



case study



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Getting to the source of proactive policing at Strathclyde Police

Strathclyde Police is Scotland's largest police force and one of the biggest in the UK, with over 7,500 police officers. The force is spread across 5,371 square miles of Scotland and protects nearly 2.3 million people within nine territorial divisions. With such a large geographical area to cover, standardising procedures across the different departments and ensuring best practice is of prime importance to Strathclyde.

Workforce modernisation needed

About two years ago Strathclyde Police decided to manage police informant activity electronically, moving away from a paper-based system. The intention was to collate and control data centrally as well as reducing the administrative time associated with Covert Human Intelligence Source (CHIS) authorisation requests, reviews and renewals.

From paper to electronic solution

After examining several solutions, Strathclyde chose to implement ABM's informant management solution, abmpegasus™ Source Management. ABM provides the technology behind the Scottish Intelligence Database and has a reputation as a leading supplier of criminal intelligence IT. William Wilson, Detective Inspector and Project Manager for the RIPA/RIPSA Compliance Project comments: "Upon examination, we concluded that a paper-based system was not providing the best value for the force. The time was right to embrace technology to ensure standardisation and compliance across the force and best manage police informant activity. ABM could demonstrate clear business benefits to using its system and we felt confident about developing a working relationship with the company."

Key result – proactive policing

Since modernising its informant management system, Strathclyde has realised several qualitative benefits. The central management of police sources offers a force-wide view of activity and gathering data in one place allows officers to assess information, disseminate it appropriately and allocate tasks. Detective Inspector Wilson says: "Proactive policing is vital and by collating and analysing data centrally in this way, we can turn information into intelligence, which can be acted upon immediately, helping to prevent and solve crimes more quickly and efficiently."



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The new system has enabled Strathclyde to implement standard processes and codes of practice across all divisions, ensuring compliance with policing regulations and acts. From a management perspective, this has significantly improved service quality and efficiency internally, while also providing a clear audit trail, which can be examined and reviewed by external bodies.

In addition, there has definitely been a cost saving by moving from a paper-based to an electronic system. The administrative process has been simplified and the time it takes to authorise source requests has been greatly reduced, as documents no longer need to be transported to the Central Authorising Bureau. Detective Inspector Wilson adds: "Our force is focussed on improving its performance and offering a top policing service to the public. These improvements to our working practices mean that we have an organisation which is less bureaucratic, more efficient and can spend more time on proactive policing."

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Integration is the future

Over the past two years, Strathclyde has developed a good relationship with ABM and has recently gone live with its covert operations and telecoms authorities management system. This is a much larger project, which promises to benefit all areas of operational policing by standardising procedures, reducing the administrative burden and increasing crime-solving efficiency through an integrated covert suite of products.

