to be cocaine.

The person who collected the parcel was questioned and a subsequent search revealed counterfeit United States currency, a quantity of marijuana and two books similar to those discovered by the Customs officer. This case is an excellent example of the opportunity afforded junior members to gain expertise in a variety of AFP activities.

Younger members of the Parcels Post Section may be asked to conduct initial investigations, interview a suspected offender, prepare a brief of evidence and give evidence in a Court of Law. The Section provides a valuable training ground for junior ranks and prepares them for the rigours of larger operations, giving many of them their first exposure to the complexities and danger of drug operations.

Detective Sergeant Ken McDermott

explained, "Once you learn how to prepare a brief here in relation to a Parcels Post drug seizure, you can do it anywhere. The lessons learned in Parcels Post are applied in other areas of the AFP during a member's career. In general terms it provides for a wide range of expertise."

Members learn to analyse information and to brief other members. The experience teaches members the necessity of decision making and the confidence to act upon those decisions within the confines of the law.

The application of theoretical knowledge in the practical setting of Parcels Post provides an extremely sound foundation for the junior police members.

### **Management of serious crime**

The involvement of the Divisional Officer-in-Charge, Commander Bob McDonald, in the development of the Management of Serious Crime Course (MOSC) and the planned introduction of improved methodologies to the Southern Region will go a long way to harnessing the Region's resources.

The result has been a more structured and effective investigational processes. Commander McDonald said, "In short, MOSC is designed to challenge the way police managers approach major investigations."

"Participants are encouraged to apply a strategic approach to the problems and issues that arise during the life of major investigations."

"In summary, the principal methodologies which can be readily introduced into the workplace can be described as:

- Major Investigation Plan
- Termination Reports
- Debrief/Review Reports
- Evidence and Resource Matrix
- Security Planning, and
- Information Management Systems.

"If the methodologies are accepted and properly implemented, Southern Region will lift its professional approach to the management of major and serious investigations," Commander McDonald said.

The Intelligence and Drug Operations Division is gearing to implement the Commander's recommendations.