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THE USE OF CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE IN COMBATING CRIME: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

The use of criminal intelligence in combating crime represents a system of targeted collection, verification, analysis, and application of information that enhances the efficiency of criminal proceedings and ensures the validity of managerial and procedural decisions. Its main goal is not the accumulation of large data sets, but the creation of a reliable analytical foundation for law enforcement activities. In modern practice, the core methodology is *intelligence-led policing* (ILP) – a concept that integrates strategic threat assessment and tactical support of criminal proceedings based on the processing of data from multiple sources. This approach involves a clearly structured analytical cycle: setting priorities, collecting data, conducting analytical processing,

formulating conclusions, and delivering the product for decision-making. It also emphasizes compliance with standards for evaluating the reliability of information and protecting personal data.

In the United States, criminal intelligence is embedded in the law enforcement system through a network of *fusion centers*, which serve as hubs for collecting and processing criminal information at the federal, state, and local levels. The legal standards governing these centers are established by *28 CFR Part 23*, which defines requirements for the collection, verification, storage, and dissemination of analytical materials, prohibits the retention of irrelevant data, and mandates periodic review of stored records. Within this framework, the *Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (NSI)* program operates, providing a standardized description of suspicious activities and their automated transmission to competent authorities [1, c.11-12]. This mechanism creates a unified format for information exchange across all levels of law enforcement and ensures rapid response to emerging threats. Analytical products developed under the ILP framework are directly applied in criminal proceedings – during evidence preparation, initiation of investigative actions, or determination of investigation priorities.

Canada has developed its own model of criminal intelligence through the *Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC)* – an interagency network that unites federal, provincial, and municipal police forces. CISC coordinates the analytical activities of law enforcement agencies, produces national strategic assessments of organized crime, issues threat reports, and maintains unified data exchange standards. In practice, CISC uses analytical products to set investigative priorities and design operational plans. Information exchange is supported by the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)*, which administers the *Criminal Intelligence Program*, integrating analytical reports into ongoing investigations and utilizing interprovincial databases and criminal registries. This model not only facilitates coordination among law enforcement bodies but also prevents duplication of operational efforts and improves the documentation of organized criminal groups.

In the United Kingdom, criminal intelligence operates within the framework of the *National Intelligence Model (NIM)*, which defines the standards for collecting, processing, and using information in policing.

NIM includes three key levels of analytical products: strategic assessments (long-term trends and threats), tactical assessments (short-term risks and priorities), and *problem/target profiles*— analytical descriptions of specific subjects or problems. Coordination is carried out by the *Tasking & Coordination Group*, which determines the sequence of operational and investigative actions based on analytical findings. Data reliability is evaluated using the 3×5×2 system, which assesses the credibility of sources and the accuracy of the information. This model standardizes information assessment, ensures a shared analytical language among units, and upholds the principles of legality, proportionality, and necessity in data processing [2, c.7-9].

Although the analytical cycle in these countries follows similar stages, their priorities differ. In the United States, the focus is on data integration between agencies and government levels, which enables the detection of transregional threats and the formation of nationwide risk assessments. In Canada, the emphasis lies in strategic evaluation of organized crime and the creation of a unified information space accessible to all police bodies. In the United Kingdom, the key feature is procedural discipline: no operational activity begins without an approved analytical product, and all actions are planned based on substantiated data. Despite these differences, all three systems share the same principle – analytics does not replace investigation but structures it, providing a logical sequence of actions that increases the effectiveness of evidence gathering in criminal proceedings.

The practical tools of criminal intelligence can be divided into five main categories [3, c.10-11]. The first is strategic assessments, which define long-term threat perspectives and investigative priorities. The second is tactical products, including subject profiles, event timelines, and link analysis charts that support operational planning. The third is *deconfliction* mechanisms, which prevent overlapping operations conducted by different units. The fourth concerns standards for assessing data quality, distinguishing between “information” and “intelligence.” The fifth involves legal oversight – maintaining access logs, conducting audits, and regularly reviewing data relevance. Such structure not only ensures analytical accuracy but also compliance with procedural standards of evidence.

The legal guarantees of criminal intelligence operations in all three countries share a common feature – the legality of data sources.

In the United States, this aspect is regulated by *28 CFR Part 23*; in the United Kingdom, by the *Data Protection Act 2018* and internal NIM standards; and in Canada, by federal privacy legislation and internal RCMP and CISC policies. Analytical units operate exclusively with lawfully obtained information, and the results of their work are formalized in a way that allows their direct use in motions, official requests, and judicial evidence. This approach maintains a balance between security needs and human rights protections.

In conclusion, the use of criminal intelligence in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom demonstrates the emergence of a new model of law enforcement activity in which analytical processes are an integral part of criminal proceedings. The U.S. model emphasizes data integration and standardization, the Canadian model promotes interagency cooperation and strategic planning, and the British model focuses on disciplined management of analytical products. Collectively, they show that criminal intelligence is not an auxiliary tool but the logical core of modern crime prevention and investigation, ensuring the efficient use of evidence and a consistent, data-driven response to threats.

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