

INTELL GOES NATIONWIDE

FIVE years ago, the AFP took its first steps into the world of computerised intelligence information using lessons learned during inquiries on drug trafficking and organised crime.

Resources were limited and the computer systems developed were far from comprehensive.

But now that has all changed. In July this year, a truly nationwide intelligence storage-retrieval system came into being with the development of INTELL 11.

"It was in July that the A.C.T. Region joined an Australian-wide intelligence network when the Crime Collation Unit began using INTELL," Detective Superintendent Bill Beale, OIC of the AFP's Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, said.

"The addition of the A.C.T. Region completely nationalised the system," he said.

INTELL 11 began in mid-1983 when the Investigations Department began developing a new intelligence computer system jointly with the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence and the Australian Customs Service.

"Previously, the AFP had been operating a limited intelligence system that had some problems for users," Superintendent Beale said.

"The object was to provide a computer assisted intelligence analysis system comparable with that used by the Costigan Royal Commission in its inquiries."

It was planned to introduce INTELL in January this year, but delays in delivery of equipment caused a postponement until May.

Progress in development was tremendous, with all parts of Australia gradually becoming involved in the input of the vital information needed to make the system work.

"Today, members in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne are entering intelligence data into INTELL from information reports submitted around the country," Superintendent Beale said.

"Most of that information comes from drug squads and regional intelligence units and is gathered during operations and day-to-day inquiries.

"These reports are collated in each region and sent to the BCI in Canberra for recording, microfilming and distribution.

"INTELL 11 has a major part to play in intelligence activities around the country. Its basic objective is to put information together to discover patterns of behaviour and events and isolate people who have not previously come to notice," Superintendent Beale said.

"It should be possible for the BCI to provide a package of information to an



AFP operators watch a demonstration of INTELL capabilities.

operational intelligence group for any particular operation," he added.

One of the biggest benefits of the INTELL system was in the Keyword Search facility.

"This allows retrieval of reports about particular subjects. For example, we can ask: 'Give all the reports about drug importations in false bottom suitcases at Melbourne Airport in the past six months'," he said.

"The system permits us to specify such things as a particular drug or a group of related drugs and a specific time or period of time.

"Keywords or a combination of words can be used with this system in seeking particular information," he said.

A further feature of the system, called Link Analysis, is even more comprehensive in its capabilities.

"The system can respond to a question like: 'I want information on every person known to have been associated with an individual or a company'," he said. "Each person turned up by the computer will also have reference to vehicles used and any other associations considered relevant."

"A second capability provides information on say, how John Smith and Joe Bloggs are related, who they know and the ways they communicate.

"The third capability enables the operator to put in a number of names and come up with those who are not directly associated with these names but who are common to them. This has the ability to identify names of organisations or their hierarchy. Usually these people are well hidden but their names do crop up in cases.

"All these facilities enable us to pinpoint those people who come to notice, regardless of their State of origin.

"In the Region a person may look like an individual, but when the name comes

up in other States these references can be married up to form a comprehensive dossier," Superintendent Beale said.

A further facility to be provided by INTELL 11 is called Movement Analysis. This allows intelligence analysts to draw connections between people travelling separately yet acting in concert.

"We may have two people travelling in separate aircraft who could have met up in London, or who have met in other situations in the past," he said. "By looking at the links, we can see who travelled with who and how often.

"This provides invaluable information for the identification of possible couriers or minders."

Such facilities, coupled with the ability to retrieve recorded information matching such vague requests as 'give me all United States citizens, aged 45 or older, who have come to notice and are known to reside at Bankstown', give the AFP and the other law enforcement agencies using the system, a useful start in the fight against drug trafficking and organised crime.