
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, INDICATORS AND DRUG ENFORCEMENT: IN THE CROSSFIRE OR AT THE CROSSROADS?

by

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***Abstract:** The climate of public accountability impinges upon managers of enforcement agencies as it does upon managers of all public agencies. This paper explores the prospects for meaningful Performance Indicators (Pis) in relation to drug enforcement. Against those cynical of the desirability or possibility of meaningful Pis in drug enforcement, the author argues that the effort is justified not only in the interests of the manageability and accountability of enforcement agencies but more broadly as an aspect of transparency in policy making and of the balancing of competing claims in a democratic society. Drawing particularly upon U.K. sources, the author illustrates the urgency of the demand for Pis, explores some political, conceptual and technical difficulties in their development, proposes a broad framework within which they may be conceptualised, and advocates a vigorous research engagement with these issues. Challenges include improving the interpretability of established measures such as drug seizures and arrests, evaluating new orthodoxies such as disruption, and developing measures of impacts of interventions and policies in terms of market-related harms and enforcement-related harms. Practical issues include the development of independent, audit-type checks of those Pis that rely on an element of judgement by enforcement officers themselves. The author urges consideration of the merits of a move to multi-year reporting/accounting periods, in order to: (1) concentrate interpretative resources on larger and more robust data sets and, (2) reduce the presentational effort currently distracting senior enforcement managers, policy makers and indeed researchers from the focused and sustained work needed to improve interpretability.*

INTRODUCTION

It is clear even to the sheltered specialist that interest in performance management is by no means restricted to drug policies and their implementation. It represents a much broader, one might say global phenomenon — an aspect of *manageridism*. Developed in the competitive arena of the private sector from the 1960s onwards, sweeping as "value for money" auditing into the public sector in the 1970s and 1980s, and taking hold in seemingly intractable problem areas such as drug policy in the 1990s, performance management and auditing will not lightly be brushed aside. The consequences of their rise in enforcement generally, and in drug enforcement in particular, cannot be prejudged as being either conservative or liberal in terms of political complexion or practical impact (Dorn, 1995). Of course, if done cynically and without critical edge, then performance management may amount to no more than a rubber stamp, a rhetorical gloss on existing strategies and tactics, at best a justification for introduction of "new" measures that have already been politically decided upon. But, if pursued rigorously and with imagination, then the methods and measures adopted may lead to real surprises, open debate, reflection and innovation.

This chapter examines the prospects for meaningful Performance Indicators (Pis) in relation to drug policies at global, European and national levels, with special reference to Pis on drug markets and enforcement.¹ The vantage point from which this is written is that of someone working for an independent agency providing consultancy, research and commissioning advice to government, in the context of the U.K. drug strategy 1998-2008, which places special emphasis on Pis (Cabinet Office, 1999, especially page 19). However, it is not an objective of this chapter to describe existing national, European or international drugs strategies and associated Pis, nor programmes for development of the latter: that would be a worthwhile task but beyond the scope and resources deployed here.² Here, in ground-clearing mode, we identify some issues of principle, practice and research that cross boundaries.

The New Right to Know

It is helpful to think of performance indicators as being used either as dials or tin-openers. Implicit in the use of performance indicators as dials is the assumption that standards of performance are unambiguous; implicit in the use of performance indicators as tin-openers is the assumption that performance is a contestable notion...the majority of indicators are tin-openers rather

than dials; by opening a can of worms, they do not give answers but prompt interrogation and inquiry, and by themselves provide an incomplete and inaccurate picture [Carter, 1994].

It is widely accepted that performance-management information is poorly developed in relation to drug enforcement, that is to say, not only poorly developed in relation to information on prevention and treatment programmes, but also in relation to the expectations of state auditing bodies. This is reflected in a report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (1988) whose conclusions regarding Her Majesty's Customs and Excise (HMC&E) were taken up and indeed amplified by the political process. In the U.K. in 1999 the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts summarised the situation in the following terms.

The C&AG's [Comptroller and Auditor General's] Report noted that the Department's [Customs'] key performance indicators do not show the extent to which the Department have any overall impact on the illegal drugs market in the United Kingdom, either in the short or the long run. Increases in drug seizures may indicate that Customs and Excise have seized a greater proportion of the drugs available on the illegal market, or they may reflect a growth in the volume of drugs smuggled. Increases in drugs prevented³ or organisations dismantled indicators, whilst confirming that some organisations have been prevented from importing drugs into the UK, do not show whether there has been any overall reduction in supply, since other organisations may have stepped in to make up any shortfall... There is a need for better performance measures. [Committee of Public Accounts, 1999, paragraphs 37 and 45:xv-xvi]

This perception is widely held. If agencies cannot generate performance information, then they cannot perceive themselves, or be perceived by others, as professional or properly managed, they cannot demonstrate that they are deploying their resources rationally, and they risk political pillory and economic damage. Consider for example the following exchanges between, on the one hand, Members of Parliament sitting on the Committee of Public Accounts and, on the other hand, the Chairman of the Board of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, on the question of disruption or dismantling of criminal organisations and its measurement.

Question .. How many organisations smuggling drugs into this country are there, would you say?

Answer Well I do not think I could give you an authoritative answer to that, not least because the organisations are constantly shifting. I would guess that the National Investigation Service [of HMC&E] has got some ideas about this because of the work that they are doing, some of which is very sensitive and confidential.

Question Without having some idea — and I understand the confidentiality — of how many there are, how meaningful is a target for performance which talks about organisations dismantling [sic]? Is it a drop in the ocean or is it most of what is out there?...

Answer I am afraid this is the nature of the difficulty. What you are dealing with is a totally clandestine situation. There is nobody in this country who would be able to give you a total satisfactory answer to the question.

Question We might not have an entirely satisfactory answer but we might be able to grope our way towards one. Do you not think that it is important to try?

Answer I do think it is important to try which is why we have been trying, and I am sorry that we have not succeeded but we are not backward in this area compared with other law enforcement agencies either here [U.K.] or anywhere else... [Committee Public Accounts, op cit., extracts from paragraphs 116-118:18]

The high-profile interaction from which this extract is taken was widely seen as a dreadful ordeal for HMC&E. In the widespread intake of breath in enforcement circles that followed, enforcement managers became more concerned about the state of play vis-à-vis Pis. It should be emphasised, however, that the pressure for such information comes from within the agencies as well as from the political system.

One of the things that struck me the most when starting to work on these issues has been the forcefulness of the demand from managers of enforcement agencies for more meaningful Pis on the activities that their agencies undertake. As one senior officer put it in conversation, "We *have a right* to know how we are doing." If ever there was a time

when enforcement agencies might have been afraid of information/research that might establish cost-effectiveness not only of specific form of interventions, but also of their activities as a whole vis-à-vis drug trafficking and other forms of organised crime, then that time is not now.

Even performance information showing low levels of effectiveness and cost-effectiveness would be better than no information at all. At least there would then be a basis for management action. In today's organisations, seemingly endless effectiveness reviews, reorganisations, downsizing and restructuring are everyday fare for senior managers: change has been normalised. But a lack of the information needed to formulate, direct and underpin such actions paralyses managers. Hence the new mantra: the right to know, the right to have performance measures in drug enforcement as in many other spheres.

Three Obstacles to Anti-trafficking Pis

What, then, has been holding things up? To this observer, three factors seemed to be in play, one "technical," one "political" and one "conceptual."

The technical factor is largely historical, but none the less still rather pressing. Due to the seemingly low interest of governments prior to the mid-1990s in commissioning research on drug markets⁴ and due to the relative recency of evaluation in policing generally,⁵ the concepts, instruments, systems and data have not been in place to support a rapid deployment of Pis for drug enforcement.⁶ Of course, there are some private sector enforcement evaluations in the U.S. (as contributors to this collection show) and some primarily qualitative work in parts of Europe (see Fijnaut et al., 1998 for an audit from a national point of view). But it is still early days in the effort to pull this together and to build upon it the concepts, systems and data necessary to support broad statements about the effectiveness of drug enforcement. The demand for Pis has arisen fast and it will take some time for the state of the art to catch up. While some researchers might say that we should put most of the available research money into other areas because the quality of work is more advanced there, such a response only reinforces the problem. On the contrary, a period of disproportionately high "catch up" funding to develop Pis on drug enforcement is what is needed.

The second factor that has impeded the development of drug enforcement Pis is a degree of ambivalence among many independent researchers and, possibly for some, prejudice. It is possible to encounter a degree of liberal sanguineness at the prospect that the outcomes of drug enforcement might not be assessed for quite some time. If no

effectiveness data at all were to be forthcoming for enforcement, then resources could be switched to other sectors. No great urgency, from this point of view, for prioritising research and development of anti-trafficking Pis. This "freezing out" approach may be fine as political rough-housing and in-fighting for resources, but it is poor for democracy. Enforcement agencies, as well as citizens (concerning hospital treatment, food safety, etc.) have a right to know.

Allied to this liberal sanguineness is an objection that, if attempts are made to develop Pis for enforcement, then surely the agencies would manipulate the outcomes. Well, maybe they would if they could — but in any case exactly the same questions arise, for example, in relation to medical doctors, their pharmaceutical and IT suppliers, insurance providers, and the whole industry, of social and health care. The answer will not be found in an abstract contest of moral virtues, but in full-hearted support for robust forms of PI and independent safeguards in all sectors. Those who suggest it cannot be done should perhaps be invited to rephrase their sentiments (perhaps on a five-point scale, running from "I very much would like it to be done well and soon," through to "I very much would not...").

But *can* it be done? In addressing this question, I move first to conceptual problems, presenting a broad model for contextualising the issues. A sufficiently inclusive model (in analytic terms) may help to provide a common framework of reference for geographically dispersed and professionally diverse teams working on different aspects of Pis and drug policy evaluation. It may also offer jumping-off points for critiques. The central sections of the chapter are concerned with some evident shortcomings facing anti-trafficking Pis. Some practical and methodological suggestions are made for improvement. Lastly I pick up the theme of the title of this chapter and point to some general limits to knowledge.

UNDERSTANDING ENFORCEMENT IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

In his book *The Prince*, Machiavelli advises that, if the archer wishes to hit a target, then it is necessary to aim above and beyond it. To do this, one has to exert one's force beyond the target. One may not be able to see clearly beyond the target, but that is where one must project one's thoughts if one is not to fall short. With this in mind, the reader is asked to glance at Figure 1. This represents an attempt to analytically model the broad contours of the interaction of policies and outcomes (capable of being represented by Pis), in the context of broader, global⁷

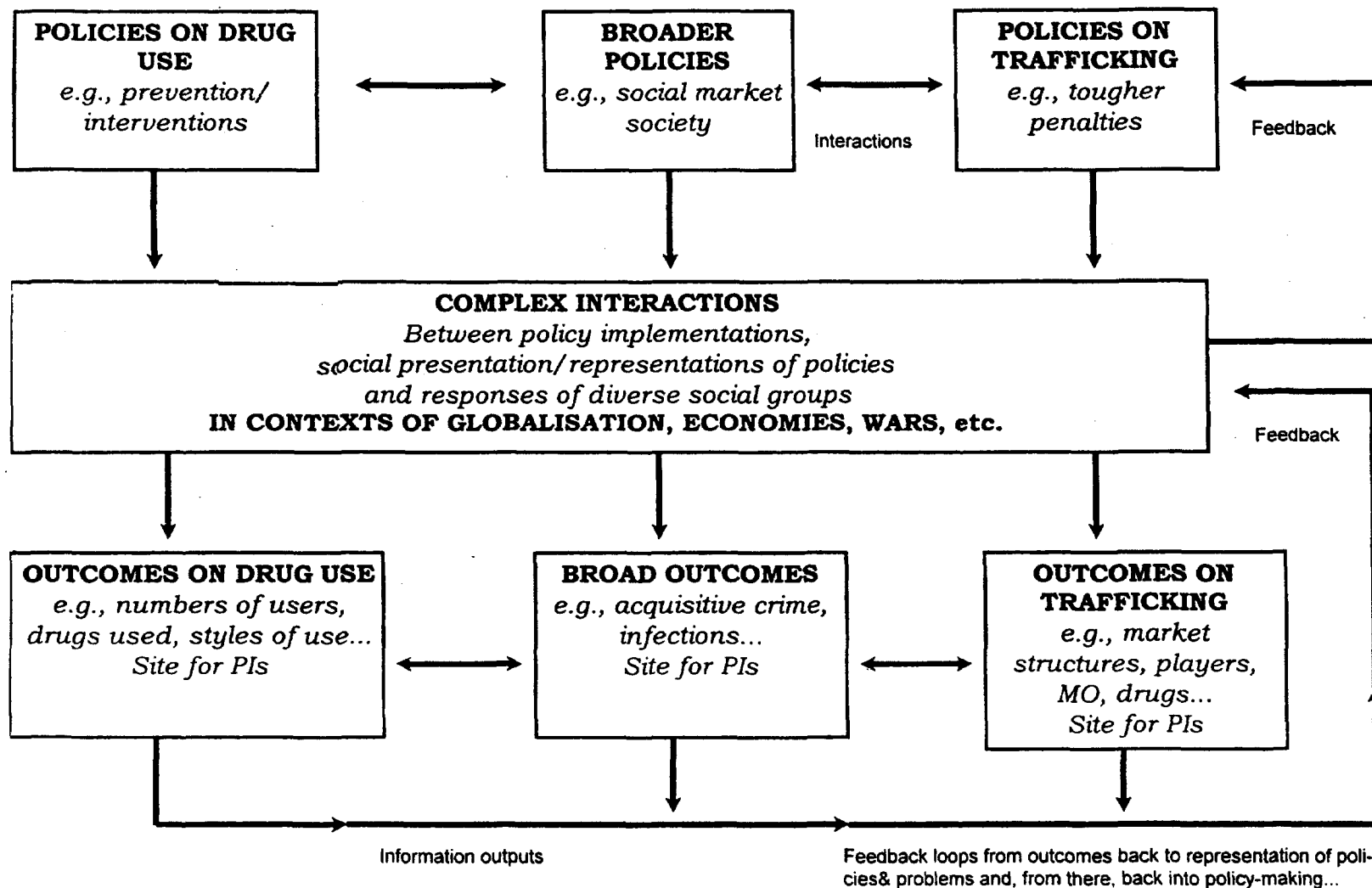
issues and the responses of social groups. It admits the potential significance of three facets — broader (global) policies, drug trafficking policies, and policies on drug use(rs) — at the levels of policy formulation, implementation/outputs and outcomes/impacts.

As far as the international picture is concerned, it is clear that trafficking (and hence consumption), anti-trafficking policies and broader policies on organised crime certainly have been much affected by broader, international, politico-economic events such as war, low intensity armed conflicts, crumbling state authority and the arms trade.⁸ As far as national policies are concerned, not only drug policies but also wider policies — economic, social welfare, housing policies, etc. (cf. Lenke and Olsson, 1996) — I share with other commentators an emphasis on the implementation of policies, from which much (but not necessarily all) of the "impacts" of policies may be derived.⁹ A feedback loop goes from outcomes, back to policies, in recognition of the possibility that, for those who like to think in one-directional causal terms, the statement "outcomes drive policies" sometimes may be as valid a proposition as "policies drive outcomes."¹⁰ For the U.S., for example, and perhaps also in some respects for Europe, the trajectory of drug problems may have driven aspects of policy-making not only on drugs but also on wider aspects of policy. In general, it is a moot point whether some much-focused upon aspects of drug problems — the quantities consumed, for example — have been much impacted upon by drug policies per se. We now attempt to insert into the broad and sweeping framework represented by Figure 1 some specific considerations about the construction and interpretation of Pis.

Advancing Beyond the Fixation on Amounts of Drugs

Questions of quantities of illicit drugs produced, trafficked and consumed have dominated the debates on drug Pis. In the United States, until recently, policy has been assessed in these terms and, particularly, in terms of levels of consumption (Reuter, 1999). However, from the late 1990s onwards, in the U.S. and in many European countries, indicators have been developed in relation to other indicators. The U.S. has developed a set of "cross cutting" indicators that still centre on, but certainly go wider than, drug supply and drug consumption. In Europe, up into the late 1990s, monitoring by the European Union's body — the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction — focused on indicators on the consumption side: drugs prevalence, health status, infection rates, etc. (EMCDDA, 1999). Add to this a keen desire at national level in many E.U. Member States to reduce levels of acquisitive crime associated with some patterns of drug use, for which national Pis

Figure 1. Performance Indicators (PIs) in Global Context



have been developed (see, for example, Cabinet Office, 1999:16-17). These "other*" concerns and indicators correspond to policy goals of harm reduction at the levels of communities and individuals.

In relation to trafficking at national and international levels, forms of harm *other than* provision of drugs are reasonably well conceptualised by at least some senior enforcement practitioners, as are potential harms of enforcement actions. But these trafficking-related harms have been inadequately formulated by researchers and have not yet been reflected in the form of Pis. This needs to be done.

Reducing Market-related Harms: From Practice to Theory

It is possible to think of outcomes and Pis in relation to, for example, (1) levels of violence in and around trafficking organisations, (2) destabilisation of institutions and communities, and (3) the ability of trafficking organisations to neutralise and subvert enforcement agencies. The latter capacity is a very important consideration for national enforcement agencies in making decisions about which criminal organisation to give the highest priority for action. It seems strange that, at least as far as the U.K. in 1999 was concerned, such important targeting criteria are not reflected in a specific PI, either in relation to anti-trafficking work or anti-serious crime work generally. How can a management system be coherent when its targeting criteria do not correspond to its Pis?

The implication is that output/outcome measures, including, but not restricted to, amounts of drugs, need to be re-developed to reflect the harms that agencies seek to reduce. This would mean working out what aspects of trafficking are *least disliked* and constructing Pis capable of capturing these features. Such thinking is already implicit in many local policies for management of some retail-level drug markets. Here the objective may be to keep them from spilling into public or private areas containing members of social groups who, for one reason or another, are considered especially vulnerable (young children, as far as offers of drugs are concerned; older people and those living on their own, as far as disturbance and fear are concerned).

Police officers are generally sensitive to potential problems of geo-social displacement, and the best officers may (on a very good day) critically appraise alternative courses of action in the light of possible unintended consequences as well as intended consequences (see Hough, this volume). At higher levels, when facing crime organisations, it is normal for enforcement agencies to try to think through the consequences of taking out an important organisation: how will other crimi-

nals react, and in what terms can one evaluate the foreseeable reshuffling? Yet, although such thinking exists in enforcement agencies, the present set of output measures recognise results only in a much narrower vein.

Disorganisation, Disruption, Dismantlement — and Disinformation

The language of disruption abounds in the U.S., as other contributions to this volume show. For the U.K., during 1999 dismantlement/disruption became a shared or "corporate" PI to be contributed to by all national enforcement agencies (Dorn and Lee, 1999; Cabinet Office, 1999:19, eight bullet-point). The question is, what practices does it describe? And can it be adequately quantified and meaningfully reported?

The unfortunate impression sometimes gained is that disruption can come to mean not much more than arrest. For example, at a local level police may issue figures on numbers of traffickers disrupted in a manner indistinguishable in media reports from figures on arrests. Even when the concept is deployed a little more selectively, the problems are huge. For example, it is a commonplace but perplexing observation among European enforcement people that some trafficking organisers, once convicted and imprisoned, continue to direct activities from prison. Where does that put any disruption measures? It would be salutary to see enforcement agencies reviewing previous years' disruption data and revising it downwards to take out an element corresponding to suspected trafficking from prison. It is a serious question, using a basis of adjustment related to the original calculation of the disruption, whether this should be considered.

Another, equally disturbing question about disruption measures concerns attempts by more sophisticated criminal organisations to try to steer enforcement agencies to false conclusions through informants (who necessarily point both ways), feints and camouflages, bad information and sacrifices of non-essential parts of the organisation (Dorn et al., 1999). There will be times when an enforcement agency acquires certain shipments of drugs because the organiser allows that to happen as a business expense. This concept is widely understood (Committee on Public Account, *op dt*). Likewise, there will be times when personnel are handed over, in circumstances that are constructed to incriminate an individual in both trafficking and the organisation. Even when a case officer "smells a rat" and shares that feeling with supervising senior officers or (in many parts of Europe) investigating magistrate or prose-

cutor, unless the case officer can quickly find another more rewarding basis for action, he or she will be under pressure to accept the sacrifice. Those captured of course protest their innocence, or quite often, not their innocence, but their indignation at finding themselves "in the frame" for a charge bigger than that they thought they were risking — but then such stories are routine. The overall point is that both the police and traffickers engage in case construction.

Such actions by organisers transfer evidence from themselves and the valuable parts of their organisations to others. This ability actually enhances the capability of organisers to continue in business and is the opposite of what is intended to be measured as disruption/ dismantlement.¹¹ In such cases, while it would be correct to record seizures, arrests and convictions,¹² the recording of a disruption (temporary), let alone a dismantlement (long term), would be positively misleading. In fact we should be asking ourselves whether a minus score might sometimes be merited. This and other considerations suggest that disruption indicators need careful thought.

How to Define, Count and Validate "Events"

From a methodological point of view, anti-trafficking Pis present three broad problems. There seem at least partial solutions to each of these problems.

The first problem has been illustrated in several ways by the preceding paragraphs. How does one construct criteria that can guide enforcement agencies in knowing how in principle to "count" (identify, verify, quantify) claims such as disruption when these do not have an externally/independently adjudicated basis in the way that a conviction has?¹³ In practice, this question has led to the construction of scoring systems, which are negotiated between the various enforcement agencies so as to be "do-able," without incurring undue administrative burdens. Since it falls to the parties involved, there may not be very much that researchers from outside the agencies can do in relation to this process of negotiation. Nevertheless, it seems highly desirable that some independent research input be mandated for this process, so as to raise issues-in-principle about the concepts that may only be implicit in the criteria developed. This may involve, for example, raising issues about potential double-counting (e.g., is it allowable that arrest and disruption data refer to more or less the same, or only to different events?).

Once criteria have been set, the next problem is how to allocate particular cases to Pis. In some cases, this problem does not exist for the enforcement agency because they do not make the key decisions (e.g.,

convictions), while in other cases (e.g., disruption) the problem is acute. It seems hard to quarrel with the view that such Pis should be "open to fully independent validation" (Committee Public Accounts, *op. cit.*, para 6(v), page vi). At present it seems that this is being done in the U.K. by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Police. These officers follow up a sub-sample of PI records to confirm that the basis on which they were formulated seems reasonable. This is an understandable approach, but it is based on a rather limited understanding of "independent validation." A more radical approach, which would test the data more directly, would involve presenting case data "blind" to an officer (i.e., one who does not know the way in which it was rated by the original case officer) or to a panel. Of course, this "blind" approach would result in more discrepancies than the "seen" approach. Discrepancies would be investigated by a "data adjudicator" (including genuine outsiders) and data, with explanations, could be re-allocated. Then the PI data for the whole accounting period would be adjusted pro-rata the changes made to the sub-sample.

Multi-year Accounting Periods

The third problem is how to interpret PI data. As mentioned, agency outputs can best be interpreted against data on the total market: drugs not seized, persons not captured, and organizations not disrupted or dismantled, etc. Moreover, if the intention would be to make a year-by-year commentary on the performance of the agencies, which seems to implicit (if only for historical and accounting reasons), then the accuracy of the background data required would have to be consistently high on an annual basis. The reality, however, is that the background data are poorly developed. As a result, the interpretation of anti-trafficking Pis is a challenge that neither the U.S. nor European countries have sorted out. Much work remains to be done.¹⁴

One practical response is to consider whether three-, five- or even ten-year cycles could improve interpretability. Certainly, it would be easier to fit a trend line to data over five years than over two consecutive years. This interval would be applied to drug amounts (total/sized), organisations (active/disrupted) or persons (involved/removed). Although this would not solve the problems, it would mitigate them. There might be additional advantages in at least partially dispelling the annual anxiety-game of releasing key performance data, looking for the suggestions that it might or might not support, and producing rebuttal statements.

There would also be broader advantages in moving to multi-year cycle. Major policy decisions about strategies and resource allocation,

rather than for one year, are usually taken over a three- or five-year cycle. Even if highly reliable and interpretable PI data could be obtained on an annual basis, it is doubtful if the policy system could make much of it, since policy volatility might rise to dysfunctional levels. The planning of the evidence base should be brought into line, in terms of time as well as content, with the requirements of policy making as process. A longer period for non-routine assessment — say five years of so — would result in more interpretable Pis, less argument and better input into policy and resource decisions. Not only enforcement managers, but also audit bodies and politicians, should welcome that.

DISCUSSION: BEYOND CYNICISM

It is clear that drug enforcement Pis have a long and hard road ahead of them. One might ask, will the effort be worthwhile? Before coming to a positive conclusion, we identify a position that goes beyond making a catalogue of the practical difficulties inherent in Pis, and proposes as *a matter of principle* that Pis are useless.

Indeed the danger does exist that the self-imposed and external pressures on governments and enforcement agencies could lead them and their research interlocutors to bluff their way through. A combination of technical virtuosity and public relations bluster could result in performance management in the field of organised crime taking the form of a millennium cult. By burying convenient but dubious assumptions deep within calculations, by using formulae that are abstruse, and by presenting results in forms that are intuitively understandable by few people, producers of Pis could perhaps find sanctuary of a sort.

This would be wrong because, at the end of the day, social auditing is never just a technical matter, since it involves assumptions and judgements that most people would call political. The important thing is make these assumptions and judgements apparent. Citizens in a democracy can then see the limits of expert knowledge and they can pick and mix to develop their own viewpoints and formulate their policy demands.

Some might regard these sentiments as touching but naive. They would point out that, like other signs or discourses that claim to be authoritative, anti-trafficking Pis have postmodern characteristics. They just are themselves, signifying not much else, and certainly not a set of "impacts" on "underlying" drug problems. Rather, performance management is a set of discourses and practices that generate Pis within a stream of other spectacular and mundane signs. The constructions we make and the meanings we grasp in order to move forward are our own:

a foundationalist alternative is not possible. From a postmodern perspective, Pis are never going to be more than "hocus-pocus," and the role of researchers should not be to speak as if they can be "grounded" but to show how tenuous such claims are.

Now it may be that some would think that such critiques could or do contribute to public debates on drugs, trafficking, organised crime, enforcement policies, etc. I hardly think so. On the contrary, such a view is paralysing in practical terms. It seems to me that both enforcement professionals and researchers need to be capable of both forms of professional action — critical and constructive — combining them to "design out" some of the problems in which Pis are currently mired and to make them as meaningful as they can be. This will take years and, along the way, many uncertainties will remain. In the short term, some forms of interpretation, made with the best of intentions and with the most earnest efforts, will no doubt continue to be at best dubious and possibly sometimes misleading. With increasing attention being paid, these problems will become more apparent. Of course this is embarrassing. But it is a necessary phase if conditions are to improve. From the point of view of our freedoms in the long term, what matters is not so much the outcome of specific discussions and decisions on strategies and policies, but rather the reproduction of the conditions — transparency, democracy and accountability — that make open and reasoned discussion, management and policy-making possible.

CONCLUSION: WAYS FORWARD

Performance management and anti-trafficking Pis will often find themselves at the centre of public debate and sometimes, at least, will be a basis for public action. Because of this, they have to be taken seriously, positively and critically. As well as continuing to measure amounts of drugs (drug flows) at various levels of drug markets, Pis should be re-developed to reflect aspects of concern, including:

- Internationally and nationally: ways of reflecting in Pis success in action against those trafficking organisations having the potential to neutralise enforcement agencies and/or to corrupt government and the private sector on a trans-national scale.
- Nationally and regionally: the ability to measure success (or the lack of it) in reducing trafficking-related harms. For example, reduction of violence within and around the trade; reduction in destabilisation of institutions; reduction in penetration of the private sector; and avoiding target-hardening.

- Locally: the measures that describe reduction of trafficking-related harms to communities, e.g., containment of trafficking within areas where it least impinges on vulnerable groups, moulding local drug markets into forms that have the lowest level of associated social harms, minimising negative displacements, and, possibly, describing the consequences of involvement of enforcement agencies in control strategies that run wider than the criminal law (see the Introduction to this volume and, more broadly, Dorn, 1999).

A number of technical improvements in anti-trafficking Pis have been identified. These include:

- In order to improve the interpretability of agency activity and output data, we should move to multi-year cycles instead of 12-month reporting/accounting cycles.
- In order to develop better criteria for "what counts" as an example of "disruption," we should involve independent researchers in the criteria-making process.
- In order to validate Pis more convincingly, we should introduce more rigorous audit techniques, taking sub-samples of disruption PI data, having them re-scored "blind" and then adjusting the whole set.

To these we could add some standard quality assurance processes:

- Review the integrity of the data used in performance management through exercises that involve mounting challenges by joint teams of enforcement officers, auditors and researchers who look for weaknesses and possible improvements.
- In order to come closer to reality and to enhance credibility, the concept of a negative score against at least some Pis should be accepted in principle. Practical procedures should be developed for recording those outcomes that can reasonably be assessed as having a counter-productive element.
- Be prepared to revise PI data for past years, just as economic and other important data are revised, in order to reflect better information as this comes available. Such revisions should be regarded as routine signs of quality assurance, not as problems.

Finally, on interpretability, there is a need to bring the Pis together with other social and economic data within the context of an overarching model of policies and problems. An aim should be to achieve coherence or, to put it in everyday language, to tell a story. What we

need is not a variety of anti-trafficking Pis that are expressed (explicitly or implicitly) each in a different framework, but a set that is conceptually coherent. This means broad analytic and conceptual model-building as well as quite focused studies.

Most of these issues require cooperation at national, regional and international levels. So far, there is a limited amount of relevant work at international level. Work has been done on the interpretability of measures relating to drug markets, seizures, etc. (Office of National Drug Control Policy [ONDCP], 1999). For the European Union, the work of the European Police Office (EUROPOL) is understood to be at an "early stage," while up to 1999 that of the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction has focused on drug demand issues and indicators (EMCDDA, 1999). On the much broader canvas of "mutual evaluation" by EU Member States of their actions in the context of the fast developing arena of "freedom, security and justice" (European Union, 1997), EUROPOL, together with the national agencies, is becoming more involved in strategic work, with limited co-funding available through E.U. programmes such as *Falcone* or *Oisin*.

We conclude that tying together the opportunities for cooperation at international, European and national levels for research and development of enforcement Pis could be as challenging as doing the research.



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NOTES

1. A definitional point: in principle, the term "drug markets" is used throughout in the wider sense, meaning *all* levels of market from production, transit, distribution, retail, etc. None of these "levels" may match the national administrative level all that well. Most drug strategies have a strong national theme and anti-trafficking Pis are being developed at this level. But, for practical reasons the main focus here will be on the national level.
2. What can be said in summary is that, at national level, many developed countries are grappling with the range of problems identified in the present chapter. Their national drugs strategies are devoting small but increasing amounts of resources to focused research on Pis and vexed issues of their interpretability (ONDCP, 1999; EMCDDA, 1999; Cabinet Office, 1999).
3. In the parlance of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, "Drugs prevented" is a hybrid measure consisting of two components, (1) amount seized in a particular operation and (2) the amount that an officer estimates would also have been trafficked by that organisation over the next year. It is expressed annually in aggregate form in money value (at retail level) of all drugs prevented. Since it is not used by other agencies it is likely to be phased out, partly in response to unease over its semi-subjective basis (Custom's Officers' judgements). However, currently fashionable disrupted/dismantled measures have a similar basis.

4. There seems to have been a quickening of international interest at that time. See, for example, UN International Drug Control Programme, 1994; present status of knowledge on the illicit drug industry, discussion paper for ACC Sub-Committee on Drug Control, Vienna, 5-7 September, pp 45. Savona et al. (eds.), 1994. Cocaine markets and law enforcement in Europe, Final Report, Rome: UNICRI, pp 410.

5. Not forgetting the linking of evaluation ("technical") questions of democracy ("political"): see Reiner and Spencer, 1993.

6. Actually, the situation is not that much better in relation to Pis on demand reduction activities, despite a the better level of evaluation in the fields of drug education (Caulkins et al., 1999 look at cost effectiveness of U.S. programmes) and treatment (for ways into this literature in Europe, see Farrell et al., 1999). The relationships between, on the one hand, evaluation results about demand reduction activities and, on the other hand, their contributions to broader drug problems (taking into account contexts, trends and factors generally left outside the design of the evaluation) are only loosely established (EMCDDA, 1999).

7. The term "global" is used here in the French sense, meaning a wide span of issues as well as geographical scope (global/local).

8. The Far East, Latin America, Afghanistan and, for the 1990s, the Balkans, at various times come to mind.

9. It is presumed that the symbolic aspects of policies may have significance for the actions of some actors, who may respond to the public representation of policies — or representations as mediated by others — as much as, or more than, to any direct experiences of policy as implemented. Obviously this may apply to the public at large, or particular socio-political groups, but it could also apply to drug traffickers and others involved in illegal markets. One hypothesis might be that it is in one sense the least "professional" or "organised" criminals who take the greatest account of symbolic aspects (for example, either seeking to evade enforcement that is presented as "tough," or seeking close encounters as a form of challenge or game). The more "organised" players (e.g., risk minimisers, in terms of the research of Dorn et al., 1998) may be less drawn into the symbolic aspects of policies.

10. The work of Reuter (1999) and MacCoun and Reuter (in press) is acknowledged.

11. Here the term "disruption" is used to refer to short term interruption of some activities of the criminal organisation, and long-term dismantlement or cessation of activities by removal of its central resources.

12. *It* seems that political sentiment favours attention to prison years as a potential indicator of apprehension of organisers (Fifteenth Report, *op. cit.*). The dangers of this are clear enough. If society wants prison years, then this is the gift that organisers will offer.

13. Here it is not being claimed that all jury decisions are correct, or that they are not influenced by the enforcement agencies that construct most evidence (traffickers, as noted above, construct some, in addition to judges and lawyers); only that the decision, having been fought for by all sides, is arrived at through the judicial process.

14. In the U.K., in the context of the drug strategy, a high-level, multi-agency Supply Side Research Board was formed in 1999 to agree to lines of research to be tendered in the U.K. and possibly in some cases carried out in cooperation with international and European partners. The main requirements (knowledge gaps) identified as of 1999 included sizing drug markets, understanding the middle market, charting higher drug flows, investigating cost effectiveness of specific types of interventions and, eventually, synthesising a model of markets in interaction with controls.