



Tool 5.2 Snapshot of investigative methodologies

Overview

This tool provides readers with a very brief introduction to the two key operational methodologies in counter-trafficking investigations.

There are two main alternative approaches to conducting anti-trafficking methodologies:

- Reactive investigation (discussed in more detail in Tool 5.3)
- Proactive investigation (discussed in more detail in Tool 5.4)

Reactive investigation

Reactive investigation is used when investigators receive information of criminal activity and there is an urgent need to intervene. In such cases, too great a delay in response can result in serious consequences for victims.

Reactive investigation is weaker than proactive investigation for several reasons:

- Victims may initially provide information but later refuse to cooperate
- Informants may provide information which requires immediate response, enabling those at higher levels of the criminal organization to evade arrest
- Reactive measures may mean that evidence is lacking or not able to be collected

There are three responses which must be applied when the situation of a victim creates the need for a reactive response:

- Immediate intervention
 - To rescue victims
 - To prevent the procurement of other victims
 - To secure evidence
- Use of information
 - To conduct proactive enquiries
 - To disrupt trafficking practices
 - To develop arrest strategies

- Use of intelligence
 - To plan and commence intelligence-gathering operations
 - To assess premises to gather information about locations, etc.
 - To reduce risks involved in subsequent arrest operations

Reactive investigation is discussed in further detail in Tool 5.3.

Proactive investigation

Proactive investigation is conducted in response to information on an ongoing criminal activity obtained through intelligence-gathering or from reports of witnesses. In these situations, there is no imminent threat to witnesses, meaning that investigators do not have to respond immediately. Investigators can therefore plan their activities to collect evidence according to operational plans and resources.

In proactive responses, investigators:

- Can decide where and when to start investigative operations
- Can control the direction of the investigation
- Can remain in control of investigations until the final outcome

Proactive investigation is more effective because the investigators control the investigation. If the investigation is conducted successfully, traffickers will not know when, how or where they are being investigated.

Proactive investigation is discussed in further detail in Tool 5.4.