



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND POLICE DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

Date: November 26th, 2020

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KEY EVENTS

On November 26, 2020, Chief Constable Adam Palmer of the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) presented *Artificial Intelligence and Police Decision Making Processes* at the 2020 CASIS West Coast Security Conference. The presentation was followed by a group panel for questions & answers. Main discussion topics included the integration of data and information sharing systems between BC policing services at all levels, the integration of geospatial technologies into policing in BC, the benefits of introducing better business analytics into policing, and better policing for situations involving mental health issues.

NATURE OF DISCUSSION

Presentation

The speaker focused on the increased capabilities police forces have as a result of incorporating better business analytics, data sharing, and geospatial technology into policing. The speaker also touched on initiatives dealing with responding to mental health issues.

BACKGROUND

Presentation

In 2001, the various police agencies in BC joined one integrated system for data and information sharing. This integrated system combined data systems for policing units at all levels, including the RCMP, who operate in BC. The integration of these systems has greatly increased the data sharing capabilities and efficiencies between policing organizations in BC. The introduction of more business analytics has also greatly increased workflow efficiencies with the VPD

and similar organizations. More streamlined data managing processes have allowed for more time spent on true analysis of the data being managed, and quicker reaction times to that data. The hosting of the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver was a great catalyst for implementing these changes.

The adoption of geospatial technology has greatly increased the spatial awareness capabilities of the VPD. From the mapping of critical infrastructure, to the use of crime heat maps, to the introduction of the geographic data analysis and statistical hub, this increased spatial awareness has been very beneficial to analyzing and understanding crime. Combining geospatial technology and information sharing, officers on the ground now have access to detailed blueprint and floor plan information of various critical infrastructure from their vehicles. The VPD had also increased its use of drones for tasks such as crime scene mapping, marine operations, missing person cases, and bomb threat investigations. Between new geospatial technologies, new business analytics, and greater information sharing, these new technologies and processes have greatly increased the capabilities of officers on the ground, as well as analysts.

The increased efficiencies have led to more predictive policing initiatives, leading to a dramatic drop in residential break and enter crimes. Using tools such as heat maps, police are able to receive information on areas within their patrol that are most likely to see certain crimes and push more resources accordingly and preemptively. The predictive nature of these initiatives is possible due to the integration of many different types of information provided from different agencies across both, time and space.

The VPD also has multiple initiatives to increase their capabilities in dealing with mental health cases including the inclusion of psych nurses on call. The VPD is actively trying to understand what underlying issues could lead someone to commit a crime, and how mental health is involved, rather than simply responding to the act itself.

Question Period

The question period was conducted as a panel discussion during which Chief Constable Palmer addressed data models, mapping data to different strategic and tactical intelligence needs, and also the continued developing role of geospatial data.

KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSION

Presentation

- Business analytics has increased the efficiencies of managing data in policing.
- Data sharing systems have led to more collaborative and holistic policing.
- Geospatial systems have allowed for greater situational awareness for police on the ground.
- The VPD incorporates multiple initiatives to better respond to mental health issues.

Question Period

- The VPD continues to address work on initiatives to improve police responses to mental health calls for service.
- Geospatial data was explored further and the Chief continues to be interested in supporting GIS initiatives that will help inform police department responses.
- Predictive policing will continue to be implemented and expanded on.



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Published by the Journal of Intelligence, Conflict, and Warfare and Simon Fraser University

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