



case study



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Western Australia Police Service reduces crime through intelligence-led policing with ABM

Western Australia Police Service (WA Police Service) is responsible for policing the largest single police jurisdiction in the world, an area covering one million sq miles, one third of the entire Australian continent. Its 6,318 employees include 4,993 sworn police officers and 1,500 unsworn officers who work to provide services to a population of 1.9 million, through a structure comprising three regions, 14 districts and 162 police stations.

The need for technology at Western Australia Police Service

In 1999, WA Police Service launched the \$183 million Delta Communication and Information Technology (DCAT) programme to look at transforming the agency's business systems. One of the programme's main recommendations was to replace the police service's current cumbersome administrative processes with an intelligence-led policing solution that would optimise the use of its officers, giving them timely access to reliable and up-to-date information.

Assistant Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan, WA Police Service, was charged with finding a technology solution to meet the needs of the police service. "We required a solution that would be able to not only help us analyse crime but also more easily identify suspects and crime hot spots, enabling us to organise resources accordingly to tackle it and reduce crime levels," discusses Karl O'Callaghan.

The challenge: the largest police service in the world

The sheer size of Western Australia was a major reason for the move towards intelligence-led policing, but it also represented a major challenge. Despite occupying an area of one million square miles, the population is only 1,798,000, of which 1,380,000 people live in Perth. This population spread means that it is not commercially viable for carriers to install high-tech communications to every part of the state. The limits to the telecommunications infrastructure were likely to cause bandwidth problems for the chosen technology provider, with the risk of slow or unreliable connections.

A further challenge had been the level of change that had already taken place within the police service. O'Callaghan comments: "WA Police Service had already undergone a number of dramatic changes in standards, style and structure. There was therefore a risk that officers would resist further change. We knew that any new system would have to instantly prove its ability to make officers' working lives easier."

Why ABM

"Before adopting ABM's Intelligence Management System (IMS), WA Police Service used a number of un-integrated mainframe systems to record details, which acted more like inventory databases than intelligent systems," explains Alastair Luff, Managing Director, ABM. "First level relationships linking people, addresses and vehicles were available, but any further relationship links were not, such as associates or known 'hang-outs'. Officers were not provided with the bigger picture to help them fight crime."

Following a highly competitive evaluation, WA Police Service chose ABM's product solution because of ABM's ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of its core business and recognise the absolute importance of being able to form links between different pieces of information at the touch of a button.



"The fact that a number of ABM staff have direct experience of policing and crime detection makes an enormous difference. They know what it means to be a police officer so they have analysed and designed systems which make sense from a policing perspective."

Karl O'Callaghan
Assistant Commissioner
WA Police Service

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The ABM solution

WA Police Service selected a number of integrated applications from ABM to cover all of its operational requirements:

- **IMS Crime**, a crime recording system that provides agencies with a flexible software solution for the administration of crime
- **IMS Intelligence**, a comprehensive intelligence management solution that assists in identifying links between intelligence targets and events
- **IMS PROperty**, a system providing the management of lost and found evidence that speeds up the administration process and provides full evidence management
- **IMS PROfile**, providing advanced facial recognition of offenders captured in video stills, photographs and other images

Helping Western Australia Police Service to reduce crime

Officers can now access all intelligence information on the one ABM system, as opposed to searching up to 14 separate databases and paper files as was previously required. Officers now have easy access to up-to-date relevant information in a matter of seconds, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

“Local data is controlled and acted upon locally, but also available for a police service wide picture,” expounds O’Callaghan. “This intranet-based service, delivered to many locations via satellite, allows an officer 2,000 miles from base to access the system. It is this reliability of service that has encouraged officers to make more and more use of the solution.”

O’Callaghan continues: “Reports are no longer just a 'statistics generator', but now contain key information to allow a quality investigation from the moment of the initial report, improving the standard of policing in WA Police Service. Officers instantly recognise the benefits of the new technology system which they have seen make their lives easier and safer and help them to reduce crime further.”

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Moving forward

Based on the success of ABM’s IMS, WA Police Service is keen to introduce additional business processes to allow officers to become even more proactive, adding a range of additional incident types including serious or fatal traffic crashes, domestic violence, child abuse reporting and case management, missing persons and disciplinary incidents.

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*Karl O’Callaghan
Assistant Commissioner
WA Police Service*

O’Callaghan concludes: “ABM has helped us to achieve our goal of building a police service based on intelligence-led policing. We now have a more accurate picture of crime and our officers are able to access a significant range of essential data which maximises their ability to fight crime. The standard of policing overall has improved, the working lives of officers have been made easier and we can carry out true local policing.”