



Conference 2008

"Together, Improving Intelligence Practice"

6 August 2008, Oceania Room, Te Papa Museum, Cable Street, Wellington

Prime Minister's Speech Notes

Warren Tucker will introduce the Prime Minister.

The Chief Ombudsman, Privacy Commissioner, and Inspector-General will be in attendance. Also the Police Commissioner.

- Welcome. Delighted to be here at this inaugural conference of the newly established New Zealand Institute of Intelligence Professionals.
- Pleased to note a number of key members of New Zealand's statutory oversight bodies are here this morning also – the Chief Ombudsman (Beverley Wakem), the Privacy Commissioner (Marie Shroff), and the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security (Hon Paul Neazor).
- Also the Heads of NZSIS, GCSB, EAB, and Defence Intelligence, as well as intelligence professionals from a range of Departments and Agencies – including Customs, Fisheries, Internal Affairs, Inland Revenue, Immigration, Police, Transport, and the Defence Force as well as EAB, GCSB and NZSIS.
- Historically, intelligence has been seen as an arcane niche world full of black arts, and largely incidental to the functioning of the world outside of specialist government activities such as diplomacy and the military.
- In truth, however, despite this perception, intelligence has played a major part in the success or otherwise of governments and of societies. Examples from last century include the First and Second World Wars, and the Cold War.
- In today's uncertain and troubled world, the work of our intelligence professionals remains of huge importance for a small country such as New Zealand. The complexities and challenges you face in doing your work are arguably greater than they were during the height of the Cold War, when there was a clearly defined set of adversaries.
- Today's challenges are more diffuse and diverse. We face adversaries whose identities and locations are often unknown, and who have an all-too-definite track record of striking innocent civilians without warning and with deadly effect. (September 11, 2001, Bali, Madrid, London, India.)
- We also face challenges in containing and constraining the proliferation of weapons technology capable of causing mass casualties on a hugely devastating scale. North Korea. Iran.
- And there are striking examples of countries whose behaviours, norms, governance, and motivations diverge significantly from those which New Zealand as a Western Democracy values so highly, and which we seek to exercise within a multi-lateral framework underpinned by law.
- We are doing "our bit" in Afghanistan. Concerned about North Korea, Zimbabwe and Sudan.



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- Closer to home we have a number of examples in the South Pacific.
- Growing influence of new emerging powers on the world stage.
- There are also new and emergent “transnational” issues to deal with, and to which intelligence can provide deeper understanding and improved early warning of effects and consequences. Global warming. New and pernicious diseases (SARS, H5N1). Energy and mineral resource competition. Water shortages. Sudden and difficult-to-manage mass migrations of people.
- Also transnational crime and Human trafficking. Drugs. Money laundering.
- So we can see that intelligence is today more “centre stage” and “front of brain” for governments and for citizens, than has previously been the case. This is because of the scale of the challenges where intelligence can have beneficial effect; the nature of these challenges; and also societal and technology changes in today’s world.
- The **scale of the challenges** where intelligence can have beneficial effect is evident from the examples I’ve given. These challenges include **reducing risk from key threats** (for example terrorism, illegal migration, and serious transnational organised crime).
- They also include **promoting the national interest** and our national well-being. Foreign intelligence collection on strategic issues, including matters affecting regional stability and security, is a key example.
- The **nature of the challenges**, whether in relation to threats impacting us, or to opportunities to promote our interests, is another factor in today’s technologically sophisticated, connected and globalised world.
- Threats are today more dispersed and more intimately intertwined with the fabric of society and commerce than previously. No longer do the threats we have to guard against originate primarily from other countries at a national or military level. Rather, today’s principal threats are of widespread indiscriminate casualties of our citizenry, incapacitation of our critical national infrastructure, or penetration and compromise of key sectors of our economy.
- Similarly, in today’s world, the **heightened complexity of the issues** - transnational, global, and regional - with which Government must cope makes necessary and central the use of intelligence to inform as effectual a response - through incisive and nuanced knowledge and understanding - as possible.
- In this regard, I recall that Lin Smith, when he was Director of Security and I as a Minister first dealt with him, used to describe foreign intelligence as being like the “cat’s eyes” on a winding road at night. It wouldn’t give you full illumination or clarity, but it would give you the key points you needed to stop you going over the edge.



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- **Societal and technology changes** in today's world mean that the relationship between the individual citizen and the state is constantly being reinvented, and requires additional attention – and not just from the intelligence community.
- As Marie Shroff is constantly reminding us, technology provides many more potential opportunities to collect and exploit information and intelligence about people. We acquire an ever-growing “digital shadow” which accompanies us everywhere as we go about our daily lives.
- For some states – not New Zealand, I hasten to add – the protective imperative has led to the balance being struck in favour of providing their intelligence organizations with access to large data sets.
- And in relation to issues of heightened demands for improved public safety and more rapid responses to crime, technologies such as closed circuit video surveillance and access to cellphone data (including content, such as text messaging, and associated information such as who called whom, when, and where they were at the time) are already proven in their effectiveness.
- Privacy and natural justice issues need to be balanced against intrusive surveillance and monitoring.
- There are tensions and some difficult issues here, particularly as we grapple with ensuring that public safety dominates consideration of completing more fully the intelligence picture, or providing evidence sufficient to bring a successful prosecution.
- These are all issues that need measured, broad-based, and public debate.
- Above all, though, your work needs to be undertaken within the framework and laws of our democracy; to be able to withstand rigorous scrutiny and review; and to be consistent with our core national values. In short, it needs to be valued and trusted by our citizens.
- Looking back on what I've said, two further points stand out. **First**, New Zealand's intelligence agencies benefit enormously from their long-standing and very close cooperation with partners from like-minded countries. Those partnerships bring **global reach** which would otherwise be unattainable for a small, geographically remote country such as New Zealand. They bring **access to intelligence** produced by others on a scale which New Zealand operating alone simply could not hope to achieve. And they provide **access to sources, methods, tradecraft, and technologies** which, again, would be very difficult – if not impossible – for us to achieve on our own.



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- And **secondly**, our own intelligence agencies and key departments will achieve much better and more effective outcomes if they work collaboratively, as partners and not competitors. New Zealand has a tradition of doing this well. Our small size and inherent agility gives us natural advantages in this regard. As Lord Rutherford once famously said: "We don't have very much money to do this, so we're going to have to **think**." Working smarter is what we're good at. And for us that must mean an emphasis on taking a "whole of Government" approach across the relevant sector groupings.
- Intelligence work needs to define itself more clearly as a profession. The trends I've outlined above are not likely to reverse, so it is timely that in New Zealand those professional standards are established. The NZIIP has an important role to play in this.
- This group does not obviate - and is not a step on the road to obviating - the requirement on Government to maintain and build its own intelligence capabilities. Nor does it mean that Government, representing the state and its citizens, will be sharing the full detail of how it conducts its secret intelligence business. Much will remain, rightly and in the national interest, secret and sensitive. However, NZIIP will be a vehicle, I hope, to air many of the key issues, develop a professionalised model and an acknowledged and recognised professional identity and set of standards, and enable and encourage the wide degree of sharing of issues implicit in the points I've raised this morning.
- Above all, though, I think that the real value of the NZIIP will be in fostering greater mutual understanding and awareness of both the challenges and opportunities which our intelligence professionals are facing and dealing with. That will inevitably assist and enhance that important "whole of Government" dimension of our collective intelligence efforts.
- I commend your conference, and wish you well as you focus on your theme of "Improving Intelligence Practice".