INFORMATION SHARING USING A STATE FUSION CENTER:
A CASE STUDY OF THE NEW JERSEY
REGIONAL OPERATIONS INTELLIGENCE CENTER

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Finally, and most importantly, thank you to my partner in life, Brad. You make me so happy every day. Unfortunately, you had to see me under incredible amounts of pressure and you took it like a champ. I am going to take some of the credit for you learning how to cook so well since I was unable to help around the house while I was writing! I will forever be indebted to you for all of your support and I can't wait to see what the future holds for us.

ABSTRACT

INFORMATION SHARING USING A STATE FUSION CENTER:
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The aftereffects from September 11, 2001, demonstrated how much the United States lacked sufficiently coordinated efforts for addressing—and even potentially preventing—this monumental tragedy. The 9/11 Commission reported that a failure of information-sharing among law-enforcement agencies was one of the many reasons for the terrorist attack. Although goodwill existed between many of the agencies, they were unable to completely assess the risk to the U.S. because information was not being shared. Fusion centers were the answer; and 72 fusion centers exist today. These centers are a collaboration between federal, state, local, and tribal authorities to improve information-gathering among public-safety entities, so that analysis can be conducted and local law-enforcement agencies can act on the resulting intelligence. Thus, the centers help local agencies become better-equipped to target crime by giving the latter the necessary tools to adopt the new intelligence-led policing (ILP) model.

Although much of the fusion center and policing literature focuses on information-sharing as a tool for intelligence-led policing, I hypothesize that focused intelligence will help promote the fusion center's goal of information-sharing and

persuade law enforcement to "buy in" to its benefits and ILP. This is necessary for fusion centers to continue to operate because they need more information from the people who interact with the public daily. However, the long history of secrecy that pervades the law enforcement community is not easy to overcome.

This dissertation offers a case study of one fusion center, the New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC), and its customers, the New Jersey municipal law enforcement community. Ethnographic methods such as participant observation, surveys, and interviews were used to discover how intelligence is disseminated and then shared within the state of New Jersey.

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Introduction

Policing across all levels of government has changed dramatically since the attack of September 11, 2001 (Carter & Carter, 2009b; Cooney, Rojek, & Kaminski, 2011). One significant addition to law enforcement in the United States has been the creation of fusion centers. These centers bring together federal, state, local, and tribal agencies in a physical space where information can be shared and analyzed and where contextualized information, now called intelligence, is disseminated to local law enforcement. While the terms "information" and "intelligence" are often used interchangeably, this does not apply within law enforcement. Information is raw data.[1] Action is rarely taken based simply on information. In contrast, under law-enforcement protocols, intelligence is increasingly relied upon and expected to direct and lead operations. Intelligence is created when context is provided. As Palmieri (2005) has noted, "corroboration must be supplied; value must be added to this raw information. The major component of the process that turns raw information into something useful is analysis; the product is intelligence."

Despite the existence of a fusion center in every state, due to security limitations, very little research has been conducted on these centers, how they operate, or how information is shared between members of different agencies. Fortunately, I was able to gain access and observe the actions of the analysts and employees of the New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center (hereafter the ROIC), using participant

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[1] Information "includes any data about people, organizations, events, incidents, or objects, regardless of the medium in which it exists. Information received by law enforcement agencies can be categorized into four general areas: general data, including investigative information; tips and leads data; suspicious activity reports; and criminal intelligence information" (NJ ROIC, n.d., pp. 29-30).

observation, surveys, and interviews to examine this center and the local law-enforcement agencies it serves.

First, I observed the ROIC employees to determine how information is shared at the most general level and to understand how the information and intelligence are disseminated. To study intelligence dissemination, I studied the Common Operating Picture (COP). The daily COP is a bulletin which describes the threat environment for the state of New Jersey. It is a descriptive bulletin sent out every 24 hours which contains "little or no predictive or judgmental analysis" (Mackay & Ratcliffe, 2004, p. 148). I then interviewed police officers across the state of New Jersey to determine the amount of and degree to which and how much information local agencies share with each other and with the fusion center.

I conclude that fusion centers work, but only to a certain point. Many local law enforcement agencies are not sharing information with the ROIC. Whether they see merit in the ROICs' products is determined by the amount of contact law enforcement had with the center on a day-to-day basis.

Fusion centers serve not only to disseminate intelligence, but also to help police agencies across the country implement a model within their organizations called intelligence-led policing (ILP) (GIWG, 2003). While this term has varied definitions, Carter and Carter (2009b) define it as "the collection and analysis of information related to crime and conditions that contribute to crime, resulting in an actionable intelligence product intended to aid law enforcement in developing tactical responses to threats and/or strategic planning related to emerging or changing threats" (p. 317). Information-sharing is an important component of ILP and predicting future crimes. To implement this model,

the intelligence must be used to direct the actions of public safety personnel (Peterson, 2005, p. vii).

It is vital that organizations share information. As Baker & Thomas (2010) point out with respect to information that is unknown, "what one cannot observe and receive feedback from acts as the principal deterrent to effective leadership and decision-making. Enhanced communication allows leaders to observe by achieving a proper feedback loop that includes police leaders, analysts, officers, and other customers" (p. 22). A robust feedback loop is required to receive and analyze the most accurate information in order to create an actionable intelligence product. A resulting product is intelligence that can be acted upon by decision makers.

Current popular models of policing, on the other hand, include not only ILP, but also problem-solving policing and community-oriented policing. While ILP is not a complete paradigm shift from these models, which are used by the majority of police agencies,[2] it is essential in the modern era of policing to deal with the multijurisdictional problems, such as information-sharing, that many police agencies face today. Fusion centers help combat the problem of failed information-sharing and make ILP more accessible at local levels of public safety.

A fusion center is defined as a "collaborative effort of two or more agencies that provide resources, expertise, and information to the center with the goal of maximizing their ability to detect, prevent, investigate and respond to criminal and terrorist activity" (GIWG, 2005, p. 2). The essence of fusion "is the integration and analysis of existing

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[2] While many police agencies are reactive, responding to 911 calls, some authors see many similarities between ILP and Community and Problem-Oriented Policing (COP) (Carter & Carter, 2009b, McGarrell, Freilich & Chermak, 2007).

streams of information and intelligence for actionable public policy ends—be they counterterrorism, broader counter-crime issues, or natural disaster response" (Rollins, 2008, pp. 10-11). In principle, if the information is analyzed more purposefully, the resulting end product will be a more targeted collection of new intelligence that could potentially thwart the plans of sophisticated criminal groups.

Moreover, while fusion centers were created in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, their scope has now expanded. Many centers are now "all-crimes" or "all hazards" (Masse, O'Neil, & Rollins, 2007, p. 21), which means they seek information to create intelligence on any and all crimes and dangers that presently or will have the potential to affect public safety. Cooney et al. (2011) point to three different reasons for this change. First, the fusion centers were created to prevent the types of communication breaks that occurred on 9/11, when normal officer behavior could have produced information that would have uncovered links to terrorism. Second, state and local law enforcement agencies face additional threats to public safety. These agencies recognize the need for intelligence-led policing in these areas as well. Finally, "adopting an 'all crimes' approach was an important mechanism for gaining the support from fusion center stakeholders" (Cooney et al., p. 5).[3]

Despite changing the focus to include "all crimes," the decentralized law-enforcement model, of which the fusion center is a part, still makes serving the law-enforcement community very difficult. A fusion center does not answer to police agencies; nor do the agencies answer to the center. Rather, a fusion center is an optional

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[3] This was also noted in Joyal's (2010) recent qualitative study of four fusion centers. Interviews with center participants revealed the need for "services and products that address their user's needs and concerns in a timely manner" (Joyal, p. 74). Joyal's study will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 3.

resource for many local law-enforcement agencies. The center does, however, obtain most of its funding from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). As an entity of the DHS, it is an organization (a subsystem) within the larger (containing) system of law enforcement.

Therefore, when examining a fusion center as a complex organization, one must first formulate an analysis of the current configuration, sometimes referred to as the "mess" in organizational dynamics (Ackoff, 1981). This involves identifying the parts (the different agencies and/or people represented at the fusion center) and examining how they function on their own and in interaction with each other.

Understanding the workings of the fusion center may not reveal a solution to a complex organizational system problem. Implementation of a satisfactory adjustment commonly requires changes in the containing system of law enforcement within which the center is only one subsystem. Nevertheless, an extensive descriptive analysis of the center and its relationship with local police agencies is essential for beginning the process.

Question and Hypothesis

What follows is a portrait of one of the 72 fusion centers in the U.S., the most tangible catalyst of ILP developed after 9/11. This study is unique because, until now, researchers have never been permitted to spend much time observing fusion-center personnel to see what really occurs. Rather, studies have described the fusion center model and examined its general utility based on interviews or surveys (Ratcliffe & Walden, 2010; Joyal, 2010; Cooney et al., 2011). Beginning with a micro-level analysis of the ROIC and the flow of information and intelligence in New Jersey facilitates an

understanding of the elements that improve this process. Certainly, one forward-looking result is the potential to classify the elements of good information-sharing for future large-scale studies.

This dissertation seeks to add to the ILP literature by asking how this model can inspire and elicit information-sharing. While collaboration or information-sharing is seen as necessary for ILP, the literature does not elaborate on how, in fact, it can actively encourage information-sharing. By examining the flow of intelligence within and between the fusion center and local police agencies, this study will examine how fusion centers convey the necessary information and intelligence to public-safety planners (GIWG, 2003, p. v) and thus motivate police officers to share information with the fusion center.

For ILP to be effective, information—and, when possible, intelligence—must be collected from every possible source and not only be sent from the fusion center down to the local levels but also be sent back to the center so the analysis may be more robust. Therefore, if the ROIC is disseminating targeted intelligence that helps apprehend criminals and solve crimes, agencies will be more motivated to share information with the center and, by extension, with other police agencies. In turn, the center will be able to share information of value to other agencies across the state. If, however, the ROIC is disseminating information or intelligence that does not add value to daily police work, then agencies will not see the importance of sending information to the center for the purpose of sharing. Information–sharing, therefore, must first occur at the ROIC.

The first chapter explores the daily activities, people, and relationships at the New Jersey ROIC through participant observation to determine whether information-sharing is

occurring and how it has been institutionalized, both formally and informally at the fusion center. After nine months of observation, I found that the ROIC had created an open and friendly environment that was conducive to dialogue among all of its employees, which could help to institutionalize valuable information-sharing. This is an important first step before examining the flow of intelligence, because the fusion center personnel need to work well together to manage the information collected there for analysis and dissemination.

The second chapter analyzes one of the ROIC's most prominent intelligence products—the Common Operating Picture (COP) bulletin—to determine whether the intelligence sent out daily has value for local law enforcement. I sought to determine what proportion of ROIC information consumers—the New Jersey law enforcement community—actually read the bulletin and, of that group, what proportion believe the intelligence is useful. This is important to ILP because police officers need to be aware of, read, and use the products that the ROIC disseminates to guide police action.

Using survey data and interviews with municipal police, I determined that the COP is a useful tool but in need of improvement. I found that between 25% and 60% of the recipients currently read the COP. One of their criticisms was that the ROIC analysts need to link significant national and international events to what is occurring in New Jersey. Police departments want to know how large-scale occurrences can affect them, what new forms of crime they may encounter, and finally, how to keep their officers safe. Most importantly, the COP could be more effective if it were sent to a thorough and completely up-to-date list of law-enforcement bureaus and agencies via at least one designated representative for each.

The third and final chapter tests the hypothesis by evaluating the current information-sharing environment among local police agencies in New Jersey and the ROIC's macro-level overseer role in facilitating communication and aiding these agencies. In addition to their role as analysts, fusion centers collect information from the local agencies to discern and discover connections and patterns that emerge across county lines that individual agencies may not be able identify on their own. I therefore, investigated how municipal agencies share information with one another and with the ROIC. My analysis revealed that this center needs to focus on encouraging information-sharing among municipal agencies and with the center.

At present, police from smaller police departments in southern New Jersey are unaware of the ROIC's capabilities. Therefore, as hypothesized, they are less likely to share information with the center. Furthermore, police from agencies that have benefited from a previous relationship with the ROIC, view the center as having value and are more likely to share information.

Finally, I will summarize my findings and make recommendations for the ROIC based on these results. I will also discuss how these findings may be applied more generally, as all fusion centers have the same mission. No study is without its limitations, which I will discuss before suggesting some possible areas for future research.

A Case Study of the New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC)

The New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC, pronounced "rock") is the fusion center for the entire state. Located in Ewing, outside of Trenton, it is managed by the New Jersey State Police. Opened in January 2007, it is the state's

intelligence hub. It also serves as the "home for the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management and the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC)" and as the "command center for all state-led emergency response operations, such as natural disasters, chemical or nuclear emergencies, or terror alerts" (New Jersey State League of Municipalities, n.d.). Key public-safety officials gathered at the EOC during Hurricane Irene on August 27, 2011, to avoid the lack of preparation and mismanagement that occurred during 2005's Hurricane Katrina, one of the deadliest hurricanes in U.S. history.

> The stated mission of the ROIC is:
>
> > to interface with the New Jersey law enforcement community, and other law enforcement and homeland security agencies, by being a primary point of contact for collection, evaluation, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence data and criminal background information in a timely and effective manner in order to detect and/or prevent criminal or terrorist activity, and to solve crimes. (NJ ROIC, n.d., p. 1)

The privacy policy, which discloses how the ROIC gathers and uses information, enumerates several goals that include actively participating in the Information-Sharing Environment (ISE), increasing public safety and mitigating threats, protecting privacy rights, fostering relationships to "promote cooperation between law enforcement and the community which it serves," and making "the most effective use of public safety resources" (NJ ROIC, p. 1). The ROIC has no plans to develop new databases; it utilizes current databases in the law-enforcement arena such as the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) 2000, the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), and the Motor Vehicle Commission's Driver's Registry.

The ROIC prepares intelligence reports for the New Jersey law-enforcement community by gathering information from its many partners co-located at the center, including federal partnerships with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the

Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE), state partnerships with the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJ OHSP), and the New Jersey State Department of Corrections, as well as regional partners that include the New York City Police Department (see Table 1.1). In addition, the ROIC receives information from Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) that are called into the center by concerned citizens and police officers. SARs are "official documentation of observed behavior reasonably indicative of preoperational planning related to terrorism or other criminal activity" (NJ ROIC, n.d., p. 38). Once the information is verified from all sources, the center uses this information as a resource in order to analyze and disseminate accurate and timely intelligence to local police agencies across the state.

Table 1.1

Partnerships at the ROIC

Federal	*State*	*Local*
Federal Bureau of Investigation	New Jersey State Police	Essex County Prosecutor's Office
Department of Homeland Security	New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness	Newark Police Department
Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms	New Jersey Department of Corrections	Jersey City Police Department
Immigration and Customs Enforcement/Homeland Security Investigations	New Jersey Probation and Parole	Paterson Police Department
National Crime Information Center	New Jersey Fire Service	Camden Police Department
Customs and Border Patrol	New Jersey Treasury	Ocean County Prosecutor's Office
Secret Service		
Diplomatic Security Service		

The Analysis Element is the ROIC division that creates and distributes targeted intelligence data and where all observations within the center were conducted for this study. There are three programs within the Analysis Element: the Threat Analysis Program, the Crime Analysis North Program, and the Crime Analysis South Program. The Threat Analysis Program is further subdivided into desks, including the Threat Watch Desk, the Warning Desk, the Critical Infrastructure Desk, and the Safe Passage Desk. The Crime Analysis North and South Programs each have a Geo-Spatial Mapping Desk, a Threat/Warning Desk, and a Production Desk (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1

Structure of the ROIC[4]

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                         Analysis Element
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Threat Analysis Program   Crime Analysis North    Crime Analysis South
                              Program                 Program

Threat Watch Desk      Geospatial Mapping Desk   Geospatial Mapping Desk

Warning Desk              Threat/Warning Desk      Threat/Warning Desk

Critical Infrastructure Desk  Production Desk        Production Desk

Safe Passage Desk
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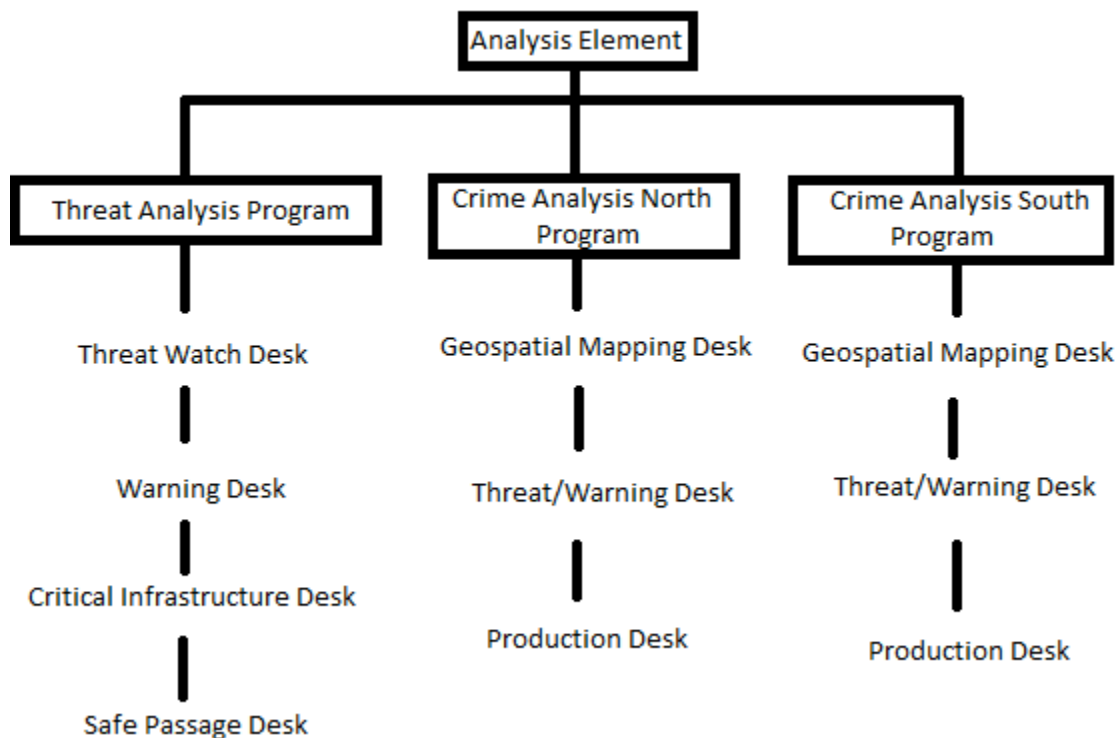
[4] Source: Provided by Dan Engelhardt, Analysis Element, Assistant Unit Head of the NJ ROIC, August 17, 2010

The main goal of the Threat Analysis Program is to identify viable threats and apprise the New Jersey law enforcement community. The Threat Watch Desk, within the Threat Analysis Program, has the most contact with the public and is where most of the collaborative efforts of the different agencies occur. This desk, which serves New Jersey law enforcement in general, is tasked with disseminating the daily COP bulletins and occasionally completes threat, incident, or event assessments. These assessments are produced only when a significant incidents occur or are being planned which involve a potential nexus to homeland security and/or terrorism, potential deployment of law enforcement resources and high visibility. For example, the recent attempted bombing in Portland, Oregon (Denson, 2010), generated an incident assessment. In the assessment in which the ROIC informed the community of the incident and its history and whether it had any ties to New Jersey. In addition, the center recommends courses of action that are intended to help prevent such incidents from occurring.

The main task of the Crime Analysis North and South Programs is to analyze and map crimes throughout northern and southern New Jersey. Analysts primarily gather information on gun seizures shooting hit incidents in an effort to identify "problem people" and "problem places", i.e. hot spots of criminal activity. This analyzed information, or criminal intelligence is then used to develop the New Jersey Pins on Paper (POP) reports. In these reports, local police can then see exactly where much of the crime is occurring, who is committing these crimes, and if there are any cross-jurisdictional issues and apply resources and target operations accordingly. The POP reports play a key role for local police departments that may not have in-house analysts. At present, the reports are sent to a specific law enforcement listserv. Optimally, they

should be sent to the more comprehensive distribution list that is being suggested for the COP. Finally, they are also uploaded to the NCIC and a message is posted on the ROIC's intranet indicating their availability for download.

The Crime Analysis North and South Programs are also tasked with providing analyses of specific events or people. The Person of Strategic Interest (PSI) Package, a customer-specific creation, is an in-depth analysis of an individual designated as a person of strategic interest. The package outlines the person's associates, vehicles, addresses, etc., to give law enforcement a visual and tangible aid in criminal investigations. Other ad hoc requests include background checks, indice checks, Be On the Look Out for (BOLOs) bulletins, Officer Safety alerts, current intelligence products, and briefings.

The Production Desk is another arm of both Crime Analysis Programs. Its contribution to the ROIC's mission takes the form of a Weekly Shooting Environment Comparative Statistics Report, which covers information from several cities in New Jersey. The target audience for this information includes allied partners in these cities, particularly state and local police. This report summarizes shooting incidents that occurred over the previous week and compares them both geospatially and statistically to the previous year's numbers for the same week. Other statistics are available through similar reports that cover 28 days and the year to date.

Before analyzing information-sharing in New Jersey, it is important to understand the state's historical and geographic background. This will help to explain the disparate needs of the many police departments and the difficulty of producing an intelligence product that meets the needs of all of them.

New Jersey presents a unique case study. With a population of 8,791,894 in 2010, it is the most densely populated state in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Despite this density, according to the 2006 Census Estimate, New Jersey currently has only 5 cities with populations greater than 100,000, only 2 of which are greater than 200,000 (U.S. Census Bureau). This is due in part to the fact that all 7,354 square miles of land comprise 566 municipalities (U.S. Census Bureau). This means that some municipalities are as small as a neighborhood. For example, while Long Beach Island is 18 miles in length and less than a mile wide, it contains 6 different municipalities, each with its own police department (Long Beach Island Summers, 2009).

To help understand the population spread across the state, three maps of New Jersey with city populations are included in Appendix A. They show that most of the cities with a population greater than 6,000 are clustered around either New York City in the north or Philadelphia in the south. Northern New Jersey has more urban/suburban cities. In fact, the six cities in New Jersey with the greatest population are all in the northern part. Smaller cities, towns, and villages with 1,000-6,000 residents are only slightly more evenly spread throughout the state, but are still clustered along the eastern shoreline and around Philadelphia. The 27 "very small towns" with less than 1,000 residents are spread evenly throughout the state. This is notable because crime trends may differ in different parts of the state. Rural communities may not have the same crime fears as a larger city outside Philadelphia or New York City, and these differences may affect the type of information the respective police departments find useful.

How the importance of crimes is ranked by various New Jersey cities thus varies greatly. A car theft may receive much attention in one city but far less in a larger city that

has a high homicide rate. These differences have grown even more pronounced since the downturn in the economy, as police agencies across New Jersey have been affected by budget cuts. Many cities have been forced to make personnel cuts in order to close budget gaps. CNN reported that Camden was forced to lay off nearly half of its police force (CNN Wire Staff, 2011). Paterson, the third largest city, laid off a quarter of its force (Putney, 2011). Other cities—including Trenton, Newark, and West Orange—with significant populations have also had to lay off police officers (CBS New York, 2011; Reed, 2011; Zdan, 2011). Smaller police agencies have avoided lay-offs by cutting budgets in areas other than personnel—for example, by not replacing out-dated equipment

Anecdotally, the population spread is not the only difference between northern and southern New Jersey. Residents in the north seem to align themselves with New York City, while those in the south identify themselves as living in suburbs of Philadelphia. Central New Jersey tends to be grouped together with northern New Jersey. As will be seen later, I categorized the interviews into two groups according to northern/central New Jersey and southern New Jersey, not only because of the population spread, but also because many of the police officers believe their crime problems are a product of spill-over from either New York City or Philadelphia.

Despite the relatively small size of New Jersey, according to data from the FBI, three cities are ranked in the top 26 most dangerous cities in the United States: Camden in southern New Jersey, Trenton in Central New Jersey, and Newark in northern New Jersey (CQ Press, 2010).

Methodology

With limited research on fusion centers, a case study is helpful to "reveal patterns and designs that pervade the larger picture" (Davidman, 1991, p. 27). While the ROIC is only 1 of 72 fusion centers across the country, it must be seen as part of a general pattern of how law enforcement has attempted to increase communication across its different levels because it has been recognized by the DHS as one of the most exemplary fusion centers. Ethnography, the principal methodology I employed, in the form of participant observation, guided my actions and observations over an eighteen- month period. On average, I visited the ROIC twice a week to observe and understand how the employees worked together and shared information.

Participant observation can be defined as "that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, either openly in the role of researcher or covertly in some disguised role, observing things that happen, listening to what is said, and questioning people, over some length of time" (Becker & Geer, 1957, p. 28). Becker and Geer called this "the most complete form of the sociological datum" because of the method by which the participant observer gathers information: "An observation of some social event, the events which precede and follow it, and explanations of its meaning by participants and spectators, before, during, and after its occurrence" (p. 28).

For this research, I observed employees' interactions at the ROIC and attempted to understand the subtleties and consequences of the daily routine. I also asked the employees how they thought information-sharing occurred at the center. The final product is an ethnography detailing a day at the ROIC.

During my data-collection phase, I observed and recorded significant interactions among employees, where I believed information-sharing would be occurring. I also attended some of the daily meetings and provided periodic updates about my research. In addition, I was permitted to speak with other employees about their work. After I was first introduced to the group, it was very easy to talk to people, as my cubicle was in front of the long hallway that ran the length of the office. Many of the employees were eager to speak with me. As time passed and my interactions became friendlier, I sometimes found it difficult to maintain a purely sociological perspective. Schwartz and Schwartz (1955) believed that participant observation data can be distorted as a result of bias or because of affective participation in which the observers "inevitably become involved in and with the observed's emotional life" (p. 350). However, the increasing level of trust I experienced from the ROIC employees provided valuable information about the various interactions at the center.

I gained access to the ROIC through personal contacts and proposed my project to the center's leadership. After I received their approval but before I was able to begin my study, however, the leadership changed, and I had to re-initiate the process. Two of the more senior employees, who firmly believed my project could benefit the center, advocated for me, and I was again given access once the ROIC leadership and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This document formally and legally assured the center that I would not publish any private information that could harm the ROIC, its employees, or its customers or otherwise negatively affect its mission. It also acknowledged my understanding of my ethical responsibilities as a researcher and doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania.

I was given a card that allowed me to enter the facilities at my convenience and was assigned a cubicle with a desk where I could do my work. I was invited to many of the meetings and was privy to much of the information that many of the ROIC employees saw. I was excluded from the meetings that required a higher clearance level, but these were few and far between.

The second strategy I used was a written survey with open-ended and multiple-choice questions (see Appendix B) that I sent to the 2,500 people on the COP listserv to determine law enforcement's opinions of the COP. This effort yielded a response rate of 12.5%. The results can be interpreted, therefore, as representing those who read the COP and are most invested in the bulletin.

Finally, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews in 2 stages with 21 law-enforcement agents—selected at random from the COP listserv—who were located throughout New Jersey. The questions that helped guide the interviews appear in Appendix C. Stratification was abstracted from the initial listserv because the e-mail addresses did not establish the location of each officer. I had hoped to conduct random interviews with 12 people from southern New Jersey and 12 people from central and northern New Jersey. I also sought to include at least one person from one of the 10 largest cities in the state or a high-crime city. I sent initial e-mails to 19 people. I then made follow-up phone calls to those had not responded within one week. I scheduled 13 interviews at the respondents' places of employment. The other six people I tried to

contact did not return phone calls or e-mails.[5] The initial 13 interviews comprised more

southern New Jersey police officers than northern/central New Jersey officers.

Therefore, in stage 2 I scheduled interviews with police officers in cities that are

considered to be northern or central New Jersey, high-crime cities, or larger population

city. To schedule these interviews, I asked my contacts at the ROIC to help me, as cold-

calling or e-mailing police officers from the COP listserv was not garnering enough

responses.[6] I was thus able to interview two people from two of New Jersey's 10 most

populous cities, which are also two of the 10 most crime-ridden cities in the state. I

scheduled six additional interviews, resulting in a total of 11 interviews in southern New

Jersey counties and 10 interviews with police officers from central and northern New

Jersey.[7] Table 1.2 shows the characteristics of the interviewees based on the locations of

their departments (northern/central or southern), the types of cities (urban, suburban, or

rural), and the interviewees' positions in their respective police forces (upper-level

management, middle-level management, or first-line supervisor and patrol).

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[5] Lack of response was more likely due to their schedules than their discretion in sharing negative thoughts about the ROIC with the researcher. The center has no authority over the local police agencies. In fact, I found that many police officers were very comfortable telling me how little they knew about or used the ROIC.

[6] Asking the ROIC for specific names of people to contact enhanced this the study because I was able to interview people who had a broader variety of experiences with the center. Many of the police contacts I made through ROIC employees knew more about the center and its capabilities and, therefore, enabled me to understand more about who uses the ROIC. I do not believe their responses were biased, since all were informed that the final product would be anonymous.

[7] Twenty-four cases were originally thought to be sufficient in order to have at least twelve cases in each of the two cells: northern/central New Jersey and southern New Jersey. The interviewees were categorized according to their location in the state because of the concentration of more urban cities in the northern half of the state and the need to understand communication across all the cities in New Jersey, urban to suburban, rural to urban, etc. It was also important to interview as many police officers from different counties as possible because the quality of communication seemed to depend on the county. Twenty-one cases were found to be sufficient, however, because I had confirmatory evidence from more than two cases for the main topics of the study and no new findings had been uncovered in the last five interviews.

Table 1.2
Descriptive statistics of interviewees

	North/Central	South	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Upper	Middle	Firstline Supervisor/Patrol
1	x		x			x		
2	x		x			x		
3	x			x		x		
4	x		x					x
5	x		x	x			x	
6	x		x	x				
7	x			x			x	
8	x			x			x	
9	x			x		x		
10	x			x		x	x	
11		x			x		x	
12		x		x			x	
13		x		x	x			x
14		x		x				x
15		x		x				x
16		x		x			x	
17		x		x		x		
18		x	x	x				x
19		x		x				x
20		x		x			x	
21		x		x			x	

The first question posed in the first chapter was: Do people who represent different public safety departments share information with one another? The answer to this question has far-reaching consequences. The lack of communication among law-enforcement agencies was blamed for 9/11 and set in motion the creation of the fusion centers. To be effective and successful—i.e., to send out targeted intelligence—information-sharing must start from within the ROIC itself. If the center has not created an environment to institutionalize information-sharing among its partners within its physical space, then the products it disseminates will not be as well-informed as they

could be. As noted earlier, what is not known, perhaps from a lack of sharing, can be detrimental to decision-making. The following is an ethnographic study of the Analysis Element. The central question of the chapter is: Has information-sharing been institutionalized within the ROIC?

First, I will present my data in the form of an ethnographic view of a typical day at the ROIC. This will include an examination of the physical space, the people who work there, and their thoughts about information-sharing. I will then discuss the formal structure of the programs within the ROIC. Next, I will present the theoretical literature regarding the importance of collaboration, the history of secrecy within law enforcement, and how to institutionalize a policy of information-sharing. Finally, I will discuss how I concluded that information-sharing has, indeed, been institutionalized at the ROIC.

Chapter 1

A Day in the Life of the ROIC: Institutionalizing Information-sharing

The Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC) is situated in the rear of the New Jersey State Police (NJSP) Headquarters campus property. The entrance to the building is guarded by NJSP security. Once in the building, the Analysis Element where the employees work and meet is located behind a card-accessed door at the back of the building. Before reaching the Analysis Element office, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) can be seen. This is the area of the ROIC where representatives from all agencies would convene if a natural, chemical or terrorist emergency were to occur. Each representative has access to their own computer terminal and a telephone. All of the desks face the front of the room where there is a stage and a large screen projecting updates.

When I walked into the Analysis Element for the official start of my participant observation, I first noticed that it was now located in a different room than the one I had observed on the first occasion that I had seen the Analysis Element. During my talk with the past director of the ROIC only months earlier, I was given a tour of the ROIC and was able to speak to some of the employees. The room that originally housed the Analysis Element of the ROIC had cubicles with high walls that were at least 6 feet tall and signs that came down from the ceiling which directed one to the agency he/she wished to contact. At that time, the only place that seemed to be available for conversation with employees was a small table located in the middle of the room. It would have been difficult for sustained conversation because people frequently passed in

and out of the space. The only other spaces for meetings were large conference rooms outside the office.

The room that I observed during my second and consequent visits had a far more open feeling. Figure 1.2 is a pictorial representation of the Analysis Element of the ROIC. Card-access opened a door that led into a long hallway. Cubicles, with walls that were roughly 3.5 feet high, populated the large open space with the exception of four offices in the middle of the room which housed some of the more senior employees at the ROIC. Televisions broadcasting local and national news were spaced around the large room. A large space with a long rectangular table was positioned between the offices and was used primarily for meetings. The cubicles formed a U-shape around the 4 offices and meeting space which also served as a lunch spot and a place for the employees to get their coffee in the morning.

Figure 1.2

Pictorial representation of Analysis Element of the ROIC
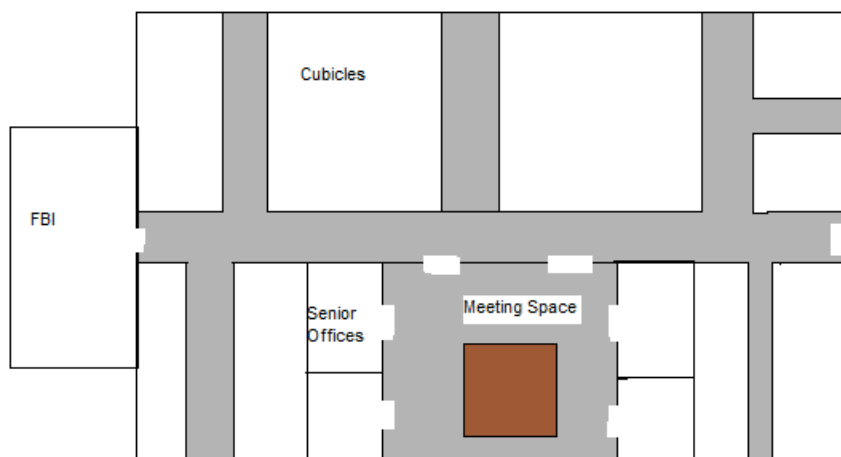
The only office which has been sectioned off was the Sensitive Compartmentalized Information Facility (SCIF). A SCIF is an area of a building used to process Sensitive Compartmentalized Information (SCI) level classified information, a higher level of classified information that some employees at the ROIC do not have. It was my experience that the FBI and DHS used the room more frequently than other partners. The SCIF is a separate room past the cubicles. The door is closed when meetings are in progress or when analysts are using the facility to access SCI.

The offices in the middle of the room that house the more senior employees were always open; I rarely passed the offices when the doors were closed. In fact, some of the employees walked in and out of the offices in order to use the computers in those offices because of some of the programs on the computers. Very late in my observation period, one of the FBI agents moved into the office. One of the NJSP supervisors informed me that it was the ROIC's way of recognizing the FBI's significant involvement in the fusion center endeavor.

The openness of the room makes it possible for everyone to see one other and to easily carry on conversations. This seems to foster a comfortable atmosphere among the many employees as evidenced by the environment where off-the-cuff banter is frequent. I often observed some of the employees gathering around one person's desk to engage in non-work-related conversation. More evidence of the comfortable atmosphere could be seen in the amount of extracurricular paraphernalia hanging on cubicle walls. For instance, one state police trooper was known to be an avid hunter and sports fan in his free time. The trooper was thus showed pictures of himself in camouflage or hung memorabilia from his favorite sports team.

Conversations at the ROIC are rarely private; often, others join a conversation by turning their chair or peaking over the cubicle so that they can participate, too. I experienced how public and open conversations could be when I spoke with one of the employees. Our initial conversation was about my dissertation, but our conversation then turned to what I wanted to do after receiving my Ph.D. As I discussed my goals, I mentioned that my husband worked for the government. A nearby employee asked if my husband knew a particular person and the conversation expanded to include this employee as well.

Daily Routine of the ROIC

The workday does not begin at the same time for all of the employees but most arrive at the ROIC by 8:00 A.M. Employees cull through e-mails, internet and print news, and databases to find out what crimes have occurred in the past 24 or 72 hours on Mondays. This is the time when the Analysis Element is the quietest. I often walked in before the 9:30 meetings and was very surprised by the calmness of the morning. People worked very diligently to gather information from the night or weekend before in order to present it at meetings. No one was distracted by the televisions around them nor were they engaged in conversation.

At their desks, the partners looked through their work databases and identified information streams to see if anything has occurred that could have a connection to or impact on New Jersey. While each agency has its own mission and concerns, the representatives who work at the fusion center contribute to the precision and wide-angle perspective that the ROIC attempts to create. For example, I interviewed one of the two

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Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) representatives at the ROIC who come in once a week. It is the job of the ICE representative to cross reference all of the names of the people who have been involved in shootings in New Jersey with those in their database to see if the same person appears in their system. She obtains the names from one of the analysts at the ROIC after the daily meeting. If any of the names are in her database, she informs an analyst or supervisor of what kind of visa they are on, when they came to the country and any other important information that she finds. The representative is not able to give this information if it is an active, open case for ICE, but she can still put the ROIC in contact with the case agent for an active case.

There are three FBI employees employed at the ROIC from the Newark and Philadelphia offices, all of whom I interviewed and/or observed regularly. They include two agents and an intelligence analyst; all three FBI employees have access to top-secret databases to which many employees at the ROIC do not have access. I interviewed the FBI analyst and asked how she decides what information to report on in the daily huddle. She stated that she tries to report on anything that could impact law enforcement and private sector security operations and planning in New Jersey. Furthermore, she noted it was not often the case that she felt that she had information that could prove important but could not share it with her colleagues because she had a higher level of clearance. On the rare occasion when this did occur, she shared what information she could with others at the ROIC and shared other parts of it with the employees who did have the necessary clearance.

After reading through reports on events and databases, the Threat Analysis program and the Crime Analysis North and South meet separately at 9:30 A.M. to review

the events of the past 24-72 hours.[8] Just before the meeting, employees from the Crime Analysis North and South programs meet in the Analysis Element's meeting space in the office while those employees in the Threat Program walk down the hall to a separate location in another conference room. This arrangement has actually worked to the advantage of the Threat Program as it has encouraged camaraderie among members of the group because the long hallway allows the employees to converse socially on their way to the meeting. I often heard employees talking about what they did over the past weekend; sometimes it involved physical activities like running. Friendly banter about the football teams was a very popular topic after a Sunday football game in the fall. The walk back to the office involved more business-related remarks about something that was just presented on the 9:30 meeting.

The 9:30 meetings are convened around a large, circular table and begin with a roll call. One of the more senior employees calls out the name of the agency for which there is a partner present. Partners in the Threat Analysis Program, the FBI, DHS, Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS), crime-mapping agents, New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) take turns to report on significant events. If there are any classified documents for which a special clearance is necessary, the agent who has the information will give a brief description of the information and inform the other personnel that he will share what he can with them if they think the information would be valuable to them.

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[8] As mentioned in the introduction, the Threat Program, Crime Analysis North and Crime Analysis South programs are all programs in the Analysis Element. Figure 1.1 is a diagram of the different programs and desks in the Analysis Element.

This is also the time when people are able to ask questions to learn what other personnel may have heard. For example, on one occasion an employee of the ROIC said that fake calls to restaurants from the sanitation department had been reported. He asked some of the people in the partner agencies if they had ever heard of this practice and to see if a pattern was emerging. In other cases, I observed one of the employees asking the FBI or DHS representatives who have a higher clearance and access to more databases to complete a search on a particular topic. I never saw anyone deny this request. Instead, I heard many of the partner agencies offer their services even before they were asked to do so.

Towards the end of my observation, I noticed a new effort to extend the reach and impact of information that was shared. During the 9:30 meeting, one of the senior managers started taking notes. Although management had always taken notes, this time, after everyone had contributed to the meeting, the manager gave out tasks to the ROIC analysts who were in charge of particular areas of the state. The manager made connections between what had just been said and possible future targets or sources of information. He then asked the analysts to either investigate a particular incident or to get in touch with one of their contacts at the local police departments to see if they could find more information regarding the person or incident.

One of the most interesting partnerships evident at the Threat Program meeting includes the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJ DHSS). Though this may not seem immediately relevant to the ROIC's responsibilities, it is an important link since the NJ DHSS is able to pass information about drugs or illnesses that may affect the criminal world. For example, the NJ DHSS representative once learned of a

contaminated supply of a specific illegal drug. He made sure to find out how to notify police and health officials as the contaminated supply could be brought to New Jersey and would most likely make drug-users ill. Another area in the criminal arena that the health liaison plugs into is the sharing of information regarding the cost to medical facilities for shooting victims at New Jersey hospitals and trauma centers. In this way, the fusion center is able to provide specific information to law enforcement and state government decision-makers on the bottom line cost of shooting incidents to New Jersey taxpayers, thereby raising the profile of the problem in this era of fiscal challenges.

In addition to the people at the ROIC, the Threat Analysis Program also connects with the National Operations Center (NOC) via teleconference. The NOC can be described as a national fusion center where agencies from all over the country, including large metropolitan cities, have representatives. The ROIC has a representative there who is able to share information he has gathered from the other 35 federal, state, territorial, tribal, local and private sector agencies present at the NOC. By having a representative at there, the ROIC ensures that they are receiving the most up-to-date information from across the U.S. They are also able to utilize the personal relationships that their representative has developed through the NOC in order to contact other agencies that are not represented at the ROIC.

Finally, the ROIC also has a number of guests who are temporarily assigned there. A number of factors determine who will come for a temporary duty; these factors include funding availability, need of both the ROIC and the partner agency for the relationship, and current crime distribution. The Essex County Prosecutor's Office sent 2 employees to share their information and bring back information from across the state that could be

useful in finding out why "carjackings had recently soared." The majority of the carjackings took place in Essex County in northern New Jersey, an area which includes Newark, the largest city in the state. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, after just three weeks, one of the employees had to return to the prosecutor's office. Partnerships like this allow the fusion center to target a particular crime trend that they see occurring. It is a beneficial relationship for both agencies as the center receives up-to-date information from the representative, while the guest and his supervisors are assured that additional resources are being directed to them. In fact, the ROIC has found their partnership with Essex County Prosecutor's Office to be so helpful that they have now started considering partnerships with the employees from the other 20 counties in New Jersey.

At 10:00 A.M. the whole Analysis Element gathers in the conference area for the daily huddle. The huddle includes everyone without exception. The secretary of the Analysis Element quietly takes roll. It appears that everyone attends not only to give their input but also to listen to what occurs as I never witnessed acts of incivility while any of the employees were speaking with the exception of a few people who texted or e-mailed from phones. For the most part, those who attended the meetings appeared to be attentive and respectful of colleagues and the information shared.

Most days the huddle is characterized by the same roll call style of information-sharing as that of the program meetings. It is the only time during the day when representatives of all programs are mandated to meet and share information. In addition to the partners in the Threat Analysis Program already mentioned, the huddle also includes a representative from the New Jersey Fire Service, ICE/HSI, New Jersey

Probation and Parole Department, New Jersey Corrections, New Jersey Treasury, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). At the end of the daily huddle, analysts compare the total number of shooting victims to the number at the same time the previous year. Though this is not used as a benchmark, it does provide some context for the number of shooting hits. A representative from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) also gives the number of gun recoveries for the week.

Sometimes the meeting took on a somewhat jovial feeling. During one particular meeting, a picture of one of the state police agents from a recent mud race was shown with a comparison to Sasquatch. Though this type of humor was rare, the meeting was still a place where the employees felt comfortable enough to make jokes. In a pressured environment such as this, humor is a good way to release the tension that inevitably comes from hearing about shooting victims and carjackings every day. It was not uncommon to hear someone joke about something that had been said during the huddle if it was appropriate. The supervisor who often led the meetings also made it a point to announce significant events in the lives of the employees that included birthdays, retirements, deaths in the family, weddings and births. Additionally, new employees or guests were always introduced at the first huddle they attended.

As this is the only time that all representatives are together, this was often the only time that I would also see the director of the ROIC. Thomas Souchek, a Major in the New Jersey State Police,[9] had an office outside of the Analysis Element area but occasionally came to the huddle. Despite Major Souchek's usually serious demeanor, he was extremely approachable and always said hello to employees by name. He typically

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[9] Major Thomas Souchek has since left the ROIC to pursue another position elsewhere.

walked into the office a minute or two after the meeting began so as not to interrupt the meeting. The person leading the huddle usually noticed his presence and asked him if he would like to add anything. Sometimes he would let those in the huddle know that a tour was going to come through the Analysis Element or he commended the Analysis Element on their work thus far.

After the huddle, people disperse and go back to their desks to continue work. Some people remain to talk to others in the group about something they just heard in the huddle or to ask for more information regarding a particular case or tactic, technique or practice. For example, if the ICE agent did not record all of the names that one of the analysts had stated during the meeting, she asked the analyst to repeat the names to her. The thirty minutes following the huddle are usually the liveliest at the ROIC. Employees converse with one another not only about business-related matters but also about recreational and personal matters. Although there are no other formal times for the Analysis Element to meet, interaction among the analysts and employees continues throughout the day.

The environment at the ROIC

Although males make up a larger percentage of the NJSP employees at the ROIC, females are well-represented among the analysts and partner agencies. The law enforcement community at the ROIC is extremely professional and I never felt or observed that there was a "good ol' boy" network. Just as in any other workplace or community, cliques formed among some of the males who also spent time together outside of the office.

Though very professional, the work environment at the ROIC is also casual. The dress code is business casual but this varies from agency to agency. For example, state police agents are required to dress in uniform on particular days while most federal employees dressed in suits.

The casual dress code and openness of the office does not deter from the professional environment. I often heard employees talking to each other about different cases or shootings or new techniques bomb-builders are using. For example, I asked an employee some questions early in the study about how the counties were divided for each analyst. As the employee began explaining to me how northern New Jersey and southern New Jersey were divided, a nearby employee added to the answer by telling me a bit more about the cities in each territory. By having low walls and a very open office, everyone is able to hear what is being said around them and can contribute to conversations they hear if they choose.

Another benefit of the openness of the office is the potential to build relationships among the different agencies. In the world of crime and crime prevention, time is always of the essence. The relationships among the different partners also allow the analysts to get past the bureaucratic walls that some may encounter. Rather than call the FBI for information on a particular case, a ROIC analyst can approach the FBI representative who can either look up the information himself or can contact a person within the agency who has the information. The person within the agency is less likely to be ignored than the outsider and effort is not wasted seeking information. By having all of the information and the data available immediately, analysts can do other, more important tasks. They no longer have to make phone calls and wait to find the right person. This

gives the law enforcement on the ground the information quickly so that they may be able to apprehend a suspect.

The need to keep open relationships among all of the employees for information-sharing cannot be overstated. The ROIC, like any other organization, is also affected by politics and friction between agencies. For example, the New Jersey State Police and the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJ OHSP) are partners in the fusion center. The NJ OHSP provides analysts and is an integral member of the ROIC as it responsible for information on counterterrorism and preparedness efforts in New Jersey. Because this mission overlaps with some of the existing responsibilities of New Jersey State Police at the ROIC, there can be some conflict between the two agencies with regards to authority. I never witnessed the conflict firsthand and only heard about it in private conversations. It seems to be something that originated in the higher echelons of both organizations. However, employees of both entities who are working at the ROIC do not let it affect their relationship with each other. As one ROIC employee explained, he stays amicable with the analyst from the OHSP because he likes her as a person and tries not to let the politics of what is occurring outside their office affect his working relationships.

In addition to politics, privacy protection is another concern that must be factored into the work of the ROIC. This area is the principal concern of the privacy officer, one of the managers inside the Analysis Element. According to the ROIC Privacy Policy, he "liases with community privacy advocacy groups to ensure that privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties are protected within the provisions of the policy" (NJ ROIC, n.d., p.4). For instance, the written privacy policy of the ROIC, which states the goals of the fusion

center, is reviewed with the most junior member of the ROIC when they first come to work there. Additionally, the first sentence of the mission statement is written in a framed picture in the huddle room so that everyone sees it daily.

When asked how he tries to ensure that information-sharing is occurring within these restrictions, one of the senior New Jersey State Police employees explained some of his techniques. He, along with the managers at the ROIC, believes it is their duty to foster relationships by keeping the atmosphere friendly. The employee stated that he tries to do this by sharing the good news of employees with the group. In addition, the employee with whom I spoke stated that he attempts to present himself as an approachable person and, to this end, keeps his office door open to all of the employees.

These efforts to foster openness and maintain high morale, in spite of many restrictions and regulations, are the goals of all senior management. A supervisor may show the employees how their work is being used at the local level in order to convey the importance of their work to them. This can be significantly motivating since a contribution cannot always be seen when the focus seems to be at the state or federal level. For instance, the ROIC works closely with major cities in the state which historically have with high crime rates. I observed a presentation during the huddle in which the ROIC completed an analysis of where crime was most focused, or the "hot spots" of the city. These crime maps, developed by the ROIC geo-spatial mapping component, were shown to all ROIC employees. The supervisors then showed the effect of targeting crime based on the analysis in the number of arrests and consequent crime decline despite the city's declining budget. When these statistics and other information are gathered, it is not always known whether they will be helpful in preventing a

terroristic attack or stopping a local criminal, or preventing some kind of coordination or cooperation between the two.

I interviewed another supervisor to find out more about how they are trying to increase information-sharing among the ROIC and its partners. He was eager for me to interview the customers, or the New Jersey public safety officers whose duty it is to know the threat environment in order to keep citizens safe, as he wanted to do more to involve local public safety community. He stated to me his desire to have a representative at the county level who would help filter information from the local police to the ROIC about violent crimes occurring at the local level. He noted that there needed to be a feedback loop from the local police in order to help better analyze crime. To begin this process of building relationships between the local police and the ROIC, the employee added the contact information of representatives from all the local police agencies to the COP distribution list, as he believed that sharing information with the local police agencies was the first step to receiving information from the local police agencies as well.

Finally, one of the ways in which partners at all levels make information-sharing better is by actively seeking additional partners who are willing to collaborate in this environment. When asked about people in the office who are unwilling to share, two employees recalled an FBI partner who was assigned to the ROIC who was not particularly good at information-sharing. Both employees remembered that the agent had not wanted to be assigned to the ROIC and therefore did not perceive that he had a vested interest in sharing information. He had a "bad attitude" that was detrimental to the mission of information-sharing as he represented more than just himself; he represented a federal agency to which the ROIC needed access. Eventually, the agent was assigned to a

role outside the ROIC and was replaced with another agent who has since built a sense of camaraderie with the other employees at the ROIC.

Theoretical Literature

One way of viewing the interorganizational relationships which exist in the fusion center is through the notion of a consortium. A consortium is an alliance between entities that have similar needs. The members of the consortium come together to create a greater entity which satisfies the needs of all its members (Kehler, 2004). Fusion centers represent the culmination of collaborative efforts on the part of state, local, tribal and federal agencies. The various agencies share resources in order to garner a clearer picture of the threats facing the United States. Each agency, including law enforcement, public safety and the private sector, may contribute data for the good of the collective. Once information has been shared, the expectation is that analysts are able to synthesize the information which will:

> allow local and state entities to better forecast and identify emerging crime and public health trends; support multidisciplinary, proactive, risk-based, and community-focused problem solving; provide a continuous flow of intelligence to officials to assist in developing a depiction of evolving threats; improve the delivery of emergency and nonemergency services (GIWG, 2005, p.11).

The goal of fusion centers is to disseminate an ever-expanding yet focused body of targeted intelligence which can be acted upon in order to prevent crime. Information-sharing and collaboration of many agencies across different levels of government and jurisdictions make information analysis possible. Collaboration, defined as "a process of joint decision-making among key stakeholders of a problem domain about the future of that domain," is necessary in order to deliver the most accurate and precise representation of crime in a particular area (Gray, 1989, p.227). Education psychologist C.R. Pete

Petersen (2003) sees collaboration as an essential process that can be seen throughout history. He explains that "progress, and even survival, have at times depended on collaboration" (Petersen). Communities which collaborate "encourage greatness by uniting, and encouraging the discovery, building, enhancing and expanding of existing strengths, assets, and resources" (Petersen). When faced with adversity and a decreasing amount of resources, collaboration is important.

Although collaboration may be a means and the motivation for fusion, it is the theory of emergence that describes what occurs when organizations share information and thus collaborate. Drawing from systems theory,

> Emergence is the overall system behavior that comes out of the interaction of many participants. It is *behavior that cannot be predicted or even envisioned* from a knowledge of what each component of a system does in isolation (Casti, 1997, p. 82).

Emergence, put simply, derives from the premise that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (von Bertalanffy, 1968). Emergent phenomena, though the result of underlying processes, are autonomous from the processes which have led to this creation because they "exert an irreducible form of downward causal influence" (Bedau, 1997, p. 377). In other words, the final product cannot be reduced to the individual components which have made it up. Furthermore, the emergent phenomena, the behaviors, and outcomes are a product of the whole and could not have been produced from any of the parts alone.

Collaboration of the partners leads to information-sharing so that emergence can occur. Information-sharing can occur whenever a partner at the ROIC sees a link between something he has found and something that he believes might be he might pertinent to another partner's jurisdiction. Additionally, when he believes information-sharing can

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help bring meaning to his own information, he must feel comfortable enough to communicate this to the appropriate partner. Therefore, information-sharing must become institutionalized. To understand this better, the theory of new institutionalism in organizational analysis can be applied. Theories on organizational fields and isomorphism will be explored in order to understand how the organizations within the fusion center work together and bring about an institutional change.

Studies have posited that police culture emphasizes secrecy and self-protection (Wesley, 1970; Christensen & Crank, 2001). The 9/11 Commission Report provides further evidence of a culture of secrecy when it reported that information-sharing was not taking place among law enforcement agencies. It stated that the FBI was unable to develop an effective counterterrorism strategy because of "a limited capacity to share information both internally and externally" and "perceived legal barriers to sharing information" (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004b, p.18). The 9/11 Commission proposed a strategy to combat terrorism which included protecting against and preparing for future terrorist attacks by "unifying the many participants in the counterterrorism effort and their knowledge in a network-based information-sharing system that transcends traditional governmental boundaries" (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004b, p.21). The Commission wanted information-sharing to become an institution in law enforcement. How does one institutionalize a strategy of sharing in a culture with such a deep history of secrecy?

In order to understand how any organization could overcome this barrier and successfully institutionalize information-sharing, the ROIC must be examined from an

organizational perspective. Information-sharing is thus the practice that needs to be institutionalized. Two organizational structures may be identified. One is the larger system: the organization of law enforcement. The ROIC is one of the organizations within law enforcement. For purposes of this study, while it is understood that law enforcement in general needs to institutionalize information-sharing, we will focus on the ROIC as a case study. By looking at the fusion center as a formal organizational structure, we can gauge how successful law enforcement will be in institutionalizing information-sharing as many states across the U.S. implement or seek to improve fusion centers. It is best to first understand the terms of the theory of new institutionalism. New institutionalism proposes:

> that formal organizational structure(s) reflected not only technical demands and resource dependencies, but was also shaped by institutional forces, including rational myths, knowledge legitimated through the educational system and by the professions, public opinion, and the law. The core idea that organizations are deeply embedded in social and political environments suggested that organizational practices and structures are often either reflections of or responses to rules, beliefs, and conventions built into the wider environment (Powell, 2007, p. 975).

Within law enforcement, as pointed out earlier, information was kept from others in order to protect one's case, whether it was from fear that another agent would take credit for solving the case or to protect people involved in the case. These fears, or rational myths, led to the institutionalization of secrecy within law enforcement within the agencies and among them as well. Ronald Jepperson (1991) defines institution as representing "a social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property" and institutionalization as the process of making this routine for the established system (p. 145).

Fligstein (1991) suggests that change among members in an organization can only occur once individuals perceive a need and a source for that change. He continues: "the

state or the organizational field will create shocks that reflect either a reconstitution of the rules or models of new organizational strategies that undermine the rule" (Fligstein, p. 315).

Institutional change within an organization is not easily achieved and may even be thwarted by myths held by those outside and by members of the organization itself. Meyer and Rowan (1991) posit that the "formal structures of many organizations in post-industrial society dramatically reflect the myths of their institutional environments instead of the demands of their work activities" (p.41). Myths regarding how an organization should proceed pervade modern society and organizations. These myths, Meyer and Rowan argue, are rationalized and impersonal instructions which characterize social goals that an organization should have and the way in which they should be obtained. Furthermore, these myths are so ingrained in our society and thinking that they are never questioned but rather are taken at face value as legitimate. For example, Meyer and Rowan point out that as people become specialized in research and development, organizations are under increasing pressure to create research and development (R&D) units. No thought is put forward regarding how essential these departments are because companies think they are necessary in order to seem more legitimate.

Myths are not the only possible impediments that organizations including the ROIC face in their efforts to institutionalize information-sharing. Havelock (1971) identifies several factors which would influence the dissemination of new information within an organization. He suggests that a division of labor, a system made up of other subsystems of individuals with a common background, may "encourage the formation of idiosyncratic information coding schemes, stimulate inter-unit competition and encourage

the formation of separate and incompatible group norms" (Havelock, p. 6-21). Each subgroup at the ROIC, i.e. the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security, and the New Jersey State Police as well as local agencies and departments, has its own language and set of terms that it uses that could hinder the flow of information to and from other subgroups. A division of labor could also create competition among the subgroups because of the limited resources available to all of the agencies within the organization. Finally, Havelock believes that each subgroup may not only develop its own vocabulary but that it can develop its own norms which may contrast with the norms of the organization. Each individual may therefore be too concerned with upholding the norms of the subgroup of which he is a member to identify with the organization, the ROIC.

The structure of the organization can also impede the flow of information among agencies. Havelock (1971) identifies several studies which show that the greater the degree of hierarchy in an organization, the less the possibility of knowledge flow. Literature on the topic of hierarchy gives several reasons for this: "Members are very hesitant to transmit knowledge upward through a hierarchy unless it is 1.) firmly substantiated by hard data which in the case of most innovation is hard to come by; 2) reflective of only a positive evaluation of themselves; and 3) directly relevant to the receiver" (Havelock, p. 6-23).

Centralization can also affect the movement of new information within the organization in two ways: "it increases the effectiveness of downward communication but at the same time reduces the possibility of intra-organizational variation" (Havelock,

1971, p.6-24). Centralization, therefore, helps efficiency in the organization but hinders the generation of new ideas.

The members of the organization must be physically close to each other in order for information to flow freely among the different groups. Havelock (1971) points to several studies that show that "distance was the most important factor in determining interaction between employees in an office" (p. 6-26).

Finally, leadership behavior is an important factor in the information flow within an organization. The behavior of the leader "serves as a stimulus and as a model for much behavior in the organization" (Havelock, 1971, p. 6-26). Leadership is no longer looked upon as the entity which gives orders and ensures that they are followed. Leaders must "integrate the objectives of the organization with the personal needs and goals of its members" (Havelock, p. 6-27). Good leadership leads to a constant flow of information by understanding the dynamics of the group and helping the group to contribute to task performance.

Discussion-How the ROIC has attempted to institutionalize information-sharing

Building the physical structure and placing everyone together does not guarantee that information-sharing will take hold in a fusion center. How successful has the ROIC been in creating an environment that will lead to the institutionalization of information-sharing in law enforcement? I argue that the ROIC has been effective in establishing a new culture and environment to encourage the free exchange of information so that collaboration can take place and emergence can occur.

According to Fligstein (1991) the state creates shocks that allow the individuals involved to see that the rules have been undermined or need to be reconstituted. However, a shock by the state was not necessary for the law enforcement community to see the need for information-sharing. The shock was provided in the 9/11 tragedy. The old rules regarding secrecy were undermined because the non-exchange of information hurt the whole country. The 9/11 Commission responded to this shock by providing a new organizational strategy when it suggested increasing information-sharing. This call for a new organizational strategy was answered by many policy makers and the International Association of the Chiefs of Police (IACP) when the idea for the fusion center was born.[10] 9/11 helped many individuals within law enforcement see that the good of the whole was threatened when the top priority was trying to protect oneself at the expense of a broader concern.

The 9/11 Commission also provided law enforcement, and more specifically the fusion centers, with the pressure needed to institutionalize information-sharing. The centers were developed so that information-sharing could be facilitated across agencies. This pressure is what Dimaggio and Powell (1991) refer to as coercive processes. The state pressured law enforcement within fusion centers to work together and share information to prevent future large-scale terrorist attacks.

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[10] The concept of organization-information collaboration, the primary inspiration for fusion centers, was actually developed long before 2001. Starting in the 1990s, the increasing interest in the Intelligence-Led Policing Model (ILP), the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) success, support of key homeland security entities and agreement among governors that each state should have its own fusion center led to the creation of many fusion centers after 9/11 (Rollins, 2008). However, 9/11 was the impetus for the quick growth in number of fusion centers.

Moreover, the ROIC has fostered an environment where information-sharing can occur in its physical space and daily routine. As identified by Havelock (1971), several factors including physical proximity, centralization, hierarchy, division of labor and leadership behavior, can all influence the dissemination of new information within an organization. The employees must feel there is an open exchange of information within the office among everyone for them to collaborate. A shorter physical distance between the organization members helps to facilitate this exchange of information. This physical proximity to agents in other departments engenders friendships which break down the walls of secrecy among agencies. The ROIC makes it physically and emotionally easier for a particular agency to ask for information that is necessary during analysis. Without tall cubicle walls or separate agency rooms, each person experiences the same physical office space and thus the environment reduces the notion of a pecking order and in that way encourages information-sharing that includes other office mates. Havelock points out that physical separation is often a function of status discrepancy. The lack of physical separation among the individuals of the ROIC keeps everyone on an equal power status, regardless of the agency they represent.

By allowing all of the members of the ROIC to experience their workspace as one of seemingly equal status for all, the flow of information becomes primarily horizontal, rather than vertical. Indeed, a stringent hierarchy reduces the flow of information. At the ROIC, the degree of hierarchy is fairly limited. This can be seen not only in the physical space where the vast majority of the cubicles are the same size, but also in the daily meetings where everyone is encouraged to contribute information. All of the individuals are treated as information managers, even those who have higher security clearances than

the majority of the employees. Federal employees work side-by-side with state employees. By bringing together many different agencies and eliminating the hierarchy among the agencies, the ROIC has centralized law enforcement information which ideally increases the effectiveness of distribution of communication to the local police agencies.

The hierarchy of people and agencies has now shifted to a hierarchy of information. The intelligence that results from the sharing of information has become more important than protecting the interests of the people with the information, which is a critical paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1962).

Additionally, the centralization and lack of a hierarchical structure at the ROIC is made clear and reinforced in the daily meetings. The 10:00 huddle is mandatory for all individuals in the office. Each person is called on with the request to share any information garnered over the last 24-72 hours. The desk manager does not skip anyone, even if it is known from the 9:30 meeting that the individual may have nothing to offer. By performing this daily ritual, the desk manager reinforces participation of each agency and individual in information-sharing every day.

It is this type of leadership that has also helped make information-sharing at the ROIC successful. The director and the managers of each program need to be firmly invested in the mission of information-sharing. This was evident to employees by the decision to allow other researchers and me open access to the ROIC and its employees. The ROIC leadership made it clear to employees that innovation in information-sharing was a goal and the present study contributed to the mission by seeking feedback on how they disseminate information. The management at the ROIC provides an example of

beliefs and conventions that they want to see reflected in the organizational practices and structures which provided an example to the members of the ROIC on how to contribute to task performance.

Using Havelock's (1971) criteria to identify the factors which influence the dissemination of new information within an organization, I came to recognize that the ROIC has created an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing information. Not only do employees like those from the FBI and ICE express this point-of-view in interviews, but I also observed the collaborative environment present at the ROIC when employees seek out other employees for information. Instead of returning to their desk to continue work after the morning huddle, time after the morning huddle was spent asking each other questions, as well as gathering or requesting additional information.

For information-sharing to become institutionalized, it must become "a social order or pattern" that has become so ingrained in the minds of the employees that it occurs without thinking (Jepperson, 1991, p.145). More time needs to be spent evaluating the actions of the employees of the ROIC in order to conclusively say that information-sharing has become institutionalized. Yet, many of the employees' actions showed evidence of functioning in a workplace where information-sharing had been institutionalized by speaking to each other about the information they had, both during and outside of the mandated times. After the morning's hushed concentration, the office was rarely quiet because people were often working together. It was my experience at the ROIC that the representatives of federal, state and local agencies communicated and worked together, so much so that it took me some time to remember who represented

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which agency because hierarchies were not discernable at the ROIC and everyone comingled.

This is not to say that the ROIC model is perfect. As mentioned earlier, politics is still an undercurrent with which supervisors need to contend. Fortunately, the human relationships built at the ROIC help diminish the negative effects of the politics between NJSP and OHSP. Employees who do not believe information-sharing will ever work in law enforcement also challenge supervisors. Three employees with whom I spoke expressed negative opinions about how ROIC initiatives could work. One partner in particular believed that secrecy was a part of law enforcement that could never be overcome. That individual personifies the myths that Meyer and Rowan (1991) recognize as a threat to institutional change. This culture of secrecy and self-protection that the partner believes still exists pervaded law enforcement before 9/11 and cannot easily be overcome. After all, organizations are made up of complex people. Some individuals will continue to withhold information even if demands of the workplace call for sharing because secrecy was institutionalized in law enforcement for so long.

As Fligstein (1991) points out, a transformation in the organization can occur once individuals perceive the need for it. Individuals who are reluctant or unwilling to change may perceive the need for the transformation, but they still have not recognized their own or the ROIC's role in this move forward. Even though the ROIC had provided the environment which would increase opportunities, protection, and freedom for individuals to change their thoughts and attitudes on information-sharing, the senior-level officials at the ROIC continue to support, sponsor and model this so change can occur.

Each individual must continue, on an on-going basis, to see how sharing supports his/her net value, or claimed expertise, within the constructs of the organization in order for the institutionalization of information-sharing to continue. Abbott (1988) points out that in order to legitimize their claimed expertise, organizations, or in this case each law enforcement agency, competes with one another for jurisdictional monopolies. Releasing information to other organizations within the fusion center reduces power and renders the organization that relinquished the information less significant. At the 10:00 meeting, instead of giving a summary of the 9:30 meeting, the manager of each desk allows the roll call to continue as it did in the 9:30 meeting despite knowing what is already going to be said. Each agency is thus able to stake claim of their legitimacy by being the gatekeepers of information where only they may be able to search particular crime databases and only they may choose to share the information. Additionally, the inability to give all of the information they have on a particular subject because of security clearance issues further legitimizes their existence at the ROIC because they are now the only ones with access to this information.

The withholding of some information does not preclude the institutionalization of information-sharing. Protection of secret information is necessary because of legal and ethical conflicts with obligations to protect privacy rights. In this case, however, the myths of law enforcement help individuals at the ROIC understand at least one of the major barriers that explain why all information cannot be shared. As Meyer and Rowan (1991) point out, the formal structure, in this case the various security clearances which hinder complete information-sharing, dramatically reflect the myths of law enforcement instead of the demands of their work activities.

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Every law enforcement agency has its own set of rules and security clearances for several reasons. One reason is that each agency has its own databases of information for which it screens and then trains its agents to use. Once they are screened and trained in the sensitive handling of information, the agents are given access to it. Furthermore, individuals within an agency are trained to recognize what information is relevant to others outside the agency; this is widely understood throughout law enforcement. By giving what information they can give in morning huddles and smaller meetings with those who have the security clearance, individuals are perpetuating the culture of information-sharing.

There is also an ethics component that affects the sharing of information that must be noted. Though the current law enforcement environment calls for information-sharing, there is also an obligation to maintain privacy. Occasions and circumstances when these obligations conflict with one another may arise, but each partner at the ROIC must weigh these obligations before discussing the information they have. Protecting citizens' right to privacy may be a justifiable reason to withhold information because as Rosenzweig (2010) points out, a greater analytical capacity comes at a steep price- "the peril of creating an ineradicable trove of information about innocent individuals" (p. 626). It is the duty of the law enforcement officials who hold this information to pass on only the information that is necessary.

Is emergence occurring despite the withholding of information from some agencies? I argue, yes. The 9:30 meeting often sparks further conversation regarding a particular event or situation. It is not uncommon for one employee to suggest looking at a past crime or situation in order to shed more light on a current threat. In fact, the

managers' new role of actively engaging with the information and setting tasks for analysts is more likely to lead to the discovery of emergent information. Once the analysts return with information from their respective departments, the information can be used to better understand a specific threat. The analysts in the room at the 9:30 and 10:00 meetings attempt to make connections between the information of which they are aware and the information they hear from other partners. The ROIC utilizes these connections to guide and provide direction for further analysis. Sensitive law enforcement information that is being withheld is often too specific for it to be of greater significance; instead the more general points of the information are shared among the employees. Furthermore, the withholding of particular information does not seem to prevent emergence because the goal of crime analysis is to find patterns which can eventually lead to the capture of criminals. If all of the sensitive information were being shared, the ROIC would no longer be engaging in crime analysis or their mission, but data mining. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) worries that data mining could lead to the targeting of innocent citizens where they may be harassed or suffer harm to their reputation (German & Stanley, 2007). Data mining is a practice the ACLU and others would like to prevent.

In short, the ROIC was created after a shock. 9/11 made the intelligence community realize that collaboration and information-sharing were necessary in order to recognize and therefore prevent more threats and attacks. The ROIC then developed an environment conducive to information-sharing among the various partners. This process is not linear; it is an iterative process. The ROIC can still improve its information-sharing

environment and make the flow of information more seamless, and should continue in these efforts.

Conclusion

It was imperative that New Jersey answer the call from the 9/11 Commission to develop an umbrella agency which would house many different law enforcement agencies so that they might collaborate for the common goal of preventing crime. This structure, the New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center, is an innovative interagency entity in the fight against terrorism and crime within New Jersey. The main goal of the fusion center has been accomplished at the ROIC: information is being shared across federal, state and local law enforcement agencies at the ROIC and significant intelligence results from these efforts.

There are lessons to be learned from the case study of the New Jersey ROIC, all of which can be summarized by Havelock's (1971) astute observation that "interorganizational processes can be reduced to interpersonal processes," or the processes that help expand one's network of trusted individuals (p. 6-20). First, collaboration occurs best in a comfortable, safe and positive environment. This can be fostered by the sponsoring agency through physical spaces that contribute to an environment of sharing. Large walls or individual offices do not promote sharing; low walls or no walls at all and open meeting areas do. Second, daily meetings further encourage the sharing of information by reminding the other employees where they can go if they need information. It is not enough to work in the same office space; employees must feel comfortable among each other and realize that they all ultimately have the same

goal-to protect the public. Finally, for information-sharing to become institutionalized, it must be reflected in the actions of its management and the organization.

Fusion centers were created after 9/11 so that when multiple threats are recognized and the system once again "blink(s) red", law enforcement can recognize and respond to the threats by working together. Today, fusion centers do more than recognize terrorist threats; they aid local police agencies with crime analysis and connect them to resources that are unavailable at the local level. Is the ROIC doing this successfully? The next two chapters seek to evaluate this component of the ROIC's duty. The ROIC's most ubiquitous source of intelligence, the Common Operating Picture bulletin, is analyzed in the next chapter to determine whether or not the COP is meeting the needs of its intended audience.

Chapter 2

Dissemination of Information to the New Jersey Police Community

The Regional Operations Intelligence Center's (ROIC) mission, stated simply, is crime analysis and the dissemination of information and intelligence. Crime analysis provides context and gives meaning to information so it can be useful. The ROIC executes the second part of its mission through the Common Operating Picture, or the COP.[11] Dissemination of the COP must be two-fold: Information must reach both decision-makers and patrol. Decision-makers include (1) those who decide how to deploy patrol and (2) those who act as a filter between the large amounts of disseminated information and patrol. As Mackay and Ratcliffe (2004) point out, the intelligence cycle is "incomplete unless the intelligence product is used to influence the thinking of the decision-maker" (p. 148).

Patrol officers are uniformed police officers assigned to monitor a specific geographic area at a regular interval to look for signs of problems. They are better able to recognize suspicious behavior in their daily contacts with people and the physical environment if they are aware of pertinent information. It is critical that information and intelligence be relayed to the people who can use it in order to identify suspicious behavior, even if local law enforcement has what some may believe is a limited role in combating terrorism because of a lack of analytic capabilities and a small jurisdiction. Moreover, as evidenced by the fusion center's move toward an all-crimes model,

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[11] The NJSP analyst responsible for sending out the COP moved to another location after the system's observation and examination. Shortly thereafter, distribution of the bulletin was halted so the ROIC could learn more about its value based on the findings of this study.

terrorism is often funded by all types of crime. To make the connections between day-to-day crimes and terrorist funding, local law enforcement must know of current developments in intelligence.

By asking several questions, this chapter will examine whether the COP is meeting the ILP needs of local law enforcement and examine the use of the fusion center in information-sharing in New Jersey. First, are the people who receive the COP those for whom it is intended? Second, do the recipients read the COP on a daily basis? If not, why not and what should be added or eliminated to make it more useful?

While e-mail limits the depth of intelligence that can be disseminated in the COP, survey and interview data help inform the conclusion that the bulletin serves as an important tool for municipal police agencies, even if it does not necessarily meet their ILP needs. The COP needs to be distributed more systematically and targeted at more senior law enforcement officials, who then are able to disseminate what they consider the most relevant intelligence to patrol. I surmise that at least 25% of the current list of recipients read the COP. To make the bulletin more useful, the analysts need to help police officers understand the significance that national and international events hold for themselves and their town.

Background Information

As a descriptive product, the ROIC disseminates intelligence and verified information in the COP so that public-safety officials can understand the threat environment in New Jersey at any given time. This is an important distinction because open sources, such as CNN, may be able to report on information much more rapidly

than the ROIC can and apologize later if the information is proven to be incorrect. The ROIC does not have this luxury; it needs to be right all of the time. The customers—that is, the public-safety agents of New Jersey—know they are receiving information or intelligence in the COP that has already been verified through official sources.

The COP e-mail is sent daily between 11:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. Headlines in the e-mail provide a brief summary of the information. Readers can open the included attachment if any of the headlines are of interest to them. The information is divided into categories that include officer safety, current threats, be on the look out (BOLOs), emerging tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP), and general knowledge. BOLOs often contain pictures of wanted persons accompanied by written physical descriptions. As patrol officers are the eyes and ears on the ground, they are the most likely law-enforcement personnel to see the wanted persons.

Matters of officer safety are also an important component of the COP. If, for example, criminals are using a new method to commit a crime that could be hazardous to the safety of people beyond those in the immediate vicinity, it would be important for the officers to understand how far the hazards extend. The COP also contains information regarding new tactics being used by terrorists against certain modes of transportation, such as trains and airplanes. The officers on the ground need to know about this so they will be more aware of suspicious behavior surrounding these targets. Appendix D is an example of a COP bulletin.

Up to 2,500 individuals receive the COP e-mail each day. Because of its size and the nature of the attachments, the ROIC's current computer system cannot handle its mass. Rather, the ROIC sends the bulletin to the Mid Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized

Crime Law Enforcement Network (MAGLOCLEN), which then sends it to the ROIC's listserv. MAGLOCLEN is one of 6 regional centers in a larger network called the Regional Information-sharing Systems (RISS). RISS is a federally funded program that links criminal-justice agencies throughout the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and England. It provides a secure website for law enforcement to connect and share information. In addition, RISS centers also "provide essential investigative services, including information-sharing, analytical support, investigative support and research, equipment loans, confidential funds, training and publications, field staff support, and technical assistance" (RISS, 2007). MAGLOCLEN offered to send out the e-mails at no charge to the ROIC, and they accepted.

The COP listserv covers people from all branches of law enforcement. Initially, it was set up to go out to NJSP and the New Jersey prosecutors' offices. It has grown so much that, at present, there is no discernible pattern to who is on the list—currently representatives from the FBI, DHS, other fusion centers, the NJSP, and police departments in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The COP is uploaded to the RISSNET, RISS' secure intranet which is accessible by thousands of law–enforcement officials, so it is impossible to know how many more people (third parties) download. MAGLOCLEN also lacks the capability to determine who or how many people read the COP on a daily basis.

When the COP e-mail is "kicked back" 3 times from a particular e-mail address, MAGLOCLEN automatically deletes that e-mail address from the list. Vacation notes are excluded from this count. Replies to the COP are sent directly to the ROIC, where several employees read through the e-mail. On average, 1-5 people per week ask to be added or

removed from the listserv. Requests to be added come from people who have either read it on RISSNET or have heard about it from another subscriber. The ROIC representatives also tell people about the COP and encourage them to ask to be put on the list.

No one at the ROIC knows how many people actually read the COP. Some employees are of the opinion that very few read the bulletin on a daily basis. They base this observation on an incident that occurred before I began my ROIC observation, when the COP was not sent out for three days. During that time, only 3 of the 800 individuals then on the list e-mailed to inform the ROIC that they had not received the COP, and those 3 people worked in the ROIC office. While this could be attributed to poor information-sharing, the employees felt it was indicative of the number of people who actually read the bulletin.

There has also been dissatisfaction among some individuals who work on the COP because they question the usefulness of their work. One employee casually informed me that he did not think that the bulletin was worthwhile to law enforcement and that the ROIC was not doing enough analysis. Instead, it was repeating open source material.[12] While there was some merit in his statement, as I came to know this person better, I learned he was an individual who often voiced his dissatisfaction.

No systematic tracking had ever been undertaken to determine the number of people who read the COP or to determine how it was disseminated to the local police. The ROIC, therefore, was eager to understand more about its daily product and to receive information that would help it decide how to make it more useful for the law-enforcement

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[12] I found that many of the employees with whom I casually spoke inside the ROIC Analysis Element were unaware of how much influence their daily product had among local police agencies. They knew only of successes from other products and partnerships with municipal agencies.

population. To contextualize the results, I will address an understanding of the theory of dissemination.

Theoretical Review

The objective of dissemination is to transfer knowledge or information in order to influence the thinking of the decision-maker (Knott & Wildavsky, 1980; Mackay & Ratcliffe, 2004). In the case of a fusion center, the information and/or intelligence being dispersed relates to criminal activity in the center's state, as well as nationally and internationally, and is meant to help decision-makers direct their resources.

The dissemination of intelligence is a critical function of the fusion center. As pointed out by a recent Bureau of Justice Assistance report on ILP, "intelligence is critical for decision-making, planning, strategic targeting, and crime prevention" (Peterson, 2005, p. 3). Fusion centers disseminate intelligence to local police agencies, universities, federal agents, the state police, county prosecutors' offices, and many other constituents because the mission of the ROIC is "to interface with the New Jersey law enforcement community, and other law enforcement and homeland security agencies" (NJ ROIC, n.d., p.1). In other words, fusion-center officials must determine who has a "need to know"[13] or would benefit from the intelligence they have collected and analyzed. The COP is meant to be a quick "one-stop shop" to give the law-enforcement

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[13] Need to know is defined in the New Jersey ROIC privacy policy: "a result of jurisdictional, organizational, or operational necessities, access to sensitive information or intelligence is necessary for the conduct of an individual's official duties as part of an organization that has a right to know the information in the performance of a law enforcement, homeland security, or counter- terrorism activity, such as to further an investigation or meet another law enforcement requirement" (NJ ROIC, n.d., p. 32).

community and other stakeholders a quick picture of the emerging threats for the state of New Jersey.

The most important reason that fusion centers, such as the ROIC, must disseminate information and intelligence is so the analysis performed at the center about how to prevent terrorism and crime reaches the people who have the most contact with citizens on a daily basis. As Henry (2002) points out, "[patrol] interact with the public, casually or actively obtaining information about the community and the people who inhabit it" (p. 324). Henry, a retired NYPD officer who holds a Ph.D., notes that "in some instances, most notably when officers recognize the significance or importance of some item of information, they take pains to ensure that other officers and, often, other agencies are formally apprised of it" (p. 324). A man taking pictures outside a train station may mean nothing to most; but if an officer is aware of intelligence that trains may be targeted before the anniversary of September 11, he/she may make this known to a supervisor or other agencies such as the ROIC.

Dissemination of information and intelligence can be problematic for a variety reasons. Knott and Wildavsky (1980) believed that, while there is a universal acceptance of it, disseminators are asked to be "the translators, interpreters, and gatekeepers for government decision-makers" (p. 539). They equated this to command. Under the guise of spreading knowledge, disseminators are likely to promote their own policy. This suggests that the fusion center disseminators choose which intelligence to send to the local agencies as a way of directing their law-enforcement efforts. If the center, in response to real threats, wanted local agencies and their patrol to target terrorism more, they might send more bulletins and information on the new tactics of terrorism and other

reports of suspicious activity that might be related to terrorism than would an organization with a different focus. Some might find this problematic, thinking fusion centers may be promoting their own agenda of preventing terrorist activities, whereas local police agencies may have other crime concerns for which they would like to have more intelligence.

In addition, Knott and Wildavsky (1980) warned of information overload. By disseminating too much information, disseminators may find themselves overburdened in their efforts to maintain the constant flow of information, and the recipients may not be able to keep up with reading the information. Law enforcement has many sources of information, including county prosecutors' offices, other state fusion centers, federal databases, and bulletins disseminated by higher authorities within the department. Some police officers receive hundreds of e-mails every week. Knott and Wildavsky's article— "If dissemination is the solution, what is the problem?"—was written in 1980, well before the Internet was used to disseminate criminal-justice intelligence. The advent of the Internet arguably makes it far easier for information to be disseminated, which makes Knott and Wildavsky's warnings that much more relevant and important.

Disseminators must also be sure they are sending information that has meaning. As de Bruijn (2006) points out, "an actor who continuously shares meaningless information runs the risk that others will, at some state, ignore it even when it is highly relevant" (p. 7). Fusion centers need to share products that have meaning to the police work that law enforcement is conducting, rather than information or knowledge that could have been garnered from open sources such as news media. Mackay and Ratcliffe (2004) believe that intelligence reporting should have three characteristics: It should not

be common knowledge or open source material; it should have an angle that is relevant to the client; and it should be intelligence that is both not obvious to the intended audience and firmly judgmental (p. 151). While it might be ideal to adhere to these criteria, it is not possible in this case due to the nature of the transmission. The ROIC is aware of instances where criminals have been in possession of documents disseminated by the center. For this reason, the COP cannot contain as many details as some may want.

It is not merely enough to choose how much and what to disseminate; the ROIC must also share its intelligence output with the appropriate users (Carter & Carter, 2009a). In addition to decision-makers and patrol, city universities with public-safety agencies could also find the information useful. Private companies that carry out government contracts in weapons or aeronautics may also need the information so they are aware of any growing threats to them. It is important for the fusion center to assess and define every stakeholder and to disseminate the information to all who may have a legitimate need for it.

Using experience and industry training, fusion-center analysts must carefully balance the need for good, quality information with possibly negative results of over-dissemination and avoid sending out unreliable information. In other words, the information must be accurate, timely, and meaningful. English (2005) contends that information quality is a priority in national security and defines information quality[14] as "consistently meeting knowledge worker and end-customer expectations" (p. 19). Police

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[14] Information quality has also been defined in the ROIC's privacy policy as "the various aspects of the information; the accuracy and validity of the actual values of the data, data structure, and database/data repository design. Traditionally, the basic elements of information quality have been identified as accuracy, completeness, currency, reliability, and context/meaning. Today, information quality is being more fully described in multidimensional models, expanding conventional views of the topic to include considerations of accessibility, security, and privacy" (NJ ROIC, n.d., p. 30).

officers have become knowledge workers who must share knowledge and work closely with other knowledge workers in order to be proactive rather than reactive. Police need to predict and attempt to prevent crime before it occurs, which is why police organizations have transformed themselves from quasi-military organizations to knowledge organizations (Gottschalk, Holgersson, & Karlsen, 2009, p. 88).

It is the police officer's role as a knowledge worker that makes him/her and information-sharing important to the ILP process. The officer needs the intelligence that comes from the fusion-center analysis in order to first situate him/herself in a place where he/she is most likely to do the most good and second to recognize suspicious behavior. In addition, he/she policeman must understand what information he/she needs to send to the ROIC so it may be analyzed and the ROIC can send a more accurate picture of trends in crimes, the nature and extent of a particular problem, and where the greatest threat may be.

Yet, the end-customer expectations of everyone on the COP listserv are not necessarily known. Some may want the snapshot of international and national news as it pertains to New Jersey. Some may want information about officer safety so their officers are aware of the newest criminal techniques and tactics. Others may want information that helps them prevent crime in their city, which would include information from neighboring cities and counties about the most recent crime patterns.

Meeting the expectations of the customers on the listserv is not necessarily synonymous with being effective. As Carter and Carter (2009a) point out, determining "whether the information and intelligence disseminated by the fusion center have resulted in the prevention, mitigation, and control of crime and terrorism" is an incredibly elusive

measure of effectiveness (p. 1337). Few studies have been able to determine this. However, Carter and Carter (2009a) state that there has been some anecdotal evidence on the positive side, but it would be too early to conclude any empirical assessment of success.

If effectiveness is elusive, the next best measure might be utility. For dissemination to have utility, the information must be timely and accurate. Larry P. English, president of the consulting company Information Impact International Inc., describes an incident in 2003 in which six flights between Paris and Los Angeles were cancelled based on information indicating that al-Qaeda might be planning to hijack the planes. The cancellations not only inconvenienced many passengers, but they also had a significant economic impact on the airline. As English (2005) points out, if the information had been accurate, a large-scale attack had been prevented. If not, the airline and its passengers were inconvenienced by bad information that should have been screened before it was disseminated. It may seem like a small price to pay to prevent another 9/11-style terrorist attack, but screening the information and the dissemination of quality information can reduce the errors of unnecessary over-reaction.

Errors in information fall into two types. Type I errors are false positives, which, if inaccurate, are similar to the situation English described. Type II errors are false negatives and are exemplified by the errors made during 9/11—that is, the inability to recognize looming terrorist attacks. Information must be screened carefully to prevent type I errors, but it must also be screened quickly and disseminated to those who need it to prevent type II errors.

In addition to maintaining accuracy, the ROIC must also abide by state and federal regulations for collecting, storing, and disseminating criminal-intelligence data. At the state and local levels, the authority that guides law enforcement in this domain is 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)- (Judicial Administration), Chapter 1 (Department of Justice), Part 23 (criminal intelligence systems operating policies). Its purpose is to ensure that all criminal intelligence systems protect U.S. citizens' constitutional rights. The regulation recognizes that criminal activities that include drug trafficking, gambling, bribery, and corruption of public officials "involve some degree of regular coordination and permanent organization involving a large number of participants over a broad geographical area"; but the collection of intelligence regarding such crimes potentially threatens the privacy and rights of individuals. The regulation thus defines the operating principles for gathering and storing criminal intelligence for all criminal-intelligence systems operating with support from the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968.

Given the many difficulties associated with disseminating information, it is reasonable to question the utility of the daily informational bulletins, especially if the ROIC does not know who or how many people are actually reading them.

Why not simply make the bulletins available to the law enforcement community on RISSNET and allow people to upload them when they are able to do so? There are several reasons to continue the current practice. First, the bulletins will garner a larger pool of readers if the recipients receive the information in an e-mail rather than being required to go to a password-protected website. Ease of access via e-mail allows readers

to skim through the material and quickly decide whether or not to read it. If something catches their attention, they can get to the information immediately.

Moreover, by sending the information to all the police departments in New Jersey, the ROIC can increase its collaborative reach. Collaboration is the mission set by the Information-sharing Environment, which was established in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. Executive Order 13355, later amended by Executive Order 13470, more broadly states that an important goal of the intelligence community, of which the ROIC and all fusion centers are a part, is to provide information to the President, the National Security Council, and the Homeland Security Council so they may make the most informed decisions regarding the protection of the United States' national interests.

Fusion centers, therefore, must have the capability and structure to produce intelligence that can be distributed to all the appropriate stakeholders. By designing a structure that reflects the directions of myths and, in this case, executive order, Meyer and Rowan (1991) believed that an organization "demonstrates that it is acting on collectively valued purposes in a proper and adequate manner" (p. 50). Fusion centers are legitimizing their existence, strengthening support, and securing their survival by demonstrating their adherence to collective values. Meyer and Rowan hypothesized that organizations that omit environmentally legitimated elements will lack acceptable legitimate accounts of their activities. These types of organizations "are more vulnerable to claims that they are negligent, irrational or unnecessary" (Meyer and Rowan, p.50). If the ROIC intends to survive, it cannot be perceived as being negligent or unnecessary in the publicly funded world of law enforcement.

In summary, while dissemination is challenging, it is important for a fusion center to inform public-safety agencies and officials of their threat environment. In theory, awareness of the significance of objects in their environment would increase the amount and quality of information that the public-safety officials send back to the fusion centers. The results will help us determine whether the ROIC is reaching the decision-makers and, thus, patrol and whether they find the COP information to be useful.

Results

Before sending out a survey to the ROIC listserv, we wanted to try to determine how many people were reading the COP bulletin. The first step was to request an e-mail receipt. As stated earlier, the ROIC sends out an e-mail with headline topics and an attachment with more detailed information. The following message was included at the top of the attachment portion of the e-mail to find out how many people were opening the attachment:

> The N.J. ROIC Analysis Element is conducting an internal audit of outgoing intelligence products. This is part of an ongoing project to better understand the needs of the customers. Please send a blank e-mail to njroicanalysis@gw.njsp.org to confirm that you have received and read this bulletin.

This would yield a very conservative estimate of the COP readership as it was asking people to cut and paste the address into a new e-mail, rather than simply pressing the reply key. In this case, 75 responses were received from the 806 people on the listserv at the time.

The next step was to determine whether the COP e-mail was opened or instantly deleted, a measure related to delivery status notification. This is a request to the e-mail recipient's server to return a notification of the delivery—i.e., whether it has been read,

has been deleted without being read, or has been delivered but not read.[15] The COP bulletin was sent on Thursday, January 13, 2011, to all listed first-order recipients: 806 people. The result showed that 157 people opened the e-mail the first day, 23 more people opened the e-mail over the next 8 days, 56 people deleted the e-mail without reading it. Another 16 instances noted that the recipients were either retired, no longer in the position, or unknown. In addition, 5 people were "out of the office" for a period of time. In total, about 32% (257/806) of the listserv was "tracked," with a read rate of about 22% (180/806). The NJSP did not have any read receipts. We surmised that this agency and the remaining 549 recipients who were not tracked had firewalls that disallowed delivery status notifications when sent from outside the network.

The COP was tracked for the NJSP on January 31, 2011.[16] The results indicated that of the 74 NJSP and partners with NJSP addresses, 17 people (about 20%) read it, 37 people deleted it without opening it, and 20 people had not responded as of February 8, 2011.[17]

In total, the COP was tracked for 41% (331) of the people on the listserv. If we assume that the rest of the listserv who could not be tracked read the bulletin at the same rate, , we could estimate that 60% (197/331) of the listserv opened the COP bulletin e-

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[15] The initial delivery-status notification did not work. Nothing came back even after several people in the office open the e-mail to check the system. Working with the technical support at MAGLOCLEN, it became apparent that the tracking service on the mail server was treating the list as one person. By creating a group, each person would be counted as an individual and the e-mails would be tracked for every person. For security reasons, this could be done only once.

[16] In order to measure how many of the NJSP read the e-mail, all NJSP e-mail addresses received the COP directly from the ROIC. This allowed us to see who read the it because we were sending it from inside the e-mail network. This did not capture those outside the NJSP, so the results will need to be combined to see how many people are reading the COP in total. Unfortunately, we do not know how many other agencies utilize firewalls, so we are unable to get the results of the e-mail test for the entire list. This gives us a rough estimate for just under half the list. Although the e-mail was sent two weeks after the first tracking, I believe the results can still be combined because the list adds or deletes only a few people each week.

[17] Many of the people within the office do not read the COP, because it contains information they had already discussed in the morning huddle.

mail sent from the ROIC. For a more conservative estimate, we can assume that only the 197 recipients read the bulletin, which is a read rate of 24% (197/806).

Survey of COP Readers

Before I sent the COP readership survey, I learned that the number of people on the COP listserv had increased to more than 2,500 people after the Law Enforcement Outreach Officer had added his list of contacts to the listserv, without the knowledge of two of the other list managers. The new contacts included many local and state police. Unfortunately, it was not possible to replicate the COP tracking with this larger list, as many of the additional recipients were out of the network and e-mails sent from the ROIC could not be traced. If the additional 1,700 contacts would have responded at the same rate as the initial 800 contacts, a return rate of about 10% would have been expected.

However, this is only an assumption because there are differences between the two recipient sets with respect to the amount of time they had been exposed to the e-mail listserv. Nevertheless, I have assumed that these new additions can increase the number of respondents to the survey because more of the recently added recipients might be interested in the material that is disseminated and enthusiastic about receiving it.

If recipients do not read the ROIC e-mails because they receive too many overall, ignoring these e-mails might occur only after recipients have been on the list for an extended period. Newer recipients may still read them regularly rather than delete them and will thus be more likely to respond to the request to respond to a five-minute survey.

To assess perceptions by COP readership about the daily bulletin, a survey was

created and a link to take the survey e-mailed to the listserv on March 7, 2011 (see

Appendix B). The e-mail read as follows:

> Dear NJ COP bulletin readership,
>
> In an effort to improve our operations and enhance the quality of the NJ Common Operating
> Picture (COP) report, we are sending a survey to you regarding various aspects of the report we
> would like your opinion on. As a valued member of the law enforcement community, your
> feedback is critical to this initiative and the overall viability of the NJ ROIC and the successful
> execution of its mission.
>
> The survey can be found at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NJROICCOP and should take only
> a few minutes to complete. Any information you include will be managed confidentially. We are
> committed to continuous improvement in all areas and your participation in this survey is very
> much appreciated.
>
> Thank you for your support. If you would like to provide your comments to us directly, please feel
> free to contact researcher Carla Cue[18] directly at (210) 836-6640 or at njroicanalysis@gw.njsp.org
>
> Thank you in advance for your involvement,
>
> Analysis Element
> NJ Regional Operations Intelligence Center
> 2 Schwarzkopf Drive
> West Trenton, NJ 08628
> (609) 963-6901
> (609) 671-0923 fax

In addition a link to the survey was also included in the COP e-mail, asking people to

participate. The results show 138 responses on the first day and a declining number

thereafter. A second reminder e-mail, March 15, 2011, generated 38 responses that day

and, again, a decline thereafter. Hypothesizing that the response rate might increase if the

e-mail were personalized, a final e-mail was sent on April 6, 2011, from the personal

work account of the privacy officer rather than the generic ROIC account. The survey

garnered a response rate of about 12.6% (315/2500).

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[18] Cue is the author's maiden name and was used for all contact during the survey and initial set of
interviews.

To keep the response time to less than five minutes, there were only three mandatory questions. The required information included the agency name, the type of organization for which the respondent worked (federal, state, local, tribal, private sector), and the respondent's position within the organization (upper-level management, middle-level management, patrol). All the other questions were optional. The results indicated that 250 of 315 people (79.4%) completed the survey. Some respondents chose not to answer some of the questions.

An important caveat must be noted. Given the approximate percentage of individuals on the COP listserv who completed the survey (12.6%), the survey's results should be understood as the opinions of those who are most invested in the COP. Therefore, the results may be skewed toward more positive responses about the COP rather than what might have been elicited if all the recipients had responded. This could mean that those who did not respond to the survey might have wanted even more information than the survey respondents requested.

If those with less interest in the product want more private information, the ROIC is unable to address this problem because of 28 CFR Part 23. Other non-respondents may be representative of law enforcement officers who never read any intelligence or information and prefer to be more reactive than proactive. There is no way to know how this affects the survey results. If, however, the ROIC considers the suggestions of the survey recipients, perhaps more people will read the COP.

In addition, the results of the survey represent the entire COP listserv, which includes people from federal, state, local, and private entities. To better understand the interaction of public-safety personnel with the COP, results of interviews conducted with

71

the recipients are included to provide more depth to the survey results. While this cannot completely address the problem of obtaining the opinions of those with the most vested interest, an attempt to conduct in-depth interviews with those who did not answer the survey will help us understand how most police officers use the COP.[19] In order to be thorough, interviews had to be limited to a particular group. Therefore, only local police were interviewed because they represent the largest percentage of the COP listserv and have the most contact with the public.

Response rates to the survey questions varied. The final two questions, which asked for additional comments and what type of information should be included in the COP bulletin, received the lowest response rates—only 25% and 15%, respectively. Table 2.1 shows the response rates for all of the questions. All other questions had a mean response rate of 83% and a median of 81%.

Table 2.1: Response rate for survey questions

Question	# of responses	Percentage	Details
Name, E-mail, Contact number	160	51%	Optional
Agency Name*	315	100%	
Type of organization at which you work*	315	100%	Federal, state, local, tribal, private sector
Position within organization*	315	100%	Upper, middle level management, frontline

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[19] Not every person who answered the survey provided an e-mail address. If provided, e-mail addresses were deleted from the master list of people who were considered for interviews. Only one person who was interviewed stated that he had completed the survey.

Would you characterize your department as urban, rural or neither?	315	100%	Urban, rural, state-level, federal-level
What type of crimes are a priority in your department?	246	78%	Violent, property, public nuisance, terrorism, white collar
How are ROIC products received in your respective department?	270	86%	Dispatch, chief, bureau head, e-mail, other
How is the information made available to frontline personnel or those with everyday contact with the public?	268	85%	E-mail, posting, meeting, not made available
On average, how often do you read the COP attachment	272	86%	Every day, every other day, 1-2/week, 1/month, never
When was the last time you read the COP attachment closely?	272	86%	Yesterday, few days ago, last week, last month, cannot remember
What was it about?	159	51%	Open-ended
Why did you read it closely?	160	51%	Open-ended
Do you regularly forward the e-mail to anyone?	269	85%	
To how many people do you forward it?	93	30%	0, 1-5, 5-10, 10-50, 50+
On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not valuable at all and 10 being extremely valuable, how valuable is the information in the COP?	258	82%	
How is the information in the COP used?	258	82%	Senior officials, mid-management, all

			people, no use, other
What type of bulletin would be most useful?	259	82%	Daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, when sig. event occurs
Are you and/or your department units familiar with all of the resources/capabilities available to assist public safety efforts at the N.J. ROIC?	246	78%	Yes/No
Have you found any of the other intelligence products distributed by the ROIC useful? i.e. POP reports, incident assessments, etc.	246	78%	Yes/No
Does your department know "where to go" with a request for N.J. ROIC assistance (contact information, ROIC internal structure)?	246	78%	Yes/No
What type of information should be included in the COP in order to make it more useful?	80	25%	Open-ended
Additional comments	38	12%	Open-ended
Completed the survey	250	79%	

*= Mandatory questions

The majority (63%) of the survey respondents classified their organization as local. These included local New Jersey city police departments, Pennsylvania and Connecticut police departments, and county prosecutors' offices. The majority of the

25% of respondents who classified their agency as state-level represented the NJSP and the New Jersey OHSP. A quarter of the respondents (25%) were from a state organization and 7.9% worked for a federal entity. Most of the federal representation came from the FBI. Only one respondent worked for a tribal organization, and 4% of respondents worked in the private sector. The ROIC personnel assumed there are not many tribal agencies represented on the listserv. There was an almost equal distribution of representation from upper-level management (33.7%), middle-level management (30.2%), and patrol (36.2%). Most of the respondents (41.9%) work in an urban setting. Respondents from rural and state-level departments each had 76 respondents—or 24.12% of the total number of respondents. Table 2.2 shows the descriptive statistics of the survey respondents.

Table 2.2

Descriptive statistics for survey respondents (315)

Type of Organization	
Federal	7.90%
State	25%
Local	63%
Tribal	1%
Private	4%
Level within Organization	
Upper-level	33.70%
Mid-level	30.20%
Frontline	36.20%
Setting of department	
Federal	9.86%
State	24.12%
Urban	41.90%
Rural	24.12%

COP: Who Gets It? How Do They Get It?

Survey questions asked how the COP bulletin is received,[20] how it is made available to patrol, and, if e-mailed, to how many people it is forwarded. The results revealed that of the 270 people who responded to the question, 84% receive the COP e-mail by personal/work e-mail. This large percentage is to be expected as this is the main method of distribution for the COP. Fifteen percent of respondents receive the COP from the chief, the bureau or unit head, or through dispatch. One person responded that he/she manually looks for it online.

Table 2.3		
How Do You Receive the ROIC Products?		
Personal/Work E-mail	From the Chief/the Bureau or Unit Head	Look up Manually
228 (84%)	41 (15%)	1 (.37%)
		Total Responses:270

The principal audience for whom the ROIC writes the COP bulletin is the law enforcement community, including patrol as they have the most day-to-day contact with the public. When asked in the survey how the information in the COP bulletin is made available to those who have daily contact with the public, 63% of respondents (169/268) said it was made available by e-mail; 19% make the information available in a meeting of officers such as briefings or roll calls; and an additional 4% post the COP in a public area. Four percent of the respondents said it was not made available to any other people.

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[20]While the ROIC sends out an e-mail, we surmised that people could also receive the product as a forward from someone else. The COP is also posted to RISSNET and could be downloaded.

Of those who responded "other" (8%) and chose to fill in a response, the majority said the information was made available to specific departments or squads. A minority said the information was made available in all the previously mentioned formats, and the deciding factor was the nature of the information itself. For example, a wanted picture may be posted in the break room for all of the officers to view. One respondent said the information is put in the officers' mailboxes.

Table 2.4				
How Is the Information Made Available to Frontline Personnel or Those with Everyday Contact with the Public?				
E-mail	Meeting	Posting	Other	Not Available
169 (63%)	53 (20%)	13 (5%)	12 (4%)	21 (8%)
				Total Responses: 268

In some departments, the supervisor is the only one who receives the COP. He or she will then forward it to an intelligence officer or the entire patrol. It is important to note that the people on the listserv are not the only ones who receive this bulletin. E-mails can be forwarded easily, which is the main reason why top-secret information is omitted from this document. To find out how many people forward the COP e-mail, survey respondents were asked, "Do you regularly forward the COP bulletin e-mail to anyone?" Among those who responded to this question, 271 (34%) answered. Those respondents were then directed to the question, "To how many people do you forward it?" The largest group, 42 (15%) indicated that they forward the e-mail to 1-5 people; 20

(7%) indicated that they forward it to 5-10 people; 23 (8%) responded that they forward it to 10-50 people; and 7 respondents (3%) said they forward it to more than 50 people.

Table 2.5
Do You Regularly Forward the COP Bulletin E-mail to Anyone? If Yes, to How Many People?

0	1-5 People	5-10 People	10-50 People	50+people
179 (66%)	42 (15%)	20 (7%)	23 (8%)	7 (3%)
				Total Responses: 271

The next question sought to find out how and who is using the information—for example, if it used by upper-level management to direct patrol, by middle management for investigative purposes, or for general awareness that is made accessible to the entire department. The responses of the 258 people who answered this question were not mutually exclusive: 36%, the greatest number of responses, indicated that investigative personnel were made aware of the information; 29% noted that all people in the department were made aware of the information; 24% said that only patrol personnel were apprised of the information; 24% indicated that middle management decides how to use the information; and 20% said that senior officials use the information to direct those under their command. A small number of respondents, 2%, said that the information was of no use. The majority of the respondents who provided an open-ended response (5%) indicated that they selectively forward the information to others to whom they feel it is relevant.

Table 2.6

How is the Information in the COP Used?

Investigative Personnel	All People	Patrol Personnel	Middle Management	Senior Officials	No Use	Other
93 (36%)	74 (29%)	63 (24%)	61 (24%)	51 (20%)	6 (2%)	13 (5%)
						Total Responses: 258

In-depth interviews were conducted to shed more light on how patrol received the information. In some departments, the chief had decided that all police should regularly receive the daily COP bulletin, either by e-mail or during the roll-call meeting at the beginning of the shift. Police could choose whether or not to read it if sent by e-mail, but at least the information was made available to them. In other departments, only detectives received the bulletin. Many police-agency detectives did not know if patrol received it. Some agencies printed the bulletin and left it in the break room or in a book with other notices for the patrol. This book or binder contained BOLOs and other officer-safety notices.

One surprising and very significant finding that emerged from the interviews was that many of the officers interviewed did not know how they initially started receiving the e-mails. Many of the officers in middle-management positions or in patrol said they started receiving the COP one day and surmised that their chief had included their names on the list. They actually did not know whether others within the department were on the distribution list but thought that their colleagues also received it. One of the detectives said he always believed everyone received it until—after I approached him for an interview—he asked others and was surprised to discover that was not the case.

One of the most interesting findings from the in-depth interviews was how frequently one person within a department would take it upon himself or herself to make patrol aware of the COP bulletin. Many police departments did not have enough staff to cull through intelligence and send out only what was relevant to patrol. Thus, many of officers interviewed printed out the bulletin or specific parts of it to distribute to patrol or display on a board where it would be noticed by patrol. These officers valued ILP and believed it not only could help direct the focus of patrol but could also provide good information for the safety of their fellow officers.

Figure 2.1 shows the COP dissemination process for the police agencies that were interviewed. The ROIC sends the COP (by way of MAGLOCLEN) to the chief, select officers, or to dispatch. An e-mail address for a dispatch unit is included in the distribution list only if the chief or someone within the department has given this e-mail address to the ROIC. The chief will then forward the bulletin to an intelligence analyst who reads through it to determine whether there is any pertinent information. If so, the analyst will forward the e-mail to the officers in the department or post it in the break room. One chief with whom I spoke e-mailed it to dispatch only if he wanted it to be read by other officers. Many of the select officers indicated they did nothing with the COP after they received it. As mentioned earlier, however, a few proactive officers did print out the sections of the COP they thought were most important and distributed them to patrol via e-mail or a flyer in the break room.

Figure 2.1

COP Dissemination Process
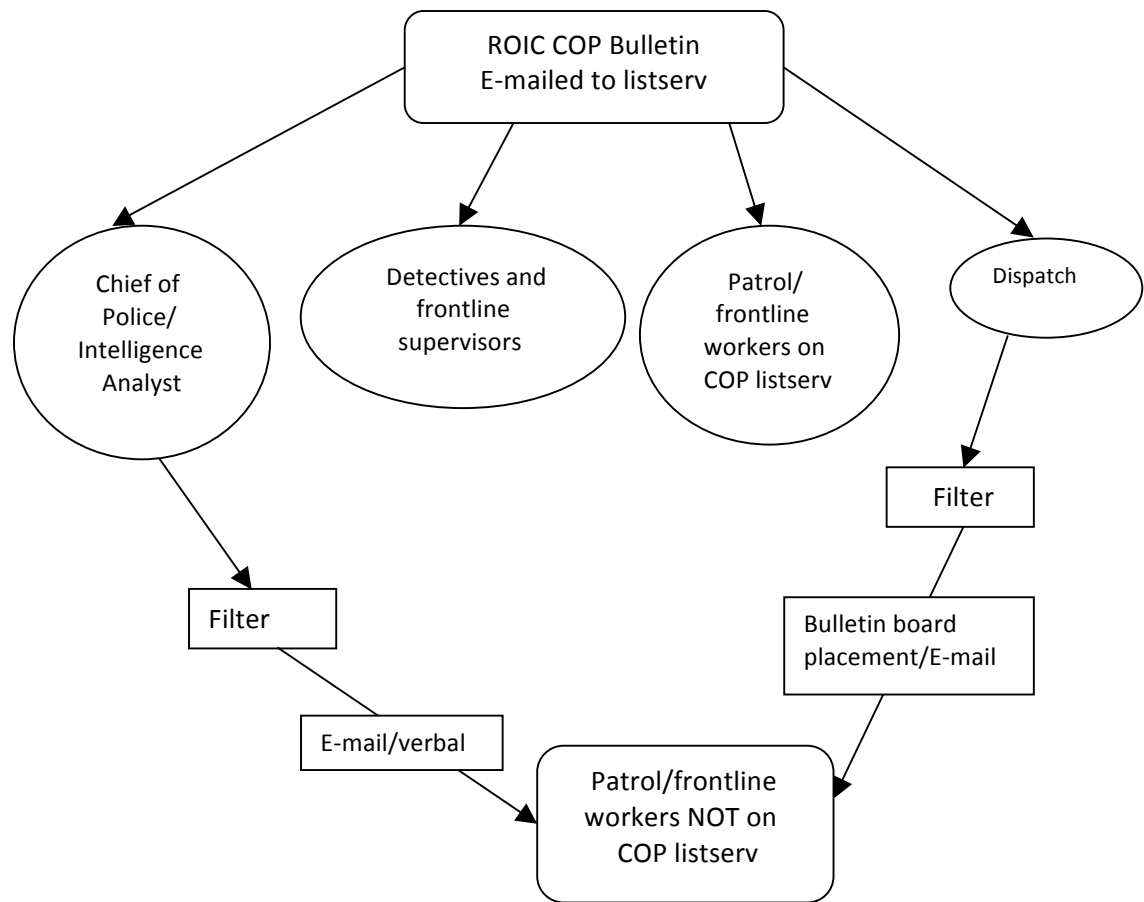
In addition, communication failures occur if some of the New Jersey police departments are absent from the COP distribution list. Given that the list was not set up systematically, this is a very real possibility. If no one in a given department is receiving the COP by e-mail, it can be assumed that patrol would receive it only if the county prosecutor's office has forwarded it to that patrol's department.

I interviewed police officers from 13 different counties across New Jersey and found that some counties were more proactive than others about sending information. Some police officers did not know if their county sent out a regular crime bulletin, while

many other officers noted that they received criminal information bulletins not only from their own county, but from other counties as well.

Select officers may not pass the COP on if they believe everyone is receiving it already. Regardless of department size, dissemination of the COP varies and is fragmented for some agencies. In one city, an officer said the department had its own intelligence unit and, therefore, distributed the COP information in its own bulletin. Another officer, from a large city, said there was no information-sharing or COP distribution in his department. In fact, even within the department, the shifts did not communicate important local intelligence gathered from the night before. Still, other officers interviewed said they often saw information from the COP in intelligence bulletins put out by other agencies.

Another important concern uncovered during the interviews was that not all police had access to work e-mail; and those who did were not required to check regularly. Thus, the only way for them to receive the information consistently is if someone within the department is assigned or takes the initiative to disseminate it in another manner.

How Often Is the COP Read?

For relevant information to be used by patrol, the ROIC must first ensure that the e-mail recipients are receiving and then reading it. Tracking the e-mail indicated only about 10% of the recipients sent back a read receipt. Therefore, the survey respondents were asked, "On average, how often do you open the COP bulletin attachment to read more about a topic in the COP bulletin?" This would indicate whether the information contained in the daily COP bulletin appeals to the e-mail recipients. Of the 272

respondents, 161 (59%) responded that they opened the attachment daily, 80 (29%) indicated that they read it every other day or once or twice a week, and 14 (5%) said they read it once a month or never. The "other" option was chosen 17 (6%) whose most frequent response was that they read it upon receiving it. This most likely means that they read it when it has been forwarded to them from another source.

Table 2.7 On Average, How Often Do You Open the COP Bulletin Attachment to Read More About a Topic?				
Daily	1-2 Times a Week	Once a Month	Never	Other
161 (59%)	80 (29%)	8(3%)	6(2%)	17 (6%)
				Total Responses: 272

Despite assurances that the survey was anonymous, survey respondents may have answered in what they perceived to be a socially desirable way and thus may have felt the need to overestimate how often they read the COP bulletin. However, there is some evidence that people will answer in a less socially desirable way when using an electronic survey (Kiesler, Siegel, & McGuire, 1984; Kiesler & Sproull, 1986). I, therefore, asked respondents, "When was the last time you read the COP attachment closely?" followed by "What was it about?" and "Why did you read it closely?" Among the respondents, 136 (50%) said they had read it yesterday, 102 (38%) indicated they had read it in the last few days or last week, and 34 (13%) said they had read it in the last month or could not remember the last time they had read it closely. The two subsequent open-ended questions generated far less feedback. Of the 272 respondents, 159 (58%) and 160 (59%) respondents respectively, skipped the questions entirely. Several possibilities may explain

this lack of response. Respondents simply may not have wanted to write the real response, they honestly could not remember, they could have overestimated how often or how recently they read the COP and might not have remembered its specific contents.

Table 2.8				
When Was the Last Time You Read the COP Attachment Closely?				
Yesterday	A Few Days Ago	Last Week	Last Month	Cannot Remember
136 (50%)	68 (25%)	34 (13%)	5 (2%)	29 (11%)
				Total Responses: 272

When asked about the last COP attachment they read, many survey respondents remembered they had read about terrorism and some mentioned reading international bulletins. By dividing the responses according to local/statewide bulletins, national bulletins, and international/terrorism bulletins, I found that 64 responses included a terrorism or international component. One of the most widely read and, therefore, most popular items was a bulletin about water-borne improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Water-borne IEDs were a recent topic and, while the large number of responses could be attributed to the recent bulletin on the subject, recall may also be ascribed to the topic's distinctiveness (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). While local and statewide responses were also popular, very few respondents remembered national bulletins. The rest of the responses were varied and included answers that mentioned human-trafficking, drugs, and gangs.

Respondents reported a variety of motives that prompted them to read the bulletin. One of the most frequent was that it was normal procedure or part of their jobs.

These respondents said it was their due diligence to keep up with threats in order to piece together information. Another group of respondents stated that they read the bulletin because it pertained to their area of patrol or an area very close to them. A smaller group of respondents said they read the bulletin because it sounded interesting or because they saw something in it that they might see often in their own communities. For example, one respondent noted that a bulletin on fraudulent student visas piqued his interest because his department sees many student visas.

In-depth interviews helped reveal how frequently police officers read the COP bulletin. Upper-level management—including chiefs, captains, and lieutenants— skimmed through the COP every day. They seemed to know immediately whether the information was germane to their needs and concerns. When asked how they knew what to look for, many replied that experience had given them the knowledge to understand what was most pertinent to them and their departments. On the other hand, middle-level management—including detectives and sergeants—were less likely to read through the bulletin. Many, with the exception of the officers who had taken it upon themselves to disseminate intelligence, said they would skim through it when they had time.

When asked what types of headlines made them read further, all the interviewees mentioned items about officer safety or cities or counties in their immediate vicinity. Many of the officers skipped information if was not about something in their area. For example, officers in cities in southern New Jersey scrolled down to the southern New Jersey section of the COP bulletin to see if there were any crime patterns emerging in that area. One officer, however, did say he read about what was occurring in northern New

Jersey because he believed that crime patterns and trends that first occurred in that area would eventually be replicated in the southern part of the state.

The interviewees also read the information in the bulletin if the headlines corresponded to intelligence regarding soft targets in their own communities. For example, one police officer explained that, because his town has many highways and hotels, he looked for headlines that may offer intelligence about highways as targets or new tactics or techniques criminals are using involving transportation. More recently, intelligence has been received that train stations may be the next targets of terrorist attacks, and many New Jersey cities have passenger train lines that run through them. The interviewees mentioned they consistently read the in-depth passages that mention train stations. Other officers read the intelligence only when it pertained to their area of investigation such as gangs or narcotics.

What Do Recipients Want in a Daily Bulletin?

I asked survey respondents to name the focus of their unit or department in order to determine what type of information is most useful. This was not a mutually exclusive question, so respondents were able to select more than one option. There were 246 responses. Property crimes had the greatest number, with 155 (63%) of respondents, while violent crimes and public nuisance crimes had 141 (57%) and 104 (42%) responses, respectively. Terrorism and white-collar crimes had the least number of responses with 89 (36%) and 66 (27%) responses, respectively. Of the 41% of respondents who chose to add a response for "other," many said the focus of their department was all of the crimes.

Intelligence, training, narcotics, and traffic were also recorded as responses for other foci of the department.

Table 2.9					
What Types of Crimes are a Priority in Your Department?					
Property	Violent	Public Nuisance	Terrorism	White Collar	Other
155 (63%)	141 (57%)	104 (42%)	89 (36%)	66 (27%)	102 (41%)
					Total Responses: 246

The final portion of the survey sought to determine the importance respondents ascribed to the COP bulletin, how it could be improved, and if they knew about the other resources the ROIC offers. First, the survey asked the respondents to rate the information in the COP bulletin on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being not valuable at all and 10 being extremely valuable. The majority of the 260 respondents (80%) rated the COP bulletin at 5 or higher. The mode was 8, with nearly a quarter of the responses. Only 6% of the respondents rated the information at a 2 or 3; no one rated the information at a 1.

One concern expressed by some of the ROIC analysts was about information overload—whether the center is sending out too much information too frequently. I, therefore, asked the respondents what type of dissemination schedule would be most useful. Of the 259 respondents, 200 (78%) indicated that a daily (39%) or weekly (39%) bulletin would be most useful, only 16 (6%) felt the schedule should be reduced to biweekly or monthly e-mails, and 24 (9%) felt that the bulletin should be disseminated only when a significant event occurred. Many of those who responded "other" (19 or 7%) indicated they would like to see it on a daily basis and also when significant events occur.

Table 2.10

What Type of Bulletin Would Be Most Useful?

Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Sig. Event	Other
100 (39%)	100 (39%)	9 (3%)	7 (3%)	24 (9%)	19 (7%)
					Total Responses: 259

The final two open-ended questions were presented to further determine what recipients would like to see in the daily bulletin. The first question—"What type of information should be included in the COP bulletin in order to make it more useful?"—elicited 80 responses. Many of the respondents praised the current configuration of the bulletin and said it should remain the same. However, a majority of wanted more local or New Jersey-centric information. Respondents said they could find the information about international crises in the news but wanted to know how these related to them or to a patrol in New Jersey. Many added that the information needed to be timelier and that emergency notifications should be sent out as needed.

The second question asked for any additional comments. Once again, many were very complimentary and praised the efforts of the ROIC to report intelligence to the New Jersey law-enforcement community. There were some negative comments, including "Too much of the information contained in the COP is a repeat of common open source news." Another respondent said, "The COP bulletin is far inferior to other fusion center products I receive," but did not elaborate. Other than these two comments, however, the rest were positive or offered minor suggestions for improvement.

In-depth interviews reiterated what survey respondents said about the COP bulletin. Many appreciated the information, even if it was available on open-source

websites such as CNN. Interviewees said they did not always have time to read newspapers and could, therefore, go to the COP to get the most accurate account of what had occurred nationally or internationally. Osama bin Laden's death had occurred prior to the interviews, and some respondents said they did read through the COP intelligence on bin Laden because they believed the ROIC was able to give an unbiased opinion, as opposed to what was offered by other omnipresent news sources. While open-source material was being read by survey respondents, this was rarely the type of information that was forwarded to patrol.

Not every officer interviewed agreed that all of the information in the COP warranted inclusion. One analyst, in charge of collecting bulletins and then disseminating pertinent information to his department every 2 weeks, stated that he thought patrol would see open-source material in the news; therefore, he believed there was no reason for the ROIC to put it in its intelligence reports. Another officer, who sent out his own daily bulletin to his department and nearby agencies, also complained that inclusion of the open-source material was unnecessary.

Officer safety tips were one of the most important aspects that many police officers read and passed on to others. The officers said that, while they sometimes saw the information in other places, safety was such a big concern that there was no harm in reinforcing the message. One police officer recounted how he had passed along information that proved to be useful regarding a new suicide technique involving a poisonous gas made from a detergent:

> They make a poisonous gas out of detergents, over the counter stuff. [The ROIC] put a product about that. Coincidentally two weeks later we were one of five incidents where someone tried to kill themselves that way. I had two officers go to the hospital but they were aware enough about it

to get away from it a lot quicker so their exposure was a lot less. Things like that make it a lot more valuable to us. That wound up preventing a lot more injuries.

One of the most common complaints of police officers in the southern New Jersey region was that the COP seemed to place too much focus on crimes occurring in northern New Jersey. One interviewee surmised that this could be because there are more urban cities in the northern part of the state and, thus, that region was experiencing more crime.

Officers said they would like more detail about some of the intelligence or suspicious activities reported in the COP. One officer explained that he wanted to know more about the aftermath of some of the incidents. For example, he elaborated, if a preliminary report stated that someone was caught shining a laser into an airplane, he wanted to know why it occurred. Was the perpetrator a teenager who considered the action a prank or did the act have a terrorism nexus? More information would help him understand how it might affect him in his patrol area.

Another officer offered a more calculated reason for wanting more information in the COP:

> For me, the county breakdown—if there was more detail in there … it helps us, we're always looking at that for patterns. It helps us to identify things so that we can form links. Even though scientifically, I can't boil that down, I can say [to the ROIC] we have noticed that in this track flyer, you may not have reviewed yet or didn't get because [police departments] only broadcast it to certain areas. We want to bring this to your attention. If we can get more detail in the top part of that report in the county, that would be very beneficial because there's [some] things that are listed in there that we definitely take notice of because of the dynamics of our township and the geography of what we have going on here and if we had more detail, it's just going to make us more aware. Since I know that we try to be very proactive in the intel front, collecting information, disseminating information, that would be very beneficial to us to have that detail.

This police officer, like many others I interviewed, sees the COP as a method of informing their own intelligence. As one police officer, who reads the bulletin regularly, pointed out, "Many police officers understand that it's generic and informational but at least you can basically get a snapshot of what's going on in the state."

Discussion

If information dissemination is taken for granted or undertaken indiscriminately, intelligence organizations such as the ROIC may lose customers. As a public entity formed to respond to the law-enforcement community, the center must adhere to the requests of the agencies it serves in order to contribute to the public welfare. By demonstrating it is acting on the collective values of the public and informing the law-enforcement community of terrorism issues internationally and nationally in the COP bulletin, the ROIC is able to demonstrate its legitimacy and, therefore, its existence, which strengthens public support and secures its survival. It is not enough to bring the different agencies together and provide evidence that they are collaborating. The ROIC must have something tangible to show for these efforts.

In the community of information-sharing, the myth pervades that an increasing amount of information shared with others in the larger community is a sign of productivity and utility. One of the ways the ROIC shows its utility to DHS and its many partners is to disseminate a large quantity of information to a large distribution list. If the ROIC does not provide the information to those who have the most contact with the public, who would? If this were the case with regard to utility, the center would definitely prevail over other agencies. The ROIC disseminates a daily bulletin and weekly, monthly, and yearly reports on the crime in northern and southern New Jersey to over 2,500 people. However, it is important to find out if the people who receive the information are the appropriate recipients and how they were chosen.

First, who are the "appropriate" recipients? They are the decision-makers within each department who are able to filter important information to patrol. For the COP to

reach these people, the ROIC must focus its efforts on the bulletin's listserv. As the list grew, its organization was lost because no information was collected about the additional recipients. In addition, there seems to have been little rhyme or reason, outside of convenience and networks, to explain who was actually added to the list. Some of the COP recipients did not forward the information to others in their department because they assumed the others already received it. Other recipients did not read the COP at all because they did not find enough pertinent information to make it worth their time.

It is not feasible for the ROIC to track and send a daily bulletin to every police officer in the New Jersey more than 500 police departments. It is also unlikely that each department would want the COP sent to every patrol officer. Rather, the bulletin should be disseminated to those in charge of decision-making (Mackay & Ratcliffe, 2004, p. 155). By allowing decision-makers to filter the COP information, patrol is not overburdened with too much material.

In addition, recipients expect and use different types of information. Many police officers read only the information that pertains to their area of patrol and officer safety tips. Chiefs and upper-management officials are more likely to scan through the entire bulletin because they feel they need to understand the crime environment in order to direct their patrol units. Inundating patrol with unnecessary information may cause them to ignore the entire document. The ROIC needs to disseminate the information to the customers who have a need for the daily bulletin, those who need the greater environment snapshot, i.e., the chiefs of police or the intelligence analysts for the local law-enforcement agencies. Those customers can then choose to forward certain reports to

their patrol. The ROIC is thus meeting the expectations of all of its customers and avoiding information overload.

The information the ROIC disseminates is as important as finding the appropriate audience. Once this audience has been identified, the center needs to ensure that its daily bulletin contains information that can be described as high-quality, accurate, timely, and meaningful because open-source material may be part of identifying the threat environment in New Jersey. The COP does include crime information from open-news sources such as CNN. The argument against including this information is that if a law-enforcement agent wants information on recent national or international events, he/she would have most likely already known about it from the news or from his own agency.

However, the pieces of information missing from the COP are the answers to the questions of "'So what?' and 'What does this report mean to the client that they didn't already know?' as well as the question 'Does this add to the client's presumed knowledge?'" (Mackay & Radcliffe, 2004, pp. 150-151). Customers want to know more than what they can garner from open-news sources; they want to know why they should care about it. Is there a tie to New Jersey? If trouble is stirring in Egypt and there are Coptic Christians known to live in New Jersey, what should law-enforcement officers expect?

The ROIC needs to provide a framework of understanding for police officers, who want information they can apply when they need it. Applied information allows them to make the connections more easily between what they have read or heard about in the COP and what they see on the streets. The ROIC analysts must impose structure to the information they disseminate to produce meaning for the police officers.

If the information is not placed in a context to which the recipients can relate, they may feel overwhelmed with information they feel is unnecessary. As noted by many of the people interviewed, police officers are bombarded with dozens of e-mails a day. Sifting through irrelevant e-mails takes them away from work they could be doing on the streets to protect citizens. On the other hand, reading relevant e-mails helps them to do their jobs better.

The ROIC cannot include more classified information for several reasons. First, this information can be shared only with other agents who have the same security clearance. The FBI, DHS, and NJSP all have their own security clearances. While some are shared, many are specific to a particular agency; and with a distribution list over 2,500 people, there is no way to know who or how many of those people have a particular security clearance. To get on the list, recipients do have to show they are affiliated with a law-enforcement organization or a private company that may have a need to know, but that does not guarantee the information will not go beyond them and does not directly address the security-clearance concern.

The ROIC will most likely garner the largest readership through e-mail. Readership would shrink if users were asked to sign onto a secure server to obtain the information—even if the information were more informative—especially if there is no buy-in from the customers. As pointed out by several of the interviewees, signing onto a server requires usernames and passwords that are very often forgotten. As a method of keeping sensitive information secure, e-mail distribution is very unreliable and vulnerable. Since e-mails can be forwarded to those who do not have the proper clearance, the information can be printed out and distributed to literally anyone. Another

challenge to e-mail security is that an individual's e-mail account can be hacked. As an official at the ROIC noted, the COP is written in a way such that it could be put on the front page of *The New York Times.* The ROIC has chosen to deem greater dissemination more important than a product with more depth and exclusivity.

The only way to ensure security is by hosting the information on a secure platform where those who log in have been given access after a thorough background check. The ROIC presently does not have these capabilities but does believe this may be the only way to transmit intelligence securely to the law-enforcement community. On the other hand, the major advantages of e-mail is that it is incredibly fast. Sending the COP straight to the customers' inbox makes it more accessible than hosting the information on a secure platform.

One of the most important questions not yet addressed is whether the ROIC sends out quality information in the COP. The information disseminated in the COP has reached the level of information quality if we use English's (2005) definition of information quality as "consistently meeting knowledge worker and end-customer expectations" (p. 19). According to the interviews and the survey responses of the most invested people, many of the police officers peruse the daily e-mail exactly as the ROIC had intended: Most police officers read the pertinent information in their area in order to remain aware and vigilant of the threats in their patrol area and many read through the bullet-point list at the top of the e-mail to find out if there are any headlines of interest. While many of the officers interviewed stated they could not recall a specific instance of using the information within the COP, all affirmed that the bulletin serves a valuable purpose in informing the law-enforcement community of threats. In fact, most of the

officers who receive the daily bulletin expect only a quick snapshot that they can scan through quickly. However, in order to garner more than 24%-60% readership rate, the ROIC still has work to do.

Conclusion and Recommendations

After 9/11, the law-enforcement community realized the importance of information-sharing, especially with patrol. Anecdotally, many people have heard of instances where a tip from a vigilant citizen or patrol officer has led to a big break in a case. As noted by Henry (2002), a patrol officer is more likely to give information if he thinks it might be significant. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the intelligence community to give patrol the information they need to recognize significant items.

Given the constraints of the law, what more could the ROIC add to the COP to make it more useful? As evidenced by the survey and interviews with police officers, open-source material is read by some of the COP recipients. It is easy for recipients to choose to ignore the material if they feel it is superfluous. One officer did say that perhaps open-source material should be placed at the end of the COP, so the most compelling information was at the top of the e-mail.

To make open-source material more useful, the ROIC analysts need to help police officers understand how international and national news may affect the police and the citizens of New Jersey. Many officers also wanted to know more about the suspicious-activity reporting. Rather than just reporting that a man was seen photographing a critical infrastructure, for example, the officers want more helpful or distinguishing details about this man and his activities. Was this just a tourist, a professional photographer, or an

amateur shutterbug, or was there anything that indicated that he might be obtaining information from the photographs or his proximity to the bridge to plan an attack? Should the rest of New Jersey be aware of these activities? Finally, many police officers in southern New Jersey felt that much of the COP focused on northern New Jersey topics. Many began to ignore the bulletin because they did not think the information pertained to southern New Jersey.

The most important lesson to be learned from the collected opinions of the COP readership was that the dissemination list needed to be more systematic. To reach the greatest number of people and ensure that patrol are receiving the most relevant and up-to-date information possible, the ROIC needs to send the bulletin to a more targeted list of stakeholders. The ROIC can then suggest to the police departments a possible distribution stream. Moreover, evidence from the interviews reveals that not all county prosecutors' offices send out information to the police departments in their respective counties. The ROIC may correct this communication gap by asking that all communications from the prosecutors' offices be sent to them as well. They can then ascertain which prosecutors' offices are not sending out information. If, however, the break is at the top level of the local police departments and the chiefs of police do not forward the communications, then it is then incumbent upon the ROIC to educate the police about the center's mission or appoint a police officer to be the intermediary between the ROIC and/or the respective prosecutors' offices and patrol.

It is clear that not all of the local departments are currently represented. I recommend that the ROIC send an e-mail to everyone on the current list inform him or her that the center is initiating a new COP distribution list. The current list members

should be asked to e-mail their contact and institution information if they want to continue to receive the bulletin. The names should then be categorized systematically to ensure that at least one key person from every police agency in New Jersey is represented on the list. This will assure the ROIC has daily contact with every police department in the state.

While dissemination represents a large part of what the ROIC does in order to improve the information-sharing environment in New Jersey, the center also serves as the macro-level intermediary for the 21 counties. Equipped with knowledge of statewide threats, the ROIC is able to analyze crimes that cross county borders and share this information with local police agencies. To understand how the ROIC can function in this role for the local police agencies, the final chapter will test the hypothesis stated earlier in the introduction, with an examination of the level of information-sharing occurring between the police and the ROIC and the characteristics of the departments and the people who share the most information with the center.

Chapter 3

Information-sharing Among Municipal Police Agencies in New Jersey

Researchers and practitioners agree that channels between and among public-safety agencies not only need to be clear but also need to be of adequate capacity so that information may be passed easily. In addition, the information should enhance the opportunity to assess risk effectively. At present, few empirical studies touch on the way local police agencies use intelligence from fusion centers. As Ratcliffe and Walden (2010) point out, past research has focused on police-community relations rather than on non-coercive police behavior, such as reading intelligence bulletins.

Before research can adequately address how a fusion center can improve information-sharing, we must first understand the utility of the fusion center as perceived by local law-enforcement agencies. This chapter informs the policing literature first by exploring the communication structures and processes among New Jersey municipal police officers and then by examining the relationship between local police agencies and the state fusion center, the ROIC. I test the hypothesis that police from agencies that are aware of the capabilities of or find the intelligence from the ROIC useful will be more likely to share information with the center. I believe that the police from agencies that have used the ROIC's intelligence will understand the importance of information-sharing and, therefore, will be more likely to reciprocate.

In addition, the results of this work, in the form of its data and method, will also help future researchers begin to understand how to measure information-sharing. Without a concrete form of measurement, I have chosen to measure information-sharing between the ROIC and police agencies as either phone or e-mail contact on a day-to-day basis.

Information-sharing among police agencies is measured differently because contact on a day-to-day basis is not always necessary between these agencies. Instead, I have chosen to evaluate information-sharing among police agencies as the officers' willingness to contact other departments for information or expressions of connection to these other departments.

After interviewing 21 law enforcement officials, I verify my hypothesis and further conclude that communication needs to improve among police agencies and with the ROIC in New Jersey. Currently, communication breaks down at the county level among police agencies. As hypothesized, agencies that utilize the center's analysis capabilities have the closest working relationships with it and do share information more frequently than those with no formal or informal relationship. Furthermore, the degree of interaction between New Jersey police officers and the ROIC varies based on the police officer's rank, the police department's setting, the personal connection to the ROIC, and the department's ongoing relationship with the center. I recommend that the New Jersey ROIC help facilitate additional and more effective communication with the center and among municipal police departments in the state by means of a more powerful public-outreach program.

I will first offer a review of the few empirical studies that have been completed on fusion centers in order to understand the value added from this present study. Next, I will provide the results of the examination of the state of information-sharing within law enforcement agencies, among them, and finally between them and federal law-enforcement agencies. The results of the interviews will then provide insight into how police officers use the ROIC and share information with it. Finally, I will share the police

officers' many valuable suggestions on ways to improve information-sharing between local law-enforcement agencies and the ROIC.

Previous Research

The need for an integrated law-enforcement community cannot be overstated. As pointed out by McGarrell, Freilich, and Chermak (2007), a multiunit, multiagency structure is essential in the United States because of the country's decentralized, fragmented law-enforcement structure. This also applies to the local police agencies that need to recognize patterns of crime that cross jurisdictional lines, in the same way that fusion centers have brought together different levels of public-safety governmental agencies.

As fusion centers are still relatively new, few empirical studies have examined the flow of information to the centers, among those agencies, those who work in them, and the relationship the centers have with their external stakeholders. The most recent study examined assessments of the utility of a state fusion center by law enforcement executives and personnel. Cooney, Rojek, and Kaminski (2011) administered two surveys, one to all police executives in South Carolina and the second to a sample of personnel employed by law enforcement agencies in that state. They found that 43% of executives and 60% of personnel reported the South Carolina fusion center to be very useful. Moreover, personnel who had used the center's services or had attended a training session there were more likely to rate the center as useful, compared to those who had no experience with it. Finally, they found that only 57% of personnel had used analysis services in the past year; and, during the same time period, a smaller percentage had

submitted any suspicious activity reports. The authors suggest that fusion centers should implement strategies to encourage the adoption of ILP in local law-enforcement agencies. Moreover, they conclude that the centers should educate law-enforcement personnel about their services.

As noted in Chapter 2, patrol form the basis for much intelligence-gathering and are also the consumers of the intelligence products. Therefore, it is important that agencies—such as the New Jersey ROIC—not only disseminate timely and accurate information, but also that they receive information from street-level police officers. In line with Cooney et al.'s (2011) study that "leaders who placed a high priority on ILP were more likely to provide a very useful rating of the [fusion] center" (p. 13), I suggest that police officers will be more likely to report or share information with the fusion center if they see value in the products that are disseminated by the ROIC.

Ratcliffe and Walden (2010) conducted a study that explored the relationship between a state-intelligence center and that state's troopers "with a focus on perceptions of the intelligence center, the quantity of communication in both directions, and an interpretation of the intelligence center's main product" (p. 6). Utilizing semi-structured interviews with 52 state troopers at 2 state-police locations, they found that half the troopers had not communicated with the fusion center at all, and only 9.6% had communicated with the center at least once a month. They also found that more than half the troopers interviewed were unaware of the center's capabilities. Interestingly, 49% of the state troopers found other state troopers and police officers to be the most reliable sources of intelligence.

Joyal (2010) also recently concluded a qualitative study on the efficacy of state fusion centers, using site visits to 4 centers and 49 open-ended, semi-structured interviews with participants working at the centers and others affiliated with the sampled fusion centers or the national fusion center initiatives. She found that, while fusion centers are "improving law enforcement's ability to collect and share information," they have "yet to develop reliable and robust predictive or estimative capabilities" (Joyal, p.73). She explains that analysts are still providing more investigative case support rather than predicting or preventing future crimes through analytical work. Furthermore, despite successful buy-in from law enforcement agencies, she concludes that fusion centers must continue to market themselves to other likely partners because their potential value is not known to all.

Without knowing the capabilities of the state fusion center, police turn instead to other police for information. This use of personal relationships as sources will also be examined in this chapter. Perhaps not surprisingly, studies on informal communication among police officers are scarce. A dozen years ago, Weiss (1998) conducted a study for the National Institute of Justice to determine how that police agencies communicate about innovations in the field of policing. He administered a survey to police planners in 360 local organizations and found that police used both a formal and an informal system to contact police agencies about innovation within the field. The formal network centered on professional organizations, whereas the informal network was formed by contacting "other law enforcement agencies directly to gather information needed to manage their departments" (Weiss, p. 1). Weiss found that about 40% of the police planners contacted another agency at least once a month, primarily by telephone. His study concluded that

newer technologies, including the Web and electronic bulletin boards, showed significant potential.

Other studies conducted on information-sharing among police agencies have focused more on the technology used for collaboration. For example, Coplink, a project funded by the National Institute of Justice and the National Science Foundation, has been widely studied. Coplink is a digital initiative used to link police agencies together to share law-enforcement-related information. Police officers are able to search several databases simultaneously for a person, a vehicle, an incident, and a location. Although different from the COP and other ROIC initiatives, Coplink is an example of other information-sharing initiatives. Overall, it has shown promise as an effective tool to help combat crime (Hauck et al., 2002; Zeng et al., 2003).

Results

What is the Current State of Information-sharing in New Jersey?

The 9/11 Report highlighted a serious problem in the law enforcement community. To find out whether this situation has changed, I asked interviewees a series of questions about information-sharing. It quickly became evident that communication broke down at the county level. Communication was most often excellent within the department, satisfactory among departments within the county, and needed improvement when police in departments of one county needed to speak with police in departments of another county.

Every police officer noted that information-sharing had "improved since 9/11." As one officer explained,

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I think the landscape has changed as far as information-sharing and things like that post 9/11 because that changed the landscape of the world. I think we needed to share information more. I think it's gotten better but I think it could get better. We're progressing; it's just a slow progress. People get so caught up in worrying about what's in it for them and they need to focus on the overall goals, enforce the laws, apprehend these people and not care who gets the credit for the apprehension, just make sure it gets done.

Similarly, other interviewees noted that they "were on the same team" and that they want to see the bad people off the street. While all the police officers stated that they did share information, they also noted that they had seen instances where sharing did not occur at various levels, including police officers within the department, outside the department, and when the sharing should have taken place from the federal to the local levels.

While nearly every police officer I interviewed agreed that 9/11 brought about a much-needed change, I did speak with one person who did not believe this was the case. A partner at the ROIC, who had nothing negative to say about the center itself, instead told me he did not believe that anyone at the local level was sharing information. He was extremely adamant that police agencies have not changed in his 20-plus years of criminal-justice experience, and nothing could be done to encourage information-sharing. While interview data showed that many police officers believe this to be untrue, this mode of thinking may never change completely for some individuals.

Information-sharing Within Each Police Department

Communication within each department generally seemed very good, as many police officers noted that communication was consistent and occurred frequently. A majority of the police in the departments where the officers were interviewed had an e-mail account they were mandated to check each day. In addition, many departments have

a roll call, or "muster," where important information is passed on to the officers on duty. Generally, one person within the department reviews the occurrences from the day/night before to brief the patrol or the chief on significant occurrences. The following officer's account is typical of most departments:

> Every morning we start out here at 7:00. We have a muster morning briefing. The midnight shift supervisor tells us what happened on the midnight shift and the evening shift before to give us a basic idea of what happened. If they had any calls that were serious that we might need to know about, we need to go back out to later or if there is any intelligence we need to know about, a stolen vehicle, if they are looking for certain people for robbery. Sometimes they'll give us all the information or the flyers to be on the lookout for certain people.

This is also where police officers are briefed about officer safety or BOLOs that were released in the ROIC's daily COP bulletin.

Only two police officers stated that information-sharing within their own department is poor. One detective explained that communication within his unit is good, but communication is difficult across the different units. Pointing across the hall, he said, "You would think that there's a huge wall between us, and not just between our divisions, but between the patrol and the detectives; that's been there for 30 years." He explained that he would sometimes tell the other units about a possible lead on a case given to him by a source.

> We have come to them and said "hey one of our snitches said x, y, z and it might help your case" but then they tell us that we are holding onto information. What information am I holding onto? If I know something that's going to help you, I will tell you. I am not going to say everyone [should] have an open investigation because once it starts getting around, people talk.

He went on to explain that he is currently trying to take the mystery out of his own police work among patrol and others by inviting them to his department on a rotating basis. This helps others understand his own police work and his philosophy about sharing information.

Another officer voiced a more serious concern regarding communication within his department. He said that police officers do not communicate from one shift to the next.

> If there's a shooting at night and they get the shooter, [police officers think] "ok we got him, we're done." They won't tell anyone. It could be a gang thing. The shooting could be retaliation or something, so even though you got the shooter, the victim's guys are going to say, "screw that, we're going to come back." That's information you should put out there. But they don't. They got the shooter … move on.

While many of the police officers interviewed stated that communication was generally consistent among the officers in their own department and across shifts, this department seemed to be an outlier.

Information-sharing Within the County

According to the interviewees, information-sharing within the county was also generally good because they felt comfortable calling other departments in their county for information. The quality of information-sharing ranged from excellent to "could be better" depending on which of New Jersey's 21 counties the department was based in. Police in larger counties said that communication was good among the departments closest to them within the county, but was more strained the further away one travelled.

The best way for the officers to receive information from police departments within their county was through a known acquaintance in that department. One detective noted that communication within the county was:

> pretty good because you are constantly working with the same people. You have a tendency to work with the prosecutor's office a lot [and] other agencies on these multi-jurisdictional cases, whether it be burglary or bank robberies or whatever…you get to know people. They are there for a while. It's easy to pick up your cell phone and call them locally, county-wide.

Police chiefs have the advantage of knowing the other chiefs in the county personally, even if they have not worked with each other. When asked about communication in his county, one police chief said that it was very good. He explained how he shares

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information by saying, "I pick up the phone and go right to the chief because I know them all. I think that's the same with a lieutenant or someone. They probably have a name. I think that is a lot of how that information gets shared." Almost all the officers interviewed, regardless of rank, noted that building personal connections with police officers in other departments is the best way to communicate within the county.

Five of the police officers noted that they communicated consistently with departments within the county through detectives' meetings. Some police departments took it upon themselves to initiate a meeting of the different stakeholders in the area who would benefit from the information-sharing. For example, one officer stated that he began a county detectives' meeting that has since expanded to other departments just outside the county. Initially, it was difficult to establish the meetings as regular events in the routine. To entice people to come, the officer personally catered the meetings. For the first few meetings, he sent an e-mail with the menu. The officer noted that the detectives' meeting is still very successful because, he believes, he holds it on the same day of every month for exactly one hour. He realizes that people are busy and says that the most important way to keep everyone coming back is by making sure that the meeting is no longer than it needs to be, and the only agenda item is that of sharing intelligence. Federal, state, and local police agencies are all involved in this particular meeting, and they "bring what [they] have." The stakeholder may bring an informational sheet or a wanted picture and

> put the pile on the table. Everybody takes a piece of paper and when it's your turn, you can explain what you gave out and then people will shoot up hands. "I know that guy" or "he's involved with this girl," or "the girl you're looking for is his ex-girlfriend."

The officer noted that information-sharing in these meetings is extremely helpful in closing cases for some area police officers.

Efforts to establish on-going detectives' meetings have not been met with equal success. While other police officers mentioned detectives' meetings, at least 4 interviewees stated that the meetings had become less useful because of poor attendance. Officers noted that they simply did not have the time or the resources to send someone to a monthly meeting that was sometimes an hour away. As one officer stated, "we always try to send a rep, doesn't always happen, but [we] try." Three of the interviewees surmised that once police gained personal contacts from the meetings, then the meetings themselves were no longer a necessity. Yet another officer said that it was costly to host the meetings, because of the refreshments, and it was difficult to find a central meeting spot.

Not all the police officers agreed that communication among departments within the county was satisfactory. Of the two interviewees with the minority opinion, one, a police officer in a suburban town in southern New Jersey, said that communication was

> not great. We don't network as much as we should. On the operational level, I think the guys—the patrolmen—might speak with the other patrolmen but as far as admin and supervisors, I don't know that it happens as frequently as it should.

On the other hand, a police detective thought that the detectives were good about sharing information with one another but that patrol did not have the same mentality. He felt they had an ownership attitude about a particular crime, that it was theirs and they did not want to tell anyone. The detective went on to say that communication was "a little bit better but nowhere near as good as it could be."

Information-sharing Outside the County

In a state as small as New Jersey, with 21 counties, many police departments are relatively close to departments in other counties. Despite this proximity and the knowledge that criminals travel, information-sharing seems to break down at the county level. A large majority of those interviewed (16/21) stated that information-sharing with departments outside the county was not good. In other words, many of the police officers did not feel comfortable reaching out to other departments outside their county for information.

A very small minority, 3 police officers, however, thought that communication among departments across counties was good. They remarked that the county detectives' meetings, which include the police departments of nearby counties, is the most important way to share information. For instance, two counties in particular have a very good working relationship because of their proximity to one another and their large shared boundary. All the police officers who were interviewed in these two counties mentioned this meeting and its utility. In fact, the connection was even noted by some officers from other counties. This relationship seemed to be an anomaly, however. Another police officer said that communication has improved over the last few years. He believed this was because police agencies have become "so reliant on one another because you don't have this huge pool of personnel to keep drawing from. A lot of times you have to form these partnerships to solve these crimes."

If a county detectives' meeting is not part of the protocol, police officers said that their preferred method for disseminating information is through the Technology to Recover Abducted Kids (TRAK) message. These messages are critical alerts sent via e-

mail and/or fax to police departments throughout New Jersey. As explained on the Lyndhurst Police website (2005),

> TRAK, Technology to Recover Abducted Kids, is a computer software system that was originally designed to help law enforcement agencies locate and recover abducted children. It has since been used in countless types of cases, assisting law enforcement in the process of communicating important visual information. This system allows any police officer to quickly and efficiently create high-resolution photo bulletins and share them electronically with other law enforcement jurisdictions, the media, and the community, when they deem it appropriate.

A TRAK message differs from other communication because police officers can specify which departments receive it. If a police officer seeks general information regarding a particular crime, he can send a message to all nearby departments within and outside the county. The officer can seek information from all of New Jersey. For example, one officer explained that, "if [they] start experiencing a string of burglaries, [he] will put out a TRAK message, just indicating [they] are experiencing a lot of daytime burglaries, [saying] 'this is the method burglars are using. Is anyone experiencing similar incidents? Contact us.'" When the burglaries become a serious or widespread issue, the interviewee said a task force would be created, including people from other jurisdictions with the same problem.

Others interviewees noted that TRAK messages can be easily forgotten or ignored. When asked about information-sharing with departments outside his county, one detective voiced his objection to TRAK messages by recounting a story:

> [On] one occasion, an off-line search for a particular vehicle involved in a bunch of fraud cases [turned up a] list of a dozen or so agencies that this car was ran in. So it was a matter of physically calling each one of them because you know if you send the TRAK, are you going to get a response from all of them? Probably not. So it's like let's just get on the phone and ask. That was the best means of doing that to reach outside the county.

Later, however, the same detective surmised that the lack of communication between departments in different counties was "natural. On a local level," he said, "what do I need

to get in touch with other counties for?" This police officer was only one of two interviewed who did not see communication with departments in other counties as necessary.

A majority of the police officers interviewed (16/21) recognized the value of communication among police departments across counties but often added that communication was minimal. Despite attempts at multi-county detectives' meetings, a lack of resources once again became a hindrance to communication. One detective noted that communication with departments in other counties was "very difficult with time constraints." He explained further:

> We're short one detective and with the economy, it's gotten worse. It's very difficult to find time to sit for an hour and have lunch and talk about things when you can do the TRAK flyer. It was nice because it was good networking; [you can] meet the guys from other agencies, exchange cards, [and] numbers, but it's very time consuming travel-wise. To travel from here to [a neighboring county] for lunch at 12, you are talking 2-3 hours out of your day just for that when you can get the info from a TRAK flyer. In a way, it's effective but you don't have the manpower right now to do it. We used to do it once a month.

Another officer in a small town agreed that they did not "have the people to lose for a couple of hours" and warned that the situation would only get worse with more budget cuts.

Sharing information becomes especially important when towns border each other and a serious crime occurs in one of them. One patrol officer acknowledged this and stated that he only heard about some crimes in the next town because a police officer in the department lived there:

> Sometimes I don't think [information] gets passed on as efficiently as it should and that's even with simple stuff. We have an officer who lives in [a neighboring county]. He'll come in and tell us, "Hey, did you hear about the shooting in [nearby town]?" [Nearby town] is the next town over from us but because it's [neighboring county] we just don't hear about it which can be dangerous for us. That person can be coming into our town and we don't even know it. Same thing with [another neighboring county]. Two towns away. It seems like if it's not within the county, it takes a bit more. Unless it goes out on a state-wide level, it's a little bit harder to get information or it's not passed along as freely as it seems.

Aside from personal contacts, TRAK messages and phone calls were the only means by which some of the police officers could reach departments in other counties. This has led to a poor communication system among counties. However, one detective pointed out that "counties are typically horrendous in communicating with one another which is why the ROIC is at least trying to pull it together."

Information-sharing with the Federal Public-Safety Agencies

In the course of interviews and conversations about information-sharing, the one area in which many police officers felt little had changed was between federal law enforcement agencies and local agencies. Eight police officers commented on how little was being shared that came from the federal agencies to local agencies. Unfortunately, this, in turn, sometimes leads local police officers to refuse to share their own information. One police officer noted that the FBI refuses to share information and has used different "tricks" to gather information. For example, within policing, deconfliction is a process that police officers must go through to ensure that other agencies are not investigating the same person. During deconfliction, a police officer types the name of the person he is investigating into a system that cross-references the name in other investigative databases to indicate whether another public-safety agency is investigating the same person. As one detective explained, "The biggest reason for that is so that you don't have the cops and the FBI show up at the same time or an undercover officer working it." Theoretically, deconfliction should occur in every case and can often be useful because one can pull together more information if someone else has already been working the case for some time. However, one police officer stated his problem with the procedure and the FBI:

The problem with the deconfliction is that when you put a name in the system, they contact you for information. What the FBI used to do, they would put everybody's name in the system so if I spent a month coming up with info and I put the name in there, they come to me, like "what do you got? I have been working on that." Well no, you're not but now you are that I am handing everything over. That's the problem.

Mistrust between federal agencies and local agencies is extremely dangerous for public-safety agents. If deconfliction is not occurring and agents from more than one entity are not aware that they are both investigating the same person, agents from one department may unintentionally harm those from another department. In addition, investigations may become compromised. The police officer went on to recount an occasion when deconfliction either did not occur or did not work, and the police and the DEA both showed up for a drug delivery:

We were working on a wire. There was a big package coming in from NY. We grabbed the guys going to pick it up as the DEA grabbed the guy that was delivering it. It wound up, we jumped out, DEA jumped out. We almost had a Mexican stand-off in the street. There are ways to get around that with deconfliction but nobody does that.

If local police think that they are receiving less information than they should, it is possible that everyone will refuse to participate in sharing. "When you hit that federal level, there is still that stigma that 'Do I really want to give them all this because I don't know if I am going to get that back in return?'" While the problems with deconfliction may stem from the fact that the design for the process was inadequate, the statements of these two officers point, instead, to a problem with information-sharing and receiving credit for solving crimes.

While information-sharing occurs at least at a minimal level among local police departments, it is rarer among different levels of law-enforcement agencies because certain information can be given only to others who have the same security clearance. Some recognized this, as noted here by one police officer:

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We still struggle with our federal partners. They are happy to take information in, but you won't get follow up. If our patrolman develops info that leads to something, we walk that up the chain. When we take that job down, we try to bring that patrolman in to take the lead to let them see the end result of what it is they did. Often, when you deal with feds, you may not be included. It depends on what's going on but the culture with the feds, it's still a little bit of a struggle. I would hope to see that improve a little bit more. But again, I don't know all their mandates, what they're allowed to do that may preempt them from giving us information.

Some police officers, however, decide to share information with federal agencies, even though they know that the federal agencies will not reciprocate. Four of the police officers said they decide to share information with federal partners because they feel they are all on the same "team," and they want to see the perpetrator off the street.

A lot of guys just want to get things closed. I don't care if you get the arrest, I just don't want to see this guy's name across my desk anymore. Just go. Take care of it. That's how I am. You can take all the credit in the paper, just take the guy off the street.

A small majority of the police officers (11/21) who were interviewed voiced the sentiment about "being on the same team" but knew it was not the consensus among all police officers.

Sharing Between Northern New Jersey and Southern New Jersey

A smaller, though still significant, result that emerged from the interviews was the division between northern New Jersey and southern New Jersey. Adding to the lack of communication among police departments across counties were the differences that police officers saw between themselves and the officers in the other half of the state. When asked if he saw a difference in police and policing in northern and southern New Jersey, one officer from an urban northern New Jersey city joked that northern New Jersey had electricity. Despite the intentionally jovial nature of his comment, there is something to learn from his joke. Eight police officers stated that they feel as though the other half of the state is completely different. One police chief in a suburban central New

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Jersey city noted that it was "like two different states" or "two different planets." He went on to say that he could not describe it in words, but he felt the personalities of the police officers were different. When asked if he thought the differences could be attributed to the number of large cities in the north, he said that even the smaller towns in northern New Jersey were different from southern New Jersey because of the types of crimes that they see. As an example, he explained that a small town like Hoboken in northern New Jersey, with a population of 38, 577, would most likely see far more serious crimes than any other town in southern New Jersey, with the exception of Camden. Another police officer explained that northern New Jersey is more urban, whereas southern New Jersey is more suburban.

At least three police officers said they most definitely saw a difference, not only in personality, but also in the method of policing. Many of the officers in southern New Jersey recognized that cities in northern New Jersey may be more heavily influenced by what goes on in New York City because of their proximity to the large metropolis. As one captain in a small southern New Jersey town noted, "down in south Jersey, it's a mentality thing that that is New York in New Jersey."

These perceived differences in policing could lead to hesitancy to contact police in another city, thus hindering communication. A detective in a small rural town in southern New Jersey said he would not call the Newark Police Department for a stolen vehicle because he knew they did not have the time to deal with such crimes; he knew the level of crimes there were far different from those that he would see.

Even when police officers are brought together for conferences or meetings, the differences seen by some police officers may continue to obstruct communication. For

example, one police officer from a suburban southern New Jersey city stated that, when he went to a conference held in northern New Jersey, he felt out of place because it seemed to him that all the police officers in northern New Jersey knew one another. While a minority of the police officers (3/21) believed there was no difference in people or policing across the two halves of the state, these results point to a more fractured communication system than just crossing county borders.

Reporting Crimes Through the TRAK System

A fractured informal communication system necessitates greater reliability on the formal communication system in place. Given the difference in the volume and types of crimes that occur in cities across New Jersey, it is important to understand how police officers formally share information about the crimes in their jurisdictions with other departments. One of the most common methods for reporting crime to other police departments is through the New Jersey TRAK system. As previously mentioned, police agencies can send out a TRAK message about a pattern of crime they are witnessing in their city or a picture of a wanted suspect. Police officers have the option of sending these critical alerts to the entire state or to only particular counties or departments; they are then delivered to the agency's fax machine or e-mail address and sometimes to the e-mails of the supervisors. If deemed important by the supervisors, these messages are given to patrol.

TRAK messages were the one method of communication that seemed to be universal among the various police agencies with whom I spoke. Fifteen officers noted that it was a very important way for them to inform other police departments in the surrounding area of criminals who inevitably travel outside the city boundaries. All the

interviewees said their departments—whether large or small, in the north or the south—used TRAK messages.

The policy regarding when TRAK messages were to be used varied widely from department to department. For example, several interviewees in suburban and rural police departments stated that they used the TRAK system for "everything." Those in larger or more urban police departments stated that they used the TRAK messages for BOLOs and other important crimes that occurred throughout the city. One police officer remarked that, "when we were at the height of our carjacking problem, we used to send out every morning the daily list of vehicles that had not been recovered so that other agencies could look at the car hot sheet." Another police officer said he uses the TRAK message to remind people of the monthly county-wide detectives' meeting.

The variation in the degree to which police departments use the TRAK system seems to correlate with the size of the department. Larger departments use the TRAK system less frequently than smaller ones. A police officer from a high-crime, urban city stated that, "some of us use it a little bit. Most of them don't." Only one officer in one of the larger urban areas stated that he used TRAK messages "a whole lot." He went on to say that he "use[s] it for missing persons … [and when we] are seeking specific information on a certain MO [modus operandi]." However, the lack of TRAK messages has not gone unnoticed by the smaller cities. One officer in a small city in southern New Jersey noted that he never saw any TRAK messages out of one particular large city. The interviewed police officer from that city stated that they "used it to some extent" but generally used their own internal system.

Smaller departments, on the other hand, seemed to use TRAK messages more often, much to the chagrin of some of the police officers in larger departments. These larger departments claimed that smaller departments used it too often for too many crimes. Their opinion was that smaller misdemeanor crimes did not belong in the TRAK system. For example, one police officer stated, "a lot of the larger departments will use it for major crimes. The direct opposite is that some of the smaller agencies will use it for everything, right down to a shoplifting event." Many of the police officers in the large urban areas were critical of the small police departments that used the TRAK system for the smaller crimes and said that this "is where it gets wasted." Large cities were not the only critics of the police departments that used the system in what they considered an excessive way. An officer in a suburban area said he did not like getting TRAK messages from police departments about retirement parties and fundraisers. This particular officer said he received all of the TRAK messages via e-mail and sometimes received a thousand messages a week. He did not think that being informed of a retirement party for a police officer he did not even know was a good use of the system.

Even though it is in use across New Jersey, the TRAK system has also been called "too time-consuming." One detective noted that "the fax machine sits on a desk and not everyone gets the faxes that are printed out. They slide off onto the floor and not everyone sees them." In an increasingly bureaucratic organization that requires attention to an ever-increasing amount of paperwork to fill out and review, many police officers are foregoing the distribution of a TRAK message because they have too many more pressing responsibilities. In addition, budget cuts across New Jersey have led to an increased workload for many of the officers. Many TRAK messages are sent to police

officers who may receive hundreds of e-mails every day. Only some of the TRAK messages will thus be given the attention their senders intended.

How Do the Police Use the ROIC?

The second half of this chapter examines the role of the ROIC, not only in facilitating information exchanges among police departments, but also in its other roles in gathering information from police and sometimes helping them analyze data that will result in criminal apprehensions. In my interviews of New Jersey police officers on the COP listserv, I sought to ascertain how many of the departments I contacted used or were aware of all the many resources at the ROIC. The center's capabilities include the ability to analyze crimes to identify and anticipate hot spots so that the police can redirect their resources to a problem area, time, or day. The ROIC can forward BOLOs from police departments to the listserv of 2,500 police officers, ensuring that those on the list are receiving the picture of a wanted person, which can then be disseminated to their patrolmen. In addition, the analysts at the ROIC can conduct network analyses of crime.

How Much Do Police Officers Know About and Use the ROIC and Its Capabilities?

Before asking how police officers used the ROIC, I wanted to find out how they had initially learned about it. I surmised that this information would help me understand how the center can become more accessible to those who do not know about it. Nine of the 21 interviewees responded that they could not remember how they came to know about the ROIC. Police chiefs stated that they knew about the ROIC through regular informational meetings of the local police chiefs. In later interviews, conducted with

people who were ROIC contacts, interviewees responded that they knew about the center through a personal contact. Two police officers said that a former New Jersey state policeman came to work for the department after retirement and informed them of the ROIC. One police said he heard about the center from his brother, who was a trooper. Among the interviewees, word-of-mouth was the most popular method.

In addition, some police officers initially learned about the ROIC when they had actually worked with the center on initiatives such as Violent Enterprise Source Targeting (VEST), which had been established in several cities, including Patterson, Newark, Camden, Jersey City, Trenton, and Perth Amboy. These six large cities have a long and extensive history of violent crimes, and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) saw the need for collaboration among the many different public-safety departments present in each city. The ROIC provides intelligence support and sends an employee to the VEST meetings in each city once a month, when all the stakeholders gather to share information. The police in these cities see this as a beneficial relationship, as VEST meetings seem to result in reductions in the level of violent crime according to a ROIC supervisor during a huddle.

In addition to reducing crimes, VEST meetings and other ROIC initiatives, such as Operation Ceasefire,[21] have helped inform police officers of the center's various capabilities. Many of the officers who used the ROIC more frequently identified such initiatives as the source of their awareness of the center's utility of the ROIC and thus made use of its resources. For example, one interviewee, who had previously worked

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[21] Operation Ceasefire was a monthly meeting of representatives from larger New Jersey cities that had a ceasefire unit, that is, a shooting-investigation unit that handles all non-fatal shootings within the city. The meetings took place at the ROIC, where participants shared information and reported on recent incidents in their towns. There are no longer meetings at the ROIC, but some cities continue to have a ceasefire unit.

with the ROIC when Operation Ceasefire was still operational, said that he talks to the ROIC almost daily. He noted that,

> in the past, before the ROIC, one of our major obstacles for getting information regarding immigration [was] ICE and agencies like that [and it] was damn near impossible to get some answers.... That just doesn't happen for us anymore. We pick up the phone if we have to, shoot an email to the ROIC, and with the ICE representative that sits down there, that's just not an obstacle for us anymore.

This particular officer has such a good relationship with the ROIC that he also uses the fusion center for investigative purposes. He has found that the ROIC can help his officers gather intelligence more efficiently so they can be on the street rather than at their desks:

> With any specific shooting investigation: we [used to] respond to the incident, we gathered what information we needed and then, before the ROIC was established, your next step was detectives would come in off the road, after doing an initial investigation in the field at the scene and then they would have to come in and gather a whole lot of information themselves. Information on the victim, information on possible suspects, possible witnesses, vehicles, plate numbers, things like that. Since the establishment of the ROIC and our close relationship with the ROIC, we now are able to, with a simple email, forward that information to the ROIC and they, within hours, compile all that information for us, send it back in an email form or phone call and that has been a big plus to us because it allows my detectives to be out on the street doing an actual physical investigation rather than wasting three or four hours in here trying to compile the information that the ROIC now feeds to us. It's been a major plus for us and we've had a great relationship with them.

Even if police officers did not previously work with the ROIC, some had personal contacts there that they felt they could call, if needed. For example, one officer said that he uses the ROIC to contact other cities. He noted that criminals tend to travel across jurisdictions, and it is important to talk to the police in other cities. To accomplish this, he is "networking … because of the ROIC. If I can't hook up with [town in southern New Jersey], maybe through [name of ROIC employee], we can." Another police officer, who worked in a relatively small department, stated that he used his personal contact at the ROIC to obtain information from larger departments that, he said, were not as willing to share information:

> [When getting information from a large police department], it's very very hard to pry it out. By having them working with the ROIC, we go through [name]. We call the ROIC and the ROIC can get the information for us … nothing beats personal contact.

He went on to explain that the ROIC exhibited consistent expertise in knowing what information could be shared with other agencies. Those with personal connections felt more comfortable about seeking help or information from the fusion center. In fact, many of the police officers felt lucky to have the personal connection with the ROIC:

> We are fortunate because there is a guy at the prosecutor's office who ran the ROIC.

> We had some incident at the school which put us at the forefront in Burlington County because we were having a lot of threats against a school. We were regularly dealing with them for a while. Once the relationship's established, we had a reserve officer that also works at the ROIC. He would bring back information and share with us and would broaden our horizon by asking if we knew about certain services. Now he has a good relationship with the investigative lieutenant so if there is something happening, he'll make them aware of it.

In comparison, police officers from small departments, many of whom had not worked closely with the ROIC on any of its initiatives, seemed to know only about some of the center's capabilities. For example, one officer indicated that his agency uses the ROIC to report missing persons. Another officer from a small, suburban police department in southern New Jersey elaborated on this use of the ROIC and said, "I know that when I need something I call them, whether it's pinging[22] a phone or trying to figure out something about a suspect I can't get information on. I've used them before specifically for missing persons. They are good for that stuff." One other officer indicated that he used the ROIC for gun traces, but that was his only contact.

In contrast, one police officer from a small southern New Jersey town said he had used the ROIC on three separate occasions. Three different burglars were believed to have committed over 200 burglaries in his township and surrounding counties. He

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[22] Pinging a phone means to locate the tower origin of the last signal the phone received.

explained that in this situation, "the ROIC was intimately involved. The New Jersey State Police were involved with surveillance," and 20-30 of the state troopers were involved. He later stated, "A couple of guys here know a couple of guys that work there. This is what we got, how do you help us? They usually do. They are pretty accommodating." This officer is knowledgeable of the resources, not only because of previous experiences with the ROIC, but, once again, because of close, personal contacts.

Of those who said that their police department used the ROIC only infrequently, the common sentiment was that the department was self-sufficient and had the necessary resources to target crime on its own. For example, when asked how he contacted federal agents about an ongoing case, one sergeant explained that he has a friend who works for the FBI who would direct him to the right person. He was surprised to learn that both ICE and the FBI had representatives at the ROIC.

Overall, every interviewee knew that the ROIC existed and that it had numerous capabilities and resources, but about half of those interviewed were unsure of how to use those resources. Three police officers said they had never personally used the ROIC or its resources but knew that their department had at one time or another. Those officers knew that the ROIC had an analysis unit and, as one police officer noted, thought the fusion center had the capability to do almost anything: "It's almost like the sky's the limit. I am pretty sure that if someone can do it, the ROIC can do it—'The big hype about the ROIC.' Specifically, if I ever needed something, I would call the ROIC." Unfamiliarity with the ROIC's resources seemed to be more prevalent among the detectives and patrol I interviewed than among more senior police officers. One detective said that he "[knows]

it's an intelligence center. As far as beyond that, I don't know too much about it to be honest with you."

Even some of the more senior police officers may not be using the ROIC as much as they possibly could. For example, one police chief was asked if his department would ever consider informing the ROIC if there were a string of burglaries that he thought went outside his city and county limits. He responded he had never done so, but his city "sits on the hub of 3 counties [and is a short driving distance to a 4th county] … so [the ROIC] would be a clearing house for the 21 counties." He recognized that the ROIC "would be able to geographically pass information quickly to 4 of the counties." He stated that he would begin to consider using the ROIC for this type of information dissemination. Another police chief, from a small central New Jersey town, said he knew his department did not use the ROIC "anywhere to what they could be used." He felt that part of the blame resided in his lack of knowledge about the ROIC.

How Do Police Officers Communicate Information to the ROIC?

Even if police officers are not using the ROIC's resources, it is important that they feed information back to the fusion center. Without sources of information, analysis and targeted dissemination cannot occur. To improve this feedback loop, some of the larger police departments in New Jersey have a ROIC liaison who is mandated to notify the center about significant events in their cities or "shooting hits."[23] I interviewed a police officer who identified himself as the police department's ROIC liaison and who said, "every day I am dealing with them, either e-mail [or] text. There is material being

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[23] A shooting hit is the reporting of any gunshot wound.

passed back and forth. I pass along shooting hits to the ROIC." Shooting hits are recorded

by the ROIC for the entire state of New Jersey and are evaluated each month by an

analyst.

Although I was unable to interview police officers from all the cities that have a

partnership with the ROIC through programs such as VEST, I was able to see from my

participant observation at the center that many of those cities were at least regularly

passing information to the ROIC about shooting hits. One police officer, who had worked

with the center through the VEST initiative, said he regularly worked with the ROIC:

> We have a good working relationship with them. They do the predictive analysis which is
> software we don't have access to so they are usually on top of things. When they feel there's a
> need for it, they'll send it out. When we feel, we will also reach out for them. "Can you guys do
> this predictive analysis for us?" Everything we ask them, they do for us but like I said, if they
> know there's a trend, they also pick it up. All my emails I send out goes to the ROIC also. So they
> have everything that we do also. There again, the daily crime report everyday, they get all that
> information. If we need something from them, I'll call them, usually [name of person at the
> ROIC]. When we get a big project here, it's a hot job, I'll work with him…. It's more of a
> collective. It's all separate units but we try, because of the relationship we have, we try to make it
> a collective unit. We work it out. I think that's the best way.

For counterterrorism alerts, the feedback loop to the ROIC is mandated to include

the County Counterterrorism Coordinator (CTC). Every county in New Jersey has a CTC

who, ideally—even though the interviewees noted this is not always the case—passes

counterterrorism information on from the ROIC to the police and also feeds information

from the local police back to the center. During interviews, some police knew exactly

who their CTCs were because they received regular feedback from them. Other officers

were either unaware of what a CTC was or said they did not have regular communication

with their CTCs. This seemed to be highly dependent on the quality of the CTC and the

success of his/her outreach in each county. For example, I interviewed several officers in

one county, and each of them knew the CTC by name and explained that they frequently

received bulletins from her.

Sometimes, however, the path of the feedback loop was a little unclear. I

interviewed one officer from a small southern New Jersey city who stated that his

department was initially confused about how to filter information to the ROIC. The

department initially sent information to both the ROIC and its local CTC but has

discontinued this practice and now has

> one person calling the county who filters the information up, usually via phone call because you
> are on location with a rapidly developing situation and you are giving firsthand information up the
> line and it would get up to the ROIC within ten minutes.

Other departments were confused about how to handle notifications. Some police

officers seemed to think that notifying everyone was the best way to handle the

information:

> We just had an incident at one of the hotels. Three Middle Eastern men were reported to be talking
> about Al Qaeda. [The] patrol supervisor in charge of shift that day notified the ROIC, the FBI
> representative on the Joint Terrorism Task Force and our local contact is [name] in the
> prosecutor's office (CTC). They were all notified of that incident….

More non-terrorism-related crimes were handled at the local or county level rather

than at the federal level. Many of the officers felt that the county prosecutor's office was

the first point of contact in the process to report potential crimes they felt could be linked

to others outside their jurisdiction:

> What I'll do sometimes … my first trip is out to the county. Has anybody contacted you from
> within the county? Do they have trends going on? They might say no but I talked to somebody
> down in Camden and they are seeing it down there so he'll either call for me or I'll call up to the
> ROIC, are you aware of anything that is going on? I haven't see anything in the COP but is
> something going on? Generally they'll say, "Send me what you got or what you think we should
> look at it," and I'll send it up to the unit up there to look at it. I've done it a couple of times.

Filtering information to the ROIC may also include following a chain of command. This pattern was acknowledged by half the police officers, whether they went through the county or a supervisor. As one patrol officer explained,

> We have a chain of command, like I would take it to my sergeant and he would take it up to the lieutenant, up to the captain and to the chief and it would be disseminated that way. So we wouldn't specifically, on a patrol or sergeant level, do it. It would go from the bottom to the top before it gets somewhere unless it was an emergency.

In fact, when asked about patrol's knowledge of the ROIC, many of those interviewed indicated that patrol knew the least about the fusion center. One sergeant noted that he felt it was his duty, not that of patrol, to filter information to the ROIC. He believed his patrol did not need to have any additional knowledge of the ROIC because, as the sergeant, he serves as the filter with the ROIC. When asked how much his patrol used the ROIC, another sergeant stated,

> I think it's very limited what the ROIC is used for. I am sure they have all heard of it and know it's a one-stop shop for all different agencies. I don't know if they know everything that is available there. I don't know if I do. I have been there for training classes, computers, the lab but I don't know what's all up there.

Police officers who stated that they did not share information with the ROIC cited two reasons. One officer said he did not call the ROIC because he did not think his community's local crimes were important enough to warrant the communication. Another officer, in central New Jersey, echoed this sentiment, saying that he knew the ROIC had bigger worries than any of his small-town crimes.

Still other police officers said t they simply did not know what to send to the ROIC. As one police chief made clear, even though he was aware of some of the center's capabilities, he did not know what information needed to be communicated. He believed this was a procedural issue:

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I'll have 10 different officers and they'll say 10 different things on how you get information to the ROIC. And vice versa. I bet some officers don't even know what it is. Is that partly my fault? Yes it is. I should probably be able to utilize it more for our things. But I don't know that there is good returning that information, what information they want, [or] what their analysts are doing. I know they have several analysts there....

What Do Police Officers Suggest as Remedies for the Break in the ROIC Feedback Loop?

One of the most important ways of feeding information back to the ROIC is through its connections across the state, particularly because of the targeted intelligence that comes from these connections. Therefore, I asked the interviewees to suggest how to make other officers more aware of the ROIC's resources and how to improve the feedback loop. Three senior police officers, of varying ranks, believed the feedback loop needed to be repaired at the local level. They knew that the idea for information-sharing had to begin at a more senior level for patrol and more junior police officers to become an active part of this process.

I guess one of the easier ways of doing it is you gotta have a commitment, department-wide commitment. I think you would have to have an intelligence officer to coordinate all the information to offer some of this stuff. You're going to miss things but I think that coordinator can see about the information and follow it up.

Other police officers also recognized leadership's impact in making patrol officers more aware of their environment. As one sergeant noted, "It's on us to make our guys more vigilant." Another sergeant, in a large city, knew he faced an uphill battle in his efforts to convince patrol to bring suspicious activities to his attention. He said, however, that he had seen some success as he continued to build personal relationships:

For example, the [officer] in the street crimes unit under me, we have a very good relationship. One of my detectives is very close with him. So the information is getting passed back and forth. The [officer] is communicating with people in his unit the same way. I send my people over there and they see roll call, they go talk to the guys. We started small and like I said, success breeds upon success. You get those guys to buy in, all of a sudden, they are looked up to by the patrol guys. It's got to start with all personal relationships. Start it small and get it to mushroom out. If it does catch on fire, it would be such an intelligence windfall that we would be able to tap into.

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Some police officers suggested more training by the ROIC. Two officers, who were familiar with the center's many capabilities, said they knew of the ROIC not only because they had been on a tour there, but also because ROIC representatives had come to their department to provide collaborative training:

> I think we are pretty well informed…. We use their crimetrack and mapping, say we are going to do a search warrant. We'll pull the address up and with that capability through the ROIC and the computer we can map out the safest way for the officers to go in through what they have to give us. We are pretty familiar with it. When we first got started, we made a trip down there and they went over everything with us and there were also a couple of occasions, whenever they brought in a new system or a new opportunity online, they have always been good about sending people up here for a day of hands on training or whatever to get used to the system. That has been a big help. Because they do that, there is no reason not to use it because they have always been willing to come up and make us familiar with it.

> Any outside agency that can offer [help], if it's free, I don't see a reason for any department not to jump on something like that. So I think the more training and the more outreach and the more examples they can present to these agencies that aren't using them to show them how quick and how efficient information can fly back and forth. Specific examples like that if you can throw that out to an agency that is having a problem like that, show them how that problem doesn't exist anymore because you have somebody at the ROIC, I think examples like that would certainly bring those departments that are a little hesitant bring them on board a little quicker.

As the sergeant mentioned, budget cuts have burdened and limited many police departments. Demonstrating how collaboration with the ROIC can lead to a successful relationship might result in mutual benefits for these departments. A very progressive detective in one department, who had used some of the ROIC's capabilities to apprehend a burglar, used a ROIC analysis to convince his department to become an ILP agency:

> Six months ago I said, well let's send all this intel to the ROIC to develop a geospatial map of where the burglaries are occurring and maybe they can give us an idea of where the next one occurs. They did it, we acted on it and we had the guy in 5 days. I said look what they did, look what they are capable of. It's amazing. I don't understand how it all works. They are all very smart people that sit in a room with a lot of MAs and PhDs. They were very impressed by that so we are taking baby steps.

A sergeant who filtered information from the ROIC to his patrol offered an additional suggestion. He said he often used many of the officer-safety portions in the COP to inform police officers of possible dangers. Two of his police officers had been

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hurt while responding to a call involving an attempted suicide, who had used a solution made from a household detergent. The story was published in the local newspaper. The sergeant realized, in retrospect, that this information would be good for other police officers to know, but he did not think to tell the ROIC about this when it happened. Shortly after, he received a phone call from the ROIC, which he perceived as a good way to increase communication between his department and the fusion center. He suggested that the ROIC make these calls more often in regard to other incidents across New Jersey:

> I don't know if the ROIC has someone that looks through newspapers but if they see something they might be interested in, it would be good for them to call. That's what happened…. I don't think about what I can do for the ROIC. If they had somebody like an outreach officer making the phone calls that would be pretty easy.

Discussion

After conducting an ethnographic study at the ROIC over the course of a year and a half, I became very familiar with its mission of providing information and services to local police agencies to help them incorporate ILP and thus better anticipate and target crime. I also observed that concrete evidence of the utility of such information may be difficult to see while at the ROIC. The research objective of my speaking with police officers was to find out how and when they used the fusion center's analytical capabilities. The results of the interviews led to interesting suggestions that need to be addressed.

First, while communication is better among law enforcement agencies in general, there are still breaks in information-sharing that detrimental to the process and its effectiveness. As resources dwindle, it becomes more important to pool the remaining resources and work together. The interviews pointed out a barrier between police departments within and outside counties. As many of the officers noted, criminals do

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travel. Therefore, communication is extremely important so that departments can share information and apprehend criminals.

Police officers in one region of New Jersey also see a barrier between themselves and the other "half" of New Jersey. This perception, strongly held by the police officers I interviewed, is extremely detrimental to the working relationships among the different police agencies in New Jersey. It could result in a hesitation, or even reluctance, to work with officers, not only in the other half of the state, but just 20 minutes away in another county. In a state as small as New Jersey, with its small landmass of 8,700 square miles, these sentiments do not facilitate information-sharing.

The ROIC can play a far more important role in remedying this situation by becoming an agency that connects law-enforcement agents across county borders. If executed appropriately,[24] detectives' meetings that extend past county borders can link police officers to one another. The officers I interviewed who still attended these meetings felt that communication was good with other departments because they felt comfortable reaching out to their contacts. In addition, as many of the officers noted, a personal contact is one of the best ways to gather information:

> Also, being here so many years, one of the most important tools you have is a name. If you call a department asking for information you might end up getting a civilian operator answering the phone, you might get some almost retired guy who doesn't care or you get a desk officer who is too busy to help you at all and what you want is a name and a person that you can call directly on the cell phone and have them actually point you in the right direction so that you have the info. Personal contact is the best.

In fact, the ROIC has already recognized this need and has started an initiative called the New Jersey Southern Intelligence Exchange, which often goes by its acronym,

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[24] How to appropriately execute detectives' meetings is beyond the scope of this study. However, as pointed out by one police officer during his interview, these meetings should be brief and occur regularly at the same time each month.

NJSIX. NJSIX is a meeting of representatives from six different counties in the southern half of the state. While still new, this initiative looks very promising and could become the model for other such meetings.

Furthermore, if police officers do not know the name of a person at a particular municipal, state, or federal department, they need to know that they can call the ROIC. The ROIC analysts assigned to each of the regions of New Jersey have contacts in many of the departments across the state. It is highly unlikely that officers now learn about the center through word-of-mouth. Smaller and more rural police departments will likely benefit the most.

The ROIC is not the only organization that needs to make more contact with police departments. While I discovered no documented evidence, I suggest that communication may disintegrate at the county level because of the lack of initiative by county prosecutors' offices or their failure to recognize their role in connecting law enforcement agencies. According to New Jersey law, the county prosecutor is the chief law-enforcement officer for the county. "As such, the Prosecutor has wide-ranging authority over the law enforcement community in the county" (Bergen County Prosecutor's Office, n.d.). Thus, police departments work under the mandate of their respective county prosecutor's office and may not feel the need to work with other departments outside their county. Some officers understand this and call the county prosecutor's office that oversees the department from which they may need information rather than the department itself.

While this may save time for police officers, by limiting the number of phone calls an officer needs to make, the system needs to be more robust. First, the 21 CTCs are

not all fulfilling their collective role as the filter for counterterrorism information between the police departments and the ROIC. Each CTC should be the most informed person in the county, as he/she is able to gather information from both police departments and the ROIC. If, however, police officers are not aware of their CTC, as evidenced by the interviews, the CTCs are unable to gather information from the police officers, nor will the officers know to send information to them.

Secondly, the CTCs are the gatherers and disseminators of counterterrorism information. As pointed out by one of the managers at the ROIC, there is no filter for other information or suspicious activity that is not overtly counterterrorism information.

The public outreach officer at the ROIC, who is heavily invested in understanding and preventing gang crimes, told me during participant observation that he would like to see the equivalent of a CTC for violent crimes—or a Violent Crimes Coordinator (VCC). If a VCC can act as the liaison between the county police departments and the ROIC for violent crimes, as the CTC is already mandated to do, police officers can make the VCC their first point of contact for filtering this type of information to the ROIC. The officers can also contact their local VCC to get in touch with other county VCCs and, thus, other police departments.

The efficacy and ease in contacting the VCC about crimes that may extend to other counties is contingent upon the communication among the 21 VCCs. This served as the impetus for setting up monthly videoconference meeting among the CTCs. As found with the detectives' meetings, however, these meetings are not well-attended. When I first began my observation at the ROIC, the average number of attendees was six. As a

result, these meetings no longer take place. If the ROIC intends to institute a VCC, it first needs to ensure better participation each month.

In addition to a more structured chain of communication, universal mandates need to be used by all police departments regarding TRAK messages. These messages have been identified as the one form of communication that many officers use to send a message to many different police departments simultaneously. It is an invaluable information-sharing tool that is not used to its full potential because its practice is inconsistent from department to department. Larger police departments may not use it at all, whereas smaller departments send out TRAKs for everything. Firm, universal instructions on when to use these messages should be mandated for all departments so that the communication will be more effective. The ROIC does not have the power to do this. However, it may be able to mitigate this restriction by training municipal police departments so police would understand the importance of sharing only information that others might find useful.

Small departments in southern New Jersey need to be more familiar with ROIC's capabilities and how using the fusion center can benefit them, regardless of the type of crime they experience. As evidenced by the interviews, police from smaller departments do not use the ROIC, even though many have seen serious budget cuts. Police officers were either unaware of the resources available or they did not feel their problems were of sufficient magnitude to be handled by the ROIC. Officers from larger departments, particularly those who have had a working relationship with the ROIC in one of its initiatives, utilize the center's resources and have attributed decreases in shooting hits to their collaborative partnership. Small towns in southern New Jersey may not experience

the amount of crime that those in the northern part of the state have, but their quality of life is also negatively affected.[25] The officers in southern New Jersey should also be made aware of the resources available to them.

In addition to smaller departments, lower-ranking police officers should be encouraged to use the ROIC's resources or at least be made aware of the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the fusion center. A lack of knowledge or a disinclination to use the ROIC's capabilities could have been due to the type of information that certain ranks think is useful in their investigative roles. For instance, patrol officers respond to 911 calls and take accident reports. Detectives investigate crimes and carry out follow-up on investigations. Both of these ranks seemingly have a limited need for many of the ROIC's capabilities, such as geo-spatial mapping or contacts with federal agencies. Instead, it is often believed in policing that those in the higher ranks, including sergeants and captains, might find a greater need for these tools in order to deploy patrol.

Despite this continuing mindset among many police officers, not all practitioners agree with this assumption. Tom Nestel, a progressive Pennsylvania municipal police chief who has worked for the Philadelphia Police Department for more than 20 years, stated that "geo spatial mapping can be used to help forecast the location of crime and thus assist patrol supervisors in making deployment decisions." It can also help detectives in identifying patterns and formulating suspects. He went on to explain:

> the root of this kind of thinking is that management is responsible for deployment and long range
> thinking but I would argue that the front line personnel should be taking that way instead of being

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[25] I specify small towns in southern New Jersey because the evidence suggests that police departments, regardless of size, are more prepared if they are proximal to a large city (Schafer, Buruss, & Giblin, 2009). Many of the ROIC's initiatives are partnerships with cities in the north. Therefore, many of the small cities in the north may be more aware of resources available to them simply due to their proximity to the large cities.

just 911 responders. Using tools to forecast and analyze data could potentially change the mindset of responder minded personnel and help them become more strategic in their patrol plan.

It is crucial to make all levels of police enforcement aware of the tools available at the ROIC to help target crime in New Jersey, particularly now when budget cuts are forcing police departments to be more strategic with their resources.

Finally, I must discuss the results with reference to the hypothesis that only those police from law-enforcement agencies that had found utility from the relationships with the ROIC continued to share information with the ROIC. This supports Cooney et al.'s (2011) finding that those who placed a high value on ILP were more likely to place a high value on the fusion center. But I would add a condition. Police officials who have benefited from the fusion center's capabilities through past relationships, through either personal or formal associations, will understand the value of ILP and thus rate the utility of the fusion center higher than those who have not had these experiences.

Once law-enforcement personnel begin to understand the value of ILP and the utility of the fusion center, they will be more likely to comprehend its significance and realize the great extent to which information-sharing is an integral part of ILP. If the center were to gather more targeted information from local police agencies, it could synthesize and analyze the information and disseminate more targeted and accurate products. Even though information-sharing is a part of ILP, it seems that local law-enforcement agencies must first understand the value of ILP before we begin to see real strides.

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Conclusion

New Jersey's ROIC has been recognized for its excellence at the National Fusion Center Conference because it has been so innovative and has brought together so many resources. However, law-enforcement agencies across the state need to know about these resources so they can be utilized by more than just those who have personal contacts at the center.

The ROIC's initiatives have helped bring more publicity to the role of the fusion center. It is now time to expand the reach to more than just urban-crime areas. The ROIC needs to take on a greater role as the nexus of communication in New Jersey, ensuring that all communication among the different counties will be more efficient. Even though many police officers know that crimes often cross county boundaries, they do not communicate effectively to pass on or request information from other police departments. The ROIC needs to apply the lessons it is has learned from promoting information-sharing among different law enforcement agencies in its own physical space to promote information-sharing among the police departments of New Jersey.

Conclusion

Fusion centers no longer focus solely on terrorism-related crimes. In response to the need for more coordination among all public safety agencies, they have become all-crimes or all-hazards centers. In other words, they have expanded their focus in order to address the varied needs of local police departments. Although the need for ILP and collaboration was evident long before 9/11, the events of that date forced everyone to rethink how they conducted police investigations. As one astute police officer noted, information needs to be shared, but this may take some time:

> Gone are the days where we're huddling around saying you can't have it. Bad guys talk to each other. Criminals share everything and why are we not sharing? That's the way law enforcement used to be. "'This is mine. Stay away. Don't come into my town. I am not going to tell you what's going on. I got the big case. I don't want you making the arrest.'" That's still a prevalent attitude. Good luck breaking it. I think it's going to take another generation to get through. Anyone who has 30+ years generally is not going to be on board with this.

Even though all the attitudes about information-sharing cannot be changed instantly, valuable lessons can be learned from the results of the case study of New Jersey and the Regional Operations Intelligence Center that may help increase communication across the United States regarding the use of fusion centers in both theoretical and practical terms. How representative is the ROIC of other fusion centers? Many of them were established before central planning for all the centers was completed. Thus, each center was planned independently, and each continues to operate differently, as described by the 2008 Congressional Research Service Report for Congress on fusion centers (Rollins, 2008). Recent efforts, such as the Baseline Capabilities Assessment, have attempted to streamline the efforts of the fusion centers to identify gaps in individual centers. While each fusion center's daily operation schedule may differ slightly from the ROIC, this center can still be seen as representative of other centers because many of

these recommendations focus on how to improve information-sharing—an issue that all law enforcement faces today. Therefore, the implications and recommendations from this case study can be made for all, or at least most, of the fusion centers presently in operation.

First, the fusion center must create an open environment for information to flow more freely among partners. If the center is unable to create this environment and employ partners and managers who not only believe in the mission, but also are willing to work with other agencies, the analysts cannot synthesize and analyze new information. The environment should be a model for how the entire state collaborates. People should come together in timely and well-planned meetings, instructional seminars, and other events and feel comfortable enough to volunteer and share information they think can advance the mission of public safety.

In fulfillment of their mission, fusion centers must talk to and be informed by the decision-makers to whom the intelligence is targeted in order to learn what they want from an intelligence product. From the case study, we know that police want to know more about how international and national events and suspicious activities in their area will affect how they police their cities. The intelligence products must also be targeted to those who have the experience and knowledge to understand what information needs to be filtered to patrol so the latter can recognize significant suspicious activity. Fusion centers should implement a services-evaluation policy so they always receive feedback on their products and learn more about what their customers want.

Finally, fusion centers need to take a greater lead in building communication channels and informing police officers of the resources that can help them apprehend

criminals faster. To keep pace with younger and more modern criminals who use social media and technology to communicate, officers must also be familiar with all the resources at their disposal to communicate with one another. While crime can never be eradicated completely, it is up to the many public-safety agents to help decrease it as much as possible. Because criminals know no boundaries, and it is essential for all the enforcement agencies to share information. This is especially true when crime spills over state lines. As one police officer noted,

> It's also getting worse out on the streets. Another thing we found is that we have a pipeline to Pennsylvania. It has lots to do with the section 8 housing. They are taking the projects down in [city]. Real Estate is a bust in places like Allentown so these people need money. The federal government gives them a check every month so they bring their families down there and bring their problems with them. I have a friend who is a cop in [city] with big money. Route 78 runs out there; it's a pipeline out to PA. He calls me one day. [It was] one of the guys on the hit list with VEST. Our problems are spread out all over the place, out in Pennsylvania.

Despite this police officer's warning of crime in New Jersey being connected to crime in Pennsylvania, police agencies do not speak to other agencies across county lines, much less outside their state. A police officer, whose jurisdiction sits on the New Jersey/Pennsylvania state line, commented on how often police agencies across state borders speak to one another: "Zero, zero. Absolutely zero … unless somebody is wanted, that's the only time we talk."

My research on the information-sharing environment in New Jersey suggests that information flows more freely among the informal community of trusted acquaintances or colleagues. This community can be nurtured so that it is maintained, but among a broader community of "safe" people. The definition of "others" with whom information cannot be shared or trusted is thus reduced because the community has increased.

Just as the ROIC has increased communication among different agencies by expanding the agency partners' social networks with other agency partners at the center,

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local police officers must also increase their networks through increased interaction. This interaction is critical because this is where information-sharing and, thus, meaning occur. With more targeted information from their networks, officers can understand more about their environment and recognize threats more easily.

Finally, and most importantly, information-sharing is not only a part of ILP. ILP analysis helps to encourage information-sharing. Results from my study substantiate Cooney, Rojek, and Kaminski's (2011) suggestion for fusion centers to implement strategies that encourage ILP in local law-enforcement agencies. This can be accomplished by working with local law enforcement to demonstrate the value of the center's analysis work and by building relationships with local police so they are not only knowledgeable of the center's capabilities, but also feel comfortable calling the center for help with a case.

This study is not without its limitations. Given unlimited resources, a study of fusion centers could have taken a different approach. For example, a quantitative study may be able to assess the quality of information-sharing in the 72 fusion centers and thus assess each fusion center. I am grateful for the access I was granted to the New Jersey ROIC. One limitation I could not address adequately concerns the use of information from abroad. Neither the CIA nor the NSA are involved in any of the fusion-center work, despite being two of the agencies shown to have held information that could have helped piece together the threat facing the U.S. before 9/11. While fusion centers can gather information from domestic agencies—including DHS and the FBI —about foreign threats, some may argue that participation needs to involve all possible agencies. My lack of

clearance to see classified information limited my ability to understand how fusion centers have worked around this weakness.

Looking forward, future studies need to assess and suggest a solution for the breaks in communication among police departments in different states, as well as those in an individual state. Fusion centers have fulfilled the need for communication among federal, state, and local agencies, as mandated by the 9/11 Commission. However, there are still obstacles to an open exchange of information among all law-enforcement agencies; and it seems that personal contacts have become the most effective method for and the best promoter of information-sharing. Future studies should examine how best to foster these personal relationships in the same way that fusion centers have built personal relationships among federal, state, and local agencies. For now, it seems as though making law-enforcement personnel knowledgeable about the analytical capabilities of the fusion centers may be the best way to proceed. A study should thus see how training law enforcement might affect their contact with their respective local centers.

While the rules that govern and restrict the roles of academia and law enforcement are not always the same, this study has demonstrated that the common ground that does exists can be beneficial to both institutions. A recent lecture based on this study was presented at the ROIC. Not only was it well-received, but the decision-makers confirmed the value of this ethnography to the ROIC itself. It was even suggested that perhaps some form of this information would benefit those who work at a national level—e.g., DHS. This response also reinforces the value of and need for other ethnographic research that could focus on anything from the smallest local police departments to larger national agencies.

The entrenched reluctance of some in the communication loop to share information, a divisive sense of territorialism, and uncertainty about what is, in fact, "'useful'" information would provide fertile ground for interdisciplinary studies that include criminology and, perhaps, psychology and theories of communication. The constant tug of civil liberties against the need for certain options and strategies to help law enforcement in the United States also lends itself to further study.

In addition, future studies need to look at how crimes are thwarted and work backwards to understand the role shared information played in apprehensions and how that information was shared. Did it begin with a very aware police officer or citizen? Alternatively, as in the case of 9/11, plots that are not uncovered also provide an opportunity to learn. While it is hoped these cases are few and far between, cases such as the underwear bomber should be examined to identify and understand the breaks in communication. This type of study may require the skills of a fusion-center analyst, who has the necessary clearance level to be privy to the classified information necessary for a thorough understanding of the incident.

Results from this dissertation should also be used to understand the information flow between local agencies and larger agencies. Knowing that the use of fusion centers varies across police agencies based on knowledge of their capabilities and a personal contact there, future studies could examine these characteristics on a larger scale to see how contact compares across fusion centers using these characteristics as focal points. If so, the method by which the more connected fusion centers develop contacts should be examined so that best practices can be shared with other centers.

Finally, this study and the few other empirical studies completed on fusion centers (Joyal, 2010; Ratcliffe & Walden, 2010; Cooney et al., 2011) have worked from contact lists given to them by the centers. This may have skewed many of the results regarding the utility of the centers for each of the police officers or fusion center personnel surveyed or interviewed. A more complete assessment of the utility of the centers would begin, instead, with a list of all the police departments in the state for which the fusion center could possibly assist, followed by an survey or interview of law enforcement representatives who may or may not be on any of the fusion center distribution lists. The interviews could disclose why some agencies or personnel have not been as eager to ask for assistance from or share information with the fusion centers.

The importance of information-sharing and ILP cannot be overstated when one realizes that the advent of the Internet has changed the landscape of criminal activity such that even hardened criminals are scared of the new breed of criminals:

> I interviewed a guy a couple weeks ago, big gang guy in the Bloods. He got arrested and I went and interviewed him. 23 years old, street tough, no doubt about it. You could look at him and say that he had no problem handling himself on the street. At the end of interview I asked him, "why are you telling me this? What's your motivation?" He told me, "I am afraid out there," which kind of took me back. Here's this street thug. He'll fight with anybody; if he has to shoot someone, he will. He said he's afraid. His fear is the 14-15-16-17 year old kids who just like pulling the trigger. There's no fear to them. It's almost like they are playing a video game and they think there is some kind of reset button.

There is no question that access to information, lawful and otherwise, becomes more complex and critical on a daily basis. It is hoped that the fusion centers, enriched by on-going academic research and internal evaluation and adjustments, will continue to play an important role in protecting the United States in these astounding and harrowing times.

Appendix A

New Jersey Municipalities by Population

Bigger Cities (6,000+ Residents)

Source: City-Data.com, can be found at http://www.city-data.com/city/New-Jersey3.html
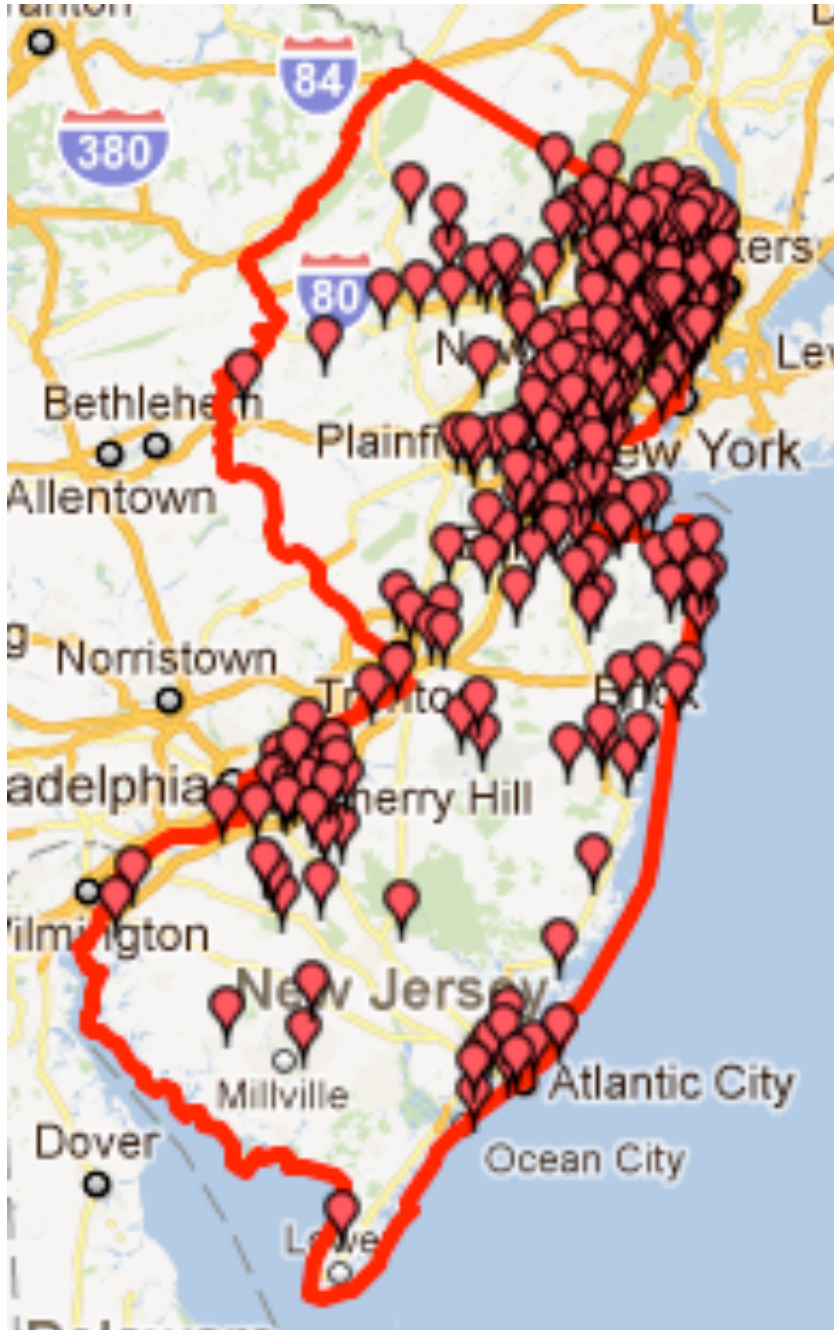
Smaller Cities, Towns and Villages (1,000-6,000 Residents)

Source: City-Data.com, can be found at http://www.city-data.com/city/New-Jersey3.html
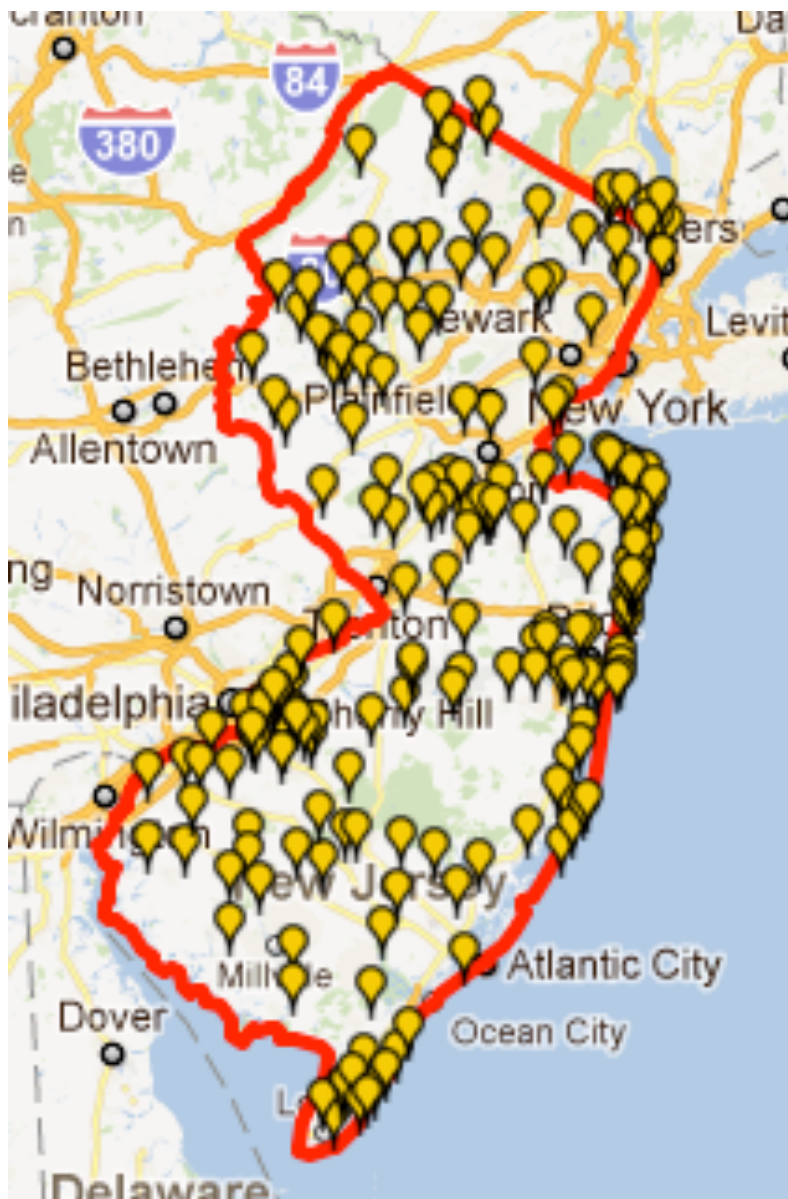
Very Small Towns and Villages (<1,000 Residents)

Source: City-Data.com, can be found at http://www.city-data.com/city/New-Jersey3.html
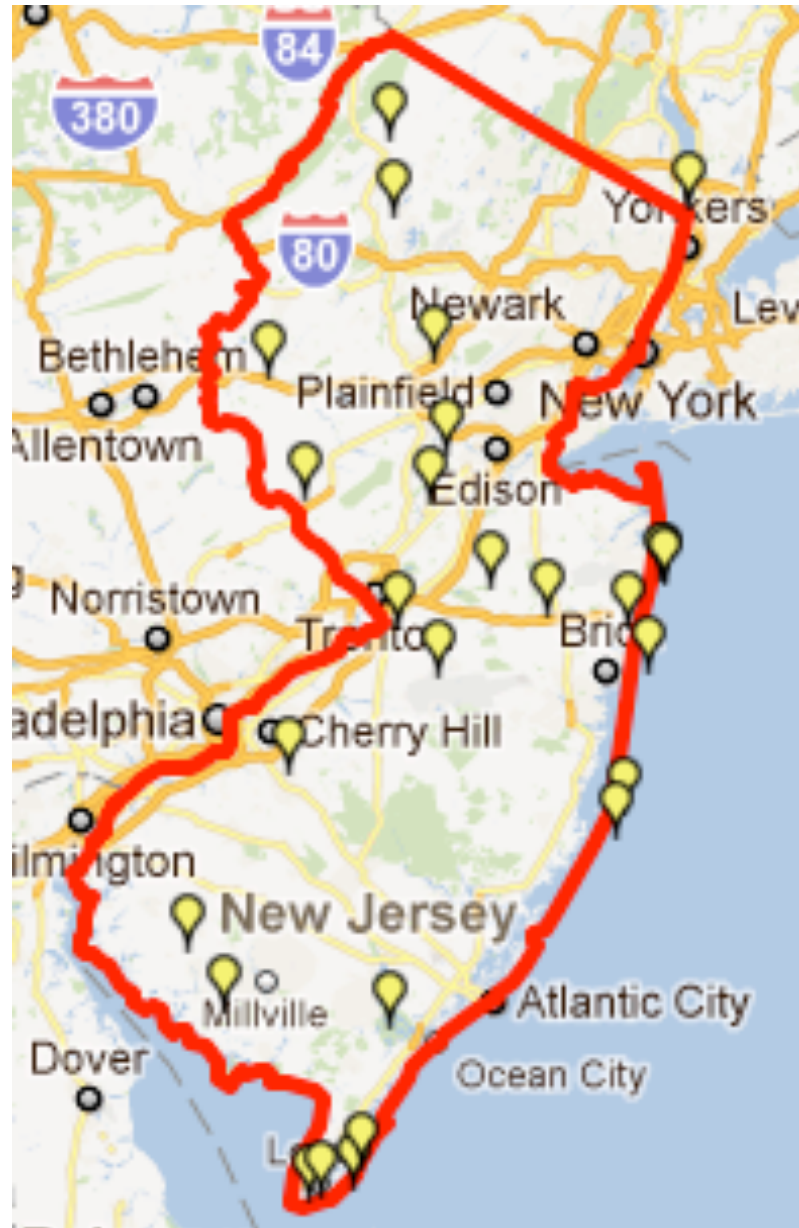
Appendix B

Survey of COP Recipients

(Page 1)

The following survey is a research study conducted with the agreement of the N.J. ROIC. Participating is completely voluntary and surveys will be made anonymous. The information gathered will be used to better understand what information is relevant to the recipients of the COP sent by the N.J. ROIC Analysis Element.

1. Name (Optional)

2. E-mail (Optional)

3. Contact Phone Number (Optional)

4. Agency Name

5. Type of organization at which you work

- Federal
- State
- Local
- Tribal
- Private Sector

6. Position within organization

- Upper level management
- Middle level management
- Patrol

7. Would you characterize your department as urban, rural or neither?

- Urban
- Rural
- State-level
- Federal-level

8. What type of crimes is a priority in your department?

- Violent crimes
- Property crimes
- Public nuisance crimes
- Terrorism
- White collar crimes
- Other (please specify)

(Page 2)

1. How are ROIC products received in your respective department?

- By dispatch
- By chief
- Each bureau head
- By personal/work e-mail
- Other (please specify)

2. How is the information made available to frontline personnel or those with everyday contact with the public?

- By e-mail
- Posting the COP in a public area
- In a meeting of officers
- It is not made available
- Other (please specify)

3. On average, how often do you read the COP attachment?

- Every day
- Every other day
- 1-2/week
- 1/month
- Never
- Other (please specify)

4. When was the last time you read the COP attachment closely?

- Yesterday
- A few days ago
- Last week
- Last month
- Cannot remember

5. What was it about?

6. Why did you read it closely?

7. Do you regularly forward the COP e-mail to anyone?

- Yes
- No

(Page 3)
1. To how many people do you forward it?

- 0
- 1-5
- 5-10
- 10-50
- 50+

2. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being not valuable at all and 10 being extremely valuable, how valuable is the information in the COP?

3. How is the information in the COP used?

- Senior officials use the COP to direct those on the ground.
- Middle management decides how to use the information.
- All people on the ground are made aware of information in the COP.
- The information in the COP is of no use.
- Other (please specify)

4. What type of bulletin would be most useful?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Biweekly (Every two weeks)
- Monthly
- When a significant event occurs
- Other (please specify)

(Page 4)

1. Are you and/or your department units familiar with all the resources/capabilities available to assist public safety efforts at the NJ ROIC?

   • Yes
   • No

2. Have you found any of the other intelligence products distributed by the ROIC useful? i.e. POP reports, incident assessments, etc.

   • Yes
   • No

3. Does your department know "where to go" with a request for NJ ROIC assistance (contact information, ROIC internal structure)?

   • Yes
   • No

4. What type of information should be included in the COP in order to make it more useful?

5. Additional comments

Appendix C

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your job and your department/agency.

   - For what agency do you work? What position do you hold?
   - How long have you held this position?
   - What training/schooling did you have? What intelligence gathering training have you had?
   - What other positions in this department/agency have you held?
   - Other positions elsewhere within law enforcement?
   - Outside of law enforcement?

2. How would you describe the area of your patrol?

   - Urban, suburban, rural? Influx of people?
   - Violent/property crimes?
   - Crimes the department is most concerned with?
   - Possible targets of terrorism? Train stations, airports, military bases, etc.

3. Tell me about a typical day.

   - Where would intelligence fit into this day?
   - Do you do this at the beginning?

4. Tell me about your intelligence sources, i.e. closed networks like LEO or open sources like CNN.

   - Do you receive information from the COP that you otherwise would not have received?
   - Do you receive any other regular e-mails telling you about the latest intelligence?

5. How did you come to hear about the ROIC?

   - The COP bulletin?
   - Do you know of any of the ROIC capabilities or have you ever used them? Geo-spatial mapping, gun trace, etc.
   - Have you ever communicated with the ROIC or reported anything to them?

6. Tell me about the types of headlines in the COP that might catch your attention.

   - Why do they catch your attention?

- Tell me how you determine if information is important enough to read and pass along.
- Have you ever actively used information in the COP in an investigation?

7. Tell me what you would do if a pattern of crime emerged in your area of patrol and you suspected it might be happening in other areas outside of your patrol.
   - Would you ever pass this information to the ROIC?

8. How is communication generally among police agencies?

   - Communication with agencies inside the county?
   - Communication with agencies outside of county?
   - How would you contact another agency?
   - Have you ever used the CTC for information or to give information?
   - What kinds of information or intelligence would be important enough to share with another department inside the county? Outside the county?

Appendix D

Abbreviated Example of a COP Bulletin

Significant Activity (24 hours)

New Jersey
(U//LES) NJ ROIC Counterterrorism Watch recently received reports of suspicious activity (For more information, please contact the NJ ROIC Analysis Element.)
← Date, County: Identified subject reportedly storing large amounts of fertilizer, shooting powerful homemade fireworks
← Date, County: Unidentified male photographing military contractor's facility

National Activity
← Two New Jersey men, accused of conspiring to kill, maim, and kidnap people outside the U.S. by joining a Somali terrorist group, are negotiating guilty pleas that would avert a trial, court records show.[26]

International Activity
← The Taliban have warned of a possible terrorist attack against the Netherlands in the wake of the government's decision to form a minority government backed by anti-Islam politician Geert Wilders....[27]

Current Threat
"White Powder" Threat Letters at Schools in Houston, Texas, and Washington D.C.
(U//LES) Since date, unknown suspect(s) have mailed 18 threatening letters that include a powdery substance to schools in Houston, Texas, and Washington, D.C.

Tactics Techniques, & Procedures
Rail Line Attacks Worldwide
(U//FOUO) The U.S. Transportation Security Administration has no specific intelligence suggesting that violent transnational or domestic groups are planning to conduct attacks along passenger and mass transit rail lines in the United States, but the tactics, techniques, and procedures used overseas are easily transferable here.[28]

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[26] DHS Open Source Enterprise Daily Digest
[27] Sify news, URL
[28] U.S. Transportation Security Administration, "Rail Line Attacks: Tactics, Techniques, & Procedures Assessment,"

Appendix E

Glossary

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
AE	Analysis Element
ATF	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
BOLO	Be on the look out-wanted pictures of people
CJIS	Criminal Justice Information System
CTC	County Terrorism Coordinator
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FAMS	Federal Air Marshall Service
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FBI	Federal Bureau of Intelligence
HIDTA	High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
IACP	International Association of the Chiefs of Police
ICE/HIS	Immigration and Customs Enforcement/Homeland Security Investigations
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
ILP	Intelligence-led Policing
MAGLOCLEN	Mid Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCIC	National Crime Information Center
NOC	National Operations Center
NJ OHSP/OHSP	New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Protection
NJSIX	New Jersey Southern Intelligence Exchange
PSI	Person of Strategic Interest Package
RISS	Regional Information Sharing Systems
NJ ROIC	New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center
SAR	Suspicious Activity Report
SCI	Sensitive Compartmentalized Information
SCIF	Sensitive Compartmentalized Information Facility
TRAK	Technology to Recover Abducted Kids
TTP	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
VCC	Violent Crimes Coordinator
VEST	Violent Enterprise Source Targeting

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