

Problem-Oriented Policing, Intelligence-Led Policing and the National Intelligence Model

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British police services are being invited to embrace both intelligence-led policing (ILP) and problem-oriented policing (POP). Are they the same? Are they different, but compatible? If they are to coexist, in what ways can this best be achieved? Specifically, can the National Intelligence Model effectively bring the two together?

Contrasts between ILP and POP

Table 1 highlights a series of key differences between POP and ILP. They have different origins, address different problems, embrace differing notions of the role, purpose, rationale and accountability of policing, involve differing ways of thinking and acting, and suggest some differing key indicators of success. Yet they both suggest that the police are in need of reform, both emphasize a more analytic approach to policing and they are both concerned to deliver crime reduction. Moreover, many police officers believe them to be closely related to one another - if not identical then natural bedfellows.

The differences certainly are real. Enthusiastic advocates of ILP see POP as naïve, Enid Blyton policing, blind to the harsh realities of dealing with nasty, networked criminals in need of well-orchestrated enforcement to disrupt, disable, deter or demotivate them. Equally enthusiastic advocates of POP see ILP as old, failed policing dressed up as new, chasing past problems rather than dealing with conditions creating them, and providing at best only a slightly better pinprick on the problems the police exist to address.

Both by trait and by mutual disregard, problem-oriented and intelligence-led policing appear to be constitutionally opposed to one another. Can they, though, be brought together?

Some meeting points between ILP and POP

There are several points at which POP and ILP converge, at least partially, in regard to specific police practices, though looked at in detail these apparent points of convergence also confirm major differences.

- POP implies attention to problems exploiting available pinch-points in the conditions generating problems (Tilley 2002). This may include targeting prolific offenders, criminal organisations, those recruiting new criminals, or stolen goods markets, any or all of which are likely to be focused on also in well-executed ILP. Unlike ILP, however, POP is equally if not more interested in finding pinchpoints that do require enforcement. These will often include reductions in opportunity of the sort stressed in situational crime prevention (see Clarke 1997, Tilley 1999, Braga 2002).

- Both POP and ILP suggest a concern with repeat victims. For POP repeat victimisation comprises a major pattern of problem events requiring systematic attention (see, for example, Pease 1998, Read et al 1999, Farrell and Pease 2001, Laycock and Farrell 2003). Repeat offenders appear to be largely responsible for repeat offences (Everson and Pease 2001). Thus focusing proactive enforcement efforts on those already victimised is an efficient way of targeting prolific offenders. It thus again forms a natural ingredient of ILP. Unlike ILP, however, POP will also be concerned with non-enforcement methods of reducing the vulnerability of those already victimized.
- Crackdown and consolidation strategies are plausible candidates for many problems addressed in POP (see Farrell et al 1998, Wright 1994). The crackdown side sits well with ILP. It involves efforts to target intensive, well-publicised enforcement to incapacitate and/or deter offenders generating problems, an approach found often to have beneficial side-effects beyond the temporal operation of the crackdown itself (Sherman 1990). POP, however, will be equally concerned with consolidation – the introduction of measures to produce sustained falls in crime during the lull created by the crackdown.
- Both POP and ILP require specialist analysts. They both make much greater and much more systematic use of information. They will often call for information collection as well as use of information already at hand. The focus of the information-collection and analysis in ILP is on offenders and networks of offenders, to inform smart enforcement focused on serious and prolific offending patterns. Analysis in ILP tends naturally to focus on current or very recent offending patterns. The intelligence used is often elicited from informants. Its collection and use is often covert. ILP leaves little if any space for analysis of non-crime problems. For ILP the major information task is thus finding and drawing together ways of tracking offender and offending patterns as they emerge, better to disrupt them through targeted enforcement. The focus of information collection and analysis in POP is on problematic patterns of behaviour that produce police-relevant problems for the community, and on plausible points of intervention to reduce them, remove them, or prevent the harm caused by them (see Tilley 2002, Clarke and Eck 2003). Analysis tends to focus on enduring problems that are not responsive to standard forms of policing. Its focus thus spans relatively long periods and relatively wide spaces. Much analysis is able to use data that should be readily available from records, if kept and recorded conscientiously. Covertly collected information and information from informants is rarely needed. POP analyses police-relevant problematic behaviour even when it is not criminal. ILP analyses focus little on the identification of longer-term patterns or on finding pinch-points that do not involve enforcement activities. These are critical in POP. They require use of robust aggregate data spanning relatively long time periods, to understand enduring and recurrent problem-attributes.

ILP, POP and the National Intelligence Model

The National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) developed the National Intelligence Model (NIM). It has since been widely endorsed by the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Home Office and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. The NCIS documentation claims that NIM 'represents the collected

wisdom and best practice in intelligence led policing and law enforcement.’ (NCIS 2000: 7). In this sense the NIM is intimately bound up with ILP and its enforcement emphases.

John and Maguire (2003), however, argue that:

(NIM) is in essence a *business model* – a means of organising knowledge and information in such a way that the best possible decisions can be made about how to deploy resources, that actions can be coordinated within and between different levels of policing, and that lessons are continually learnt and fed back into the system. While at present strongly associated (both in perception and practice) with the world of serious crime, the CID and law enforcement activities, it is in fact designed to be applied much more widely – for example, to facilitate multi-agency crime prevention and responses to non-crime problems such as disorder and anti-social behaviour. It is thus right at the heart of the current movement towards ‘problem solving’ in police work.

It is certainly the case that the details of the NIM allow some space for work which is not simply within the domain of ILP, as described here, though the accounts of this other work are brief and underdeveloped. The main emphasis is on the servicing, conduct and co-ordination of intelligence-led work, as foreshadowed in the introductory paragraphs to the NCIS document. It might well be, though, that the NIM business model, with its provision for collecting and analysing information to deal with problems at different levels, orchestrating informed responses to problems, and tracking outputs and outcomes, could be deployed for problem-oriented work. The analytic processes, data used, forms of issue addressed, and characteristic modes of response to problems would, though, differ quite radically from what would be done if the business model were being used primarily to deliver ILP. Whether the NIM comprises the optimum model for delivering POP is unclear. It is, in any case, so far largely untested.

Conclusion

Whilst POP allows space for the intelligence-led enforcement focused on in ILP, the reverse does not hold. ILP provides no space for the wider conception of police problems and responsibilities contained in POP. If the police-relevant problem addressed in POP calls for enforcement, using intelligence, then that would be appropriate in POP. It would not, though, comprise the only form of response to be considered and would rarely be deemed on its own a sufficient response.

POP is relevant to all police-relevant problems. Smart enforcement is needed for some but not all problems addressed by the police. Children missing from home comprise an example of a problem for policing but not for smart enforcement. Some long-term crime problems are more open to non-enforcement preventive interventions than they are to smart enforcement, for example thefts in car parks. Few enduring crime or non-crime problems are effectively dealt with by enforcement alone, however smart. The NIM may be a useful business model for delivering POP and the ILP that it may sometimes require. If designed to deliver POP, and ILP when this is appropriate to dealing with a specific problem, it might need to be reconfigured. It may be

sufficiently flexible, however, already to allow this for a police service or local partnership committed to NIM but also wanting to embrace POP.

A POP-focused NIM would begin with a broad array of police-relevant problems, would commission their analyses with an eye to any of a broad range of responses, would task in the light of the conclusions from the analysis about the most effective response or suite of responses (which may or may not include enforcement), and would monitor and evaluate effectiveness in terms of the reduction, elimination or harm-lessening effects. An ILP-focused NIM would target serious and prolific offenders, commission analyses with an eye to finding out who was involved with whom, where and with what crime plans, would task in the light of conclusions about who needed to be targeted with efforts at enforcement, and would track performance in terms primarily of successes in detection, arrest and prosecution of serious and prolific offenders.

Both POP and ILP involve making greater and more systematic use of information than has historically been the case in most policing. They require new specialists with new techniques. Inferences have to be drawn from information about what to do, where to do it, and who to target. There is a host of assumptions or tacit theories relating to hot spots, criminal organization, attributes of prolific offenders and their offending patterns, criminal careers, recruitment into crime, co-offending patterns, the role of opportunity in crime, displacement by person and place and so on. It is critical that these are brought to the surface and tested. We may otherwise misuse information and fail to yield the expected benefits. Moreover, improvements in ILP and POP can be expected with developments in understanding, tested in the field. Both POP and ILP need in these senses to be underpinned by crime science.

Table 1: Intelligence-led policing and problem-oriented policing

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Intelligence-led policing</i>	<i>Problem-oriented policing</i>
	Background and raison d'être	
<i>1. Problem addressed</i>	Poor detection rates	Demand exceeding capacity
<i>2. Critique of traditional policing</i>	Ineffective at clearing crime	Ineffective in dealing with spiralling demand
	Inadequate at providing protection	Not oriented to core problems
<i>3. Inspiration</i>	David Phillips	Herman Goldstein (1979, 1990)
	Conception of policing and police officers	
<i>4. Police mission</i>	Law enforcement	Deal with police relevant problems
<i>5. Scope of policing</i>	Narrowed to law enforcement	Police function defined – broader than enforcement
<i>6. Core drivers</i>	Intelligence units/ Tasking and Co-ordinating Groups	Analysts/data
<i>7. Openness to others</i>	Enforcement contingent	Problem contingent
	Characteristic forms of thinking and action	
<i>8. Problem diagnosis</i>	Bad people	Unintentional crime opportunities
<i>9. Intervention focus</i>	Person	Event pattern
<i>10. Analytic inputs</i>	Evidence/intelligence	Data
<i>11. Technology</i>	Computerised intelligence relating to cases. Networks and series	Computers and software for aggregate analysis
<i>12. Preferred tactic</i>	Arrest	Any – problem-contingent
<i>13. Preferred control mechanism</i>	Incapacitation	Any, but especially blocked opportunity
<i>14. Key police quality</i>	Action/brawn	Reason/brain
	Success criteria	
<i>15. Main indicator</i>	Serious/prolific villains caught	Police functions performed effectively
<i>16. Expected benefit</i>	Reduced crime	Reduced crime and other police related problems

(adapted from Tilley 2003)

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