

Organization Report: Interpol International Criminal Police Organization

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Introduction: Overview and Current Issues

The entity now known as Interpol began in 1914, when police from 14 European countries gathered in Monte Carlo, Monaco, to discuss currency counterfeiting. This led to its official formation in 1923 in Vienna as a nongovernmental body with the name of International Criminal Police Commission. The Organization was reconstituted in 1946, after the Second World War, with new statutes and a General Secretariat in Paris.

The Constitution was modified and the present name of International Criminal Police Organization was adopted in 1956. The name Interpol was the telegraphic address of the organization and quickly was adopted as the more commonly stated name. The official name, however, is ICPO-Interpol. Their headquarters is currently located in Lyon, France.

Interpol is the largest international police organization, with 181 member countries spread over five continents. Every member country has a local Interpol office called a National Central Bureau which is staffed by its own police and works to coordinate Interpol activities within their border.

Interpol is governed by a General Assembly which meets once a year. The General Assembly makes all the major decisions affecting general policy. It is composed of delegates appointed by the governments of member countries. Each member country represented has one vote. Interpol's current General Secretary is Ronald K. Noble. He was Chief Law Enforcement Officer in the US Treasury Department from 1989 to 1996.

There is also an Executive Committee which consists of a President, four Vice Presidents and eight delegates, all from different countries. They supervise the execution of the decisions of the General Assembly and the work of the Secretary General. The

current President is Jesús Espigares Mira. From 1996 to 2000, he was Head of the Criminal Investigation Department of Spain, dealing with drug trafficking, money laundering and organized crime.

Interpol is funded by its member nations. Contributions are based on their ability to pay as dictated by the distribution scale adapted from the United Nations. The 2002 budget was 29,467,000 Euros which is equivalent to 33,919,630 US Dollars. They publish Counterfeits and Forgeries Review, International Criminal Police Review, International Crime Statistics, Passport Handbook, Interpol Guide to Vehicle Registration Documents, Interpol Handbook on DNA Data Exchange and Practice and Stolen Works of Art (CD-ROM).

The organization's priorities lie in public safety and terrorism, criminal organizations, drug-related crimes, financial and high-tech crime, human, and fugitive investigation support. One of Interpol's most important tasks is to place member countries on alert about people being sought by police forces worldwide. Member country's domestic police departments first make the request to place criminals on the Interpol wanted list. Police within the country the criminal is said to be residing, for the most part, must then track and arrest those on the wanted list.

According to their 2002 Annual Report, Interpol has ten issues it is currently focusing on. In the aftermath of September 11, Interpol has worked to improve its communications network by providing 24 / 7 support to member nations. They are also striving to improve their technological capabilities such as their network and databases in order to enhance criminal tracking. They are working on furthering key projects such as drug trafficking, credit card crime, intellectual property and high tech crime, crimes

against people such as child smuggling and human trafficking and crimes against property such as stolen art work.

Site Contents

- **Background information:** Background available in *Interpol Information : Fact Sheets* : “Interpol – an overview” as well as same titled PDF document linked off the main page.
- **Departments of the organization:** As part of *Interpol Information : Governance*, there are listings of the main organizations and their member nations and delegates. The main *Governance* page also depicts a basic organization chart.
- **Databases:** There is a searchable database of Interpol Wanted Fugitives is available under *Wanted*.
- **Employment opportunities, list of:** Available under *Interpol Information : Recruitment*.
- **FAQ's:** Many sections have linked questions which lead to their answers further in the page. This is not consistent in all sections.
- **History:** A basic history is available in *Interpol Information : Fact Sheets* : “Interpol – an overview” as well as in the same titled PDF document linked off the main page.
- **Languages:** Arabic, French, English and Spanish are the main languages.
- **Legislation:** Legal documents pertaining to the organization and operation of Interpol can be found in *Interpol Information : Legal Materials*. Within both the *General Assembly* and *Executive Committee* sections of *Governance* can be found legislation which Interpol has proposed or created.
- **Links to other related sites:** *Interpol Information : Links* has connections to sites promoting *International Cooperation* and *Police Justice* sites for many member countries.
- **Mission:** Listed on the main *Interpol Information* page.
- **Publications catalog:** There is a list of publications. [International Criminal Police Review](#) has an index available with abstracts of the contents of each issues and some links to full text which dates back to 1998.
- **Speeches of prominent members, directors, etc.:** Text is available of the Secretary General’s speeches at *Interpol Information : Speeches* as well as those of noted officials addressing Interpol back through 2001.
- **Statistics:** There are no databases, but there are random statistics scattered within many of the categories both in tables as well as in text form. Under *International Crime Statistics* there are links to general crime statistics for member nations as far back as 1995. There are also full text annual reports back to 1999.

Mission

Interpol's mission is "to be the world's pre-eminent police organization in support of all organizations, authorities and services whose mission is preventing, detecting, and suppressing crime" as stated on the main Interpol Information page of their website. It aims to help officers from different police forces, countries, languages and cultures to cooperate with one another and work together to solve crimes.

Interpol deals only with international crimes that overlap more than one member country's borders. Their goals, as listed on their website, are to:

- "provide both a global perspective and a regional focus
- exchange information that is timely, accurate, relevant and complete
- facilitate international co-operation
- co-ordinate joint operational activities of its member countries
- make available know-how, expertise and good practice"

They are strictly forbidden to undertake any political, military, religious or racial activity.

The Interpol website supports these goals through several methods. The first is the layout of the menu which breaks down information mainly by type of crime. Within each of these sections are documents describing activity within this area as well as Interpol's efforts to stop it. An example of this in *Works of Art* which has a FAQ discussing Interpol's role in finding lost art as well as links to pictures of *Recently Stolen*, *Discovered*, *Unclaimed* and other types of art involved in international theft.

To promote information exchange, *International Crime Statistics* provides access to crime statistics for member nations by category. This is helpful for any police organization seeking an overview on national crime rates. Another example of this lies in *Vehicle Crime*. This section contains an overview of procedures for recovering stolen vehicles for all member nations.

The *Governance* section has detailed information on the meetings of the General Assembly and the activities of the Executive Committee. Within these pages, as well as in the convention listings in some sections, are reports and meeting information. This is evidence of the sponsorship of international cooperation facilitation.

Annotated Bibliography

Anderson, Michael. Policing the world : Interpol and the politics of international police co-operation. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. HV7240.I25 A58 1989.

Similar to Michael Fooner's Interpol, listed in this bibliography, this monograph covers the history and operations of the organization from inception to publication. The main difference between this resource and others presented lies in its accessibility. Lengthy passages of text make it difficult to easily pull out facts and figures for the researcher. Although including an extensive bibliography and index, it is generally more difficult to use than other sources presented. Topics include history, legal basis of Interpol, drugs, terrorism and bi-lateral police cooperation. Also included are models of international police cooperation.

Anonymous. The International Criminal Police Organization, Interpol : U.S. National Central Bureau, Washington, D.C. : point of contact for international law enforcement. [Washington, DC] : U.S. Dept. of Justice : U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, [1992?].
J 1.2:In 8/9

Anonymous. The International Criminal Police Organization, Interpol : U.S. National Central Bureau, Washington, D.C. : point of contact for international law enforcement. [Washington, DC] : U.S. Dept. of Justice : U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, [1998].
J 1.2:IN 8/9/998

Anonymous. The International Criminal Police Organization, Interpol : U.S. National Central Bureau, Washington, D.C. : point of contact for international law enforcement. [Washington, D.C.] : U.S. Dept. of Justice : U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, [2002].
J 1.2:IN 8/9/2002

These three documents are pamphlets published by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of the Treasury covering the U.S. National Central Bureau. The U.S. National Central Bureau is the United States point of contact for International Law Enforcement as part of Interpol. Each participating country in Interpol sets up a National Central Bureau which serves as the country's point of contact with the international law

enforcement community. The brochures include a list of member countries. They discuss how the U.S. National Central Bureau is connected to Interpol. Each is an updated copy of the one previous. They are not very informative, but good for basic information.

Chapman, Robert D. "Reflections on Terrorism: A Sideline View." International Journal of Intelligence & Counter Intelligence 12.2 (1999). Academic Search Elite. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Academic Affairs Library. Retrieved 6 Dec. 2003 <<http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=3973403&db=mth>>.

This twenty page article offers some reflections on terrorism. Sections include the revolutionary aspects of terrorism; the author's recollections of time spent in counterterrorist operations; and human factors involved in terrorism. There is a lengthy portion spent covering the four major groups of terrorists which are National Liberation Movements, the Palestinians, the Iranians, and revenge-takers. Obstacles to intelligence operations, efforts to protect the nation and Interpol's role in counterterrorism efforts, as well as deterrence are also covered. This is an excellent article to get a greater understanding of the world of terrorism and how Interpol interacts.

Deflem, Mathieu. "The logic of nazification: the case of the International Criminal Police Commission ("Interpol") **." International Journal of Comparative Sociology 43.1 (2002). InfoTrac OneFile. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Academic Affairs Library. Retrieved 6 Dec. 2003 <<http://eresources.lib.unc.edu/eid/description.php?EIDID=397>>.

The evolution of the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC), the police organization today known as Interpol, is investigated in the period when the organization came under control of the Nazi regime and when, at roughly the same time, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) became the Commission's official U.S. representative. Confronting some of the prior historical literature on Interpol, this article draws out the conflicting motives of Nazi police and FBI in participating in the same international organization. It is argued that the nazification of the ICPC occurred in two strategic stages: from seeking influence in the organization to acquiring control of it. Although the infiltration of the ICPC by Nazi police officials was realized in these stages, in practical terms, it never went beyond presenting an illusion of continuity in international police cooperation. It is concluded that theoretical models of nazification should consider the rationality and purposive orientation of its direction as well as its complex dynamics and historically variable determinants.

Imhoff, John J.; Cutler, Stephen P. "Interpol." FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin 67.12 (1998). Academic Search Elite. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Academic Affairs Library. Retrieved 6 Dec. 2003
<<http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=1434580&db=afh>>.

With a focus on the importance of extending law enforcement's reach around the world, this article gives case studies of situations where law enforcement was stalled by international borders. There are descriptions of the functions of Interpol; the mission of the organization; an overview of the communication system; lists of information resources; Interpol's role in the United States as well as investigative limits. Included are practical resources such as contact guidelines and a helpful list of the types of Interpol notices such as *Red* means 'seeks arrest' or *Blue* mean 'seeks information'. It concludes with a list of phone numbers for U.S. state agencies for contact.

Fooner, Michael. Interpol : global help in fight against counterfeiters, drugs, terrorists, and [sic]. [Washington, D.C.] : U.S. Dept. of Justice, National Institute of Justice, [1987?]. J 28.14/a:G 51.

This is a short trifold document published by the U.S. Department of Justice, a reprint from the National Institute of Justice Reports. It begins with a narrative about a criminal case in New York City and how the Police Inspector contacted Interpol to coordinate the investigation between countries. It continues to give an overview of Interpol including its organization and services, the National Central Bureaus and how the police can work with Interpol. It appears to be aimed at US law enforcement. It ends with another story of how Interpol was called in to aid another case and gives information on how to contact Interpol.

Fooner, Michael. Interpol : issues in world crime and international criminal justice. New York : Plenum Press, c1989. HV7240 .F663 1989.

The author has established a reputation for writing about Interpol and puts forth a thorough history and description of the organization and operations from inception to publication. Included are detailed bibliographic references in each chapter leading to further sources of information. The final section holds full text of many documents associated with Interpol such as their Constitution, the National Central Bureau Policy and the rules on international police cooperation. I'd highly recommend this source to someone who was looking for a thorough overview of Interpol and its workings.

“The FP Interview.” Foreign Policy 122.1 (2001). Academic Search Elite. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Academic Affairs Library. Retrieved 6 Dec. 2003 <<http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=3934105&db=afh>>.

This is a lengthy interview with Raymond Kendall, the Secretary General of Interpol previous to the current Secretary General, Ronald Noble. He held this post for 15 years and reviews the changes in Interpol during his administration. His commentary includes Operation Icicle in July 1999 which involved 5 National Central Bureaus as well as the Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit at Interpol Headquarters; changes in the types of global crimes as of 2001; and problems regarding the budget allocated for Interpol. Overall, this is an excellent historical review of the changes and growth in Interpol between 1985 and 2000.

United States. General Accounting Office. Counterterrorism, role of Interpol and the U.S. National Central Bureau [microform] : briefing report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. House of Representatives. Washington, D.C. : The Office ; Gaithersburg, MD : The Office [distributor, 1987]. GA 1.13:GGD-87-93 BR.

This is a nice document written in 1987 for the U.S. House of Representatives on the role of Interpol and the U.S. National Central Bureau (USNCB). It describes the role of both bureaus in association with counterterrorism as well as the objectives scope and methodology used by Interpol. It gives the background and history of Interpol, how information is exchanged, a review of both counterterrorism and non-terrorist cases and users perceptions of USNCB’s contribution to counterterrorism. Other sections include privacy issues raised by USNCB activities, summaries of USNCB counterterrorism cases and a list of Interpol member countries. There are tables and figures describing case countries of origin and sources of information; as well as an organization chart.

United States. General Accounting Office. United States participation in Interpol, the International Criminal Police Organization : Department of the Treasury : report of the Comptroller General of the United States. Washington : General Accounting Office, 1976. GA 1.13:ID-76-77.

An earlier version of an overview report on Interpol, very similar to the one assembled in 1987 for the House of Representatives listed within this bibliography. Its scope covers the US involvement with Interpol, as well as the nature and type of requests. This would be useful to gain a historical perspective of Interpol from twenty-five years ago to compare to the current annual report or other current documents. Interestingly, there were only 33 participating nations in 1976, compared to the 181 of today.

Website Evaluation

Based on *Evaluating Information: Some questions to help you judge Online Information* <<http://jhss.wrdsb.on.ca/library/html/evaluate/evalinfo.html>> from the Jacob Hespeler Secondary School Library website, there are seven criteria on which the Interpol site <<http://www.interpol.int/>> will be evaluated: Authority, Time, Scope, Form, Clarity, Validity, and Importance.

Authority: All information on the Interpol website is authored by members of the organization and therefore holds credibility of their reputation. Each section of the menu contains thorough descriptions of the activity of that sector as well as tools and links to support their efforts.

Time: The information on the Interpol site appears to be up to date. There are links to reports and speeches within the last several months. My only criticism would be the lack of consistency in reporting, such as the *National Crime Statistics* which has varying years of data for countries represented.

Scope: There is a lack of consistency in the depth and coverage of each topic area within the page. Examples of in depth coverage include: *Stolen Art Works* contain photos of both found and unclaimed art; in *Wanted*, you can click on *Recent* in the menu and see photos of those wanted by Interpol; *Forensic* forms are available for disaster victim identification. Most sections have a good description of that area, but don't necessarily have supporting documentation or tools for someone seeking further details.

Form: Mainly the site is presented in straight HTML text with some documents available in PDF format. The menu system appears differently in different browsers. Internet Explorer looks better than Mozilla or Netscape. Also, some PDF or other documents don't display in Mozilla or Netscape, but do in Internet Explorer.

Clarity: There is an interesting menu system in that it looks very shallow and uninformative, but when you click on any of the subjects, it explodes into layers of information. Sub-layers often have further information beneath them. The categories on the side are very exciting. They include: *Terrorism*, *Fusion Task Force*, *Wanted*, *Works of Art*, *Drugs*, *Football Hooliganism*, and *Weapons / Explosives*. Most pages are text based with few graphics or other methods of catching your eye. Not an exciting site to click through. There is also a search link which is in the banner but returns nearly unintelligible results.

Validity: I'd assess the site to be highly valid given that there is a timeliness to the information posted, such as the stole art works from Iraq. Also, in that it appears that most documents are authored by Interpol, there is a control on what is posted.

Importance: If someone is seeking information to deal with international law enforcement or international crime, Interpol's site would be an excellent place to get a background on how police forces interact. Given that Interpol is the largest international police organization, and represented by 181 member nations, the importance of the information they provide is high.

Overall, the Interpol site has lots of information which gives detailed descriptions of their individual units and the types of crimes that they cover. There are many publications available online, as well as forms and other documents. The main flaw is that the site is somewhat low tech where I might have thought that it would be more interactive given their mission and international focus.