

# Intelligence Systems and Sport

Intelligence

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# A Ten Point Plan for implementing and running an intelligence system for a Sporting Authority

*Five years ago, the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) conducted a full and independent review of its Security Department (now the Integrity Services Department). Whilst the review commended the department's investigative capabilities, it highlighted a need to improve its information management systems. A recommendation was made for the installation of a new electronic intelligence system to replace the existing paper-based operation. In this article Yogita Popat, Security Operations Manager at the BHA, describes how they turned the results of the Security Review into a major opportunity for the BHA, streamlining their information management and implementing a new electronic police-style intelligence system. Read on to find out what she learnt along the way and how she built upon the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Ten Point Plan for dealing with betting in sport, to develop her own Ten Point Plan for implementing and running an intelligence system in sport.*

The BHA is the regulatory and governing body for horseracing in Great Britain, and as part of its role, the Integrity Services department is responsible for identifying and investigating possible breaches of the rules of racing within the sport. Breaches can be anything from employment and payment disputes, to the more serious offences of corruption. The independent security review in 2003 told us that although our investigations were going well, our information management systems were weak. The recommendation was that we needed to further develop our intelligence systems.

To explain further, whilst we often had the information needed to prosecute an offender, having conducted all the right processes and procedures, that information was not always recorded. There was always the danger, then, that this unrecorded information might be needed later on for a prosecution. We needed continuity of information recording. This led us to approach electronic intelligence system provider Memex. Their system is designed by police experts, and has full end-to-end information management functionality. It could also be quickly customised to fit our language and processes, which was important if we were to get it embedded into our organisation.

In 2005, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published a new code of practice for preserving integrity in sports betting, called the Ten Point Plan. In March 2005 this code was published to all sports. This plan mentions information sharing among several of its ten points, and this is something I have included in my own Ten Point Plan for setting up a sports intelligence system.

The DCMS's Ten Point Plan is intended for sports authorities to use to protect the integrity of their sport, and it was envisaged that each sports authority would take the plan as a guide and build on it, developing more detailed rules and policies of their own. And indeed we have, using the easily-customisable Memex system to enable the management of our own information, in our own way.

### ***1. Start with a blank sheet of paper***

It wasn't clear to us when we first started to implement our Memex electronic intelligence management system, but became clearer later on, that we needed to make the Memex system fit our processes. We started out by doing the opposite - making our processes fit the system - but realised later on that the Memex system is actually cleverer than we thought, able to be quickly and easily customised to fit. We now know the process we want to use, so are working to align our Memex system to it ourselves. My advice then to sports organisations setting up a new system would be start with a blank sheet of paper.

### ***2. Involve users from the start***

When setting up your system, make sure you have an actual user i.e. an investigator or an intelligence administrator, on board. This is essential because the information flow needs to be right, and only the person who is going to use the system will know this. It is easy to allow the IT people to design the information flow process, but whilst they have the technical expertise, they don't have the critical investigative knowledge to allow us to align the system to business requirements. For us, running an electronic intelligence management system is far more than just getting information into the system and storing it there - equally as important is what you do with it once it's in there i.e. linking and tasking. A failure to access the right analytical expertise means your system will potentially become a black hole for information. It also means people will think the information they provide is going into a black hole which puts them off submitting it.

### ***3. Remove police language***

Despite the 2003 security review quite rightly recommending the implementation of a police style intelligence unit, and our decision to adopt one, we realised early on that police-style language was not going to work within our organisation. We needed our people to use the system, and we weren't going to achieve this using language alien to their own. So we tweaked our Memex system, and customised the language used within it to meet our own needs at the BHA. We would therefore advise customisation of the language to suit the needs of your sports organisation.

### ***4. Make information flow throughout the organisation***

Once our Memex system was up and running, we soon realised that information flow throughout the organisation was critical. Previously our intelligence function had been seen as highly secretive, but now we are far more open about what we do and find this is the best way to share information and manage intelligence. In endeavouring to do so,

however, we discovered that within our organisation, people in different roles didn't talk to each other, hindering our attempts to be more open. To counter this, we established a Race-day team briefing, conducted on every single race day, encouraging people to talk to each other, and potential intelligence to circulate around the team. And as an unexpected by-product of this strategy, we found that team relations also improved. Our Race-day team briefing then is a basic procedure which ensures nothing is missed, and the operational information gleaned drives not only day-to-day tactics but also our annual strategic review. It also provides us with additional 'eyes' out in the field to help us deal with the information.

### ***5. Have a resources structure in place to manage your system***

Another voyage of discovery for us has been seeing the volume of our intelligence grow. At the beginning we were only receiving one or two pieces of intelligence a week, whereas now we get hundreds. Indeed, the volume of intelligence we receive has increased by 40% in the last 12 months. And with this increase we need people to manage it – to analyse, research and then act upon the intelligence. For this reason, we would recommend some forward planning in terms of a resource structure to manage your new electronic intelligence management system and the volume of intelligence it will generate.

### ***6. Incorporate intelligence into the whole organisation***

Such has been the success of the implementation of our Memex intelligence management system that we have decided to become a more a more intelligence-based organisation as a whole. Even licensing in our operations is now based on intelligence. Intelligence, then, is not just the remit of the intelligence unit. No longer an add-on, it pervades everything we do. We wouldn't have been able to imagine this five years ago, but with the Memex system widely adopted within the BHA, this concept is now a reality. We would strongly recommend you consider this vision when implementing intelligence system into your sport.

### ***7. Avoid “knee jerk” reactions to new intelligence***

In point 5 above, I discussed the extent to which volumes of intelligence have increased at the BHA. With so much more intelligence in our Memex system than we ever had with the paper-based one, you can imagine just how tempting it has been to react to every single piece. This is not something I would recommend, however, since whilst noting every piece of intelligence is important, it is essential to avoid “knee-jerk” reactions that haven't been properly thought through. A single piece of intelligence might be a one-off e.g. a betting blip, and what we really need to look for is repeat behaviour and patterns, and Memex helps us do that through its advanced analytical tools. The right people developing the information will also assist with this.

### ***8. Let people know results and outcomes of intelligence***

Such has been the adoption of our Memex intelligence system within the BHA that intelligence is provided unprompted by people throughout the organisation. The system is easy to use, and we have discovered that “information breeds information”. What this

means is that the more information people submit and see how it has made a difference, the more people want to give. It also starts a conversation - one that they may not have thought relevant before. For this same reason, it is important to let people know within your organisation what has happened with the information they give, and what the result or outcome was (even if there wasn't one). With this in mind, we have recently developed a regular Briefing Document through which we update the team on what is going on and also task them with further actions arising from the information that has been submitted. The Race-day team, which previously tended to be out of the loop due to its field-based nature, is now kept fully in the picture, which in turn has led to a further increase in the number of reports that are submitted.

### ***9. Share intelligence with other organisations***

Building on points 5, 6 and 7 of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Ten Point Plan which reference information sharing between sports and other relevant organisations, we decided early on to share our information with other organisations. Best practice in police intelligence operations, according to the National Intelligence Model (NIM), recommends you take your intelligence from the widest pool of information available, and use it to drive operations. At the BHA we share information with other relevant organisations such as other sports, the RSPCA, police and customs to name but a few. Using a pool of resources such as this ensures we are able to look at all the options available to us and identify the best possible way forward in terms of preserving the integrity of our sport and beating corruption.

### ***10. Look for efficiency savings by combining systems***

Having run our Memex intelligence system for several years, we still have separate intelligence and case management systems. But since every case starts and finishes with intelligence, there is much work duplication through double inputting of information. With this in mind, we have identified an opportunity to integrate these systems, using our current systems to manage both intelligence and case management operations, and automating many processes. We'll be able to search both systems simultaneously, from a single search request, and information will only ever need to be entered once, saving us hours of time. And I am looking forward to being able to use the same tools we have in our intelligence system for case management and vice versa e.g. guides and "aide memoires". In the same vein, we may also integrate our other databases into this one system.

***For more information on the BHA, see [www.britishhorseracing.com](http://www.britishhorseracing.com).***

***For more information on Memex, see [www.memex.com](http://www.memex.com).***

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