

Intelligence based on ethics and principles

5 Stones Intelligence is an intelligence agency and protective intelligence service based on Judeo-Christian principles that uses an expert network made up of former members of the CIA, FBI, UK Serious Organised Crime Agency and US Drug Enforcement Administration. CEO David Tinsley explains how his company uses its flexible range of services to combat the blended threat that lies behind global terrorism.

How did the formation of 5 Stones Intelligence come about?

David Tinsley: Having spent 30 years working within the US law enforcement and intelligence community, I saw intelligence and operational gaps that I thought could be better addressed through the efficiency of a private entity. I founded 5 Stones with several colleagues in November 2007 in response to this absence of intelligence, in order to address the rapidly growing number of current and horizon threats in a responsive manner.

What are the main services that you provide to the marketplace?

Our strongest products are intelligence, and the process of providing answers to challenging and elusive needs. Our human intelligence network is extraordinarily unique. The most important factor that needs to be taken into account is that the problem set is correctly defined, measured and addressed. It is also important to understand context and cultural acuity when developing a prescriptive solution.

In recent years it has emerged that criminal organisations, money-laundering networks and terrorist groups are dependent on each other. How has 5 Stones adapted to this phenomenon?

One of the first things that we did was develop a process by which we committed ourselves to understanding the relevant culture. At 5 Stones, we call this 'cultural acuity'. As a company and an entity, we focus heavily on the black-market finance that is used to fund and support fundamental terrorist threats. For example, Harlan Bell, 5 Stones' director of terrorism intelligence, was heavily involved in the FBI's work concerning Osama bin Laden.

Another of the company's sayings is: 'Plan your work and work your plan'. This means that we put our objectives and what are we trying to define on the table. What we can give to the likes of the UK and US militaries, to Nato and the United Nations, is a high degree of focus. Being a private company, we're not required to do other things that might take away from that focus. While the military has to fight a number of battles and problems each day, we don't. We can

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I also think it's very important to operate at the speed of truth. In other words, if you're engaged in a war or skirmish, a lot of time is spent vetting what you've collected and trying to see if it's accurate or valuable, as opposed to disinformation.

We assign the highest levels of importance to the truth, which comes from our Judeo-Christian principles. Therefore, if we tell a client something, whether they are a government or a private entity, they can rest assured that we are telling the truth to the best of our knowledge. 5 Stones only hires passionate people who take ownership when facing challenges. Our operators and specialists invest their skill-sets, passions and networks to build extraordinary products that consistently make a difference.

select our battles and then focus on them. That's a big differentiator and it gives us a high-quality deliverable that you can't always get within a government.

Could you explain how the company's ATC Intel-Network works?

The ATC Intel-Network is our patent-pending intelligence collection and processing system, which was created specifically for the protection of our clients. ATC stands for 'All Things Considered', relative to threat-specific events and incidents, and various other global and local collection points that provide patterns for analysis and preventative forecasting. The collected and developed patterns and

anomalies are bridged together through patent-pending intelligence fusion processes. It is also the first intelligence system designed specifically for the protection of Judeo-Christian worship centres, schools and businesses. Using this database, we search for patterns of conduct and unique operational contexts, and archive them so that we can provide better analyses. We can then check that system against conduct, activity and associates.

How do you organise your R&D activities?

We have brought in some of the best computer forensic people in the US. This has led us into cyber awareness, a new service concerning counter-cyber protocol for infiltration of systems. For us, the point of R&D is to keep us ahead of the curve on what we call 'horizon threat' issues. These are things that we anticipate will happen.

For example, if you look at different intelligence or enforcement agencies within the US, they have a lot of daily activities – it's hard for them to focus on the issues on the horizon because they have to deal with contemporary threats. Being a private company, we can aggregate a certain amount of time to focus on those issues.

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How would you describe your client base?

It is about 50% corporate, 50% government. Our government clients are within the intelligence community and military. On the corporate side, we have provided deliverables to global banking entities and large financial houses, as well as sports entities.

Where do you see your growth coming from in the future?

The expansion of 5 Stones is the result of highly focused service, operating at the speed of truth. Since our launch nearly four years ago, 5 Stones has grown to have more than 200 operators in 40 countries. Our markets are global and we are constantly expanding within sub-networks. The business will continue to grow as a result of our access, deliverables and price points. In terms of value-added services, we maintain a global network of human intelligence sources with extraordinary access. We constantly collaborate with our operators and specialists and challenge ourselves in the pursuit of the highest level of service. But, what I think makes us different is our passion and commitment to people. This is what defines 5 Stones. ■

The blended threat

The expansion of global drug-trafficking organisations has resulted in extraordinary operational alliances and synergies. As a result, criminal organisations, terrorist groups and global money-laundering networks, which only a few years ago had no interest in each other, have now become co-dependent business partners. Such synergies have merged into one of the most complex, fluid and threatening declarations of intent, and represent a blended threat to the world's military, law enforcement and intelligence communities.

Traditionally, the likes of Colombian and Mexican drug-trafficking organisations focused on consumer markets in the US, while Middle Eastern heroin organisations were focused on European ones. However, with large-scale commercial cocaine shipments destined for Europe now coming from Venezuela, money launderers are providing the requisite financial camouflage for drug proceeds to be reintroduced to the world financial markets via black-market banking activities within illicit financial channels.

The need to collect, credit, translate, trade, launder and – ultimately – move illicit US dollars, pounds sterling, euros and pesos in bulk through these black-market credits is the essence and challenge of global money-laundering networks. However, this necessity has also sparked international dialogue, which has morphed into illicit global business relationships between South American money launderers and their counterparts in the Middle East, China and Europe.

These cross-cultural (and often cross-purposed) terrorist and criminal networks have found a basis for co-existence within global money-laundering networks, whose operational relationships have become a challenging and complex amalgamation of financially and culturally camouflaged targets for military, law enforcement and intelligence agencies. This is best expressed by the fact that agencies must create innovative methods to penetrate emerging threats, and identify financial intersections and choke points where they can disrupt and destroy the funding channels that support the financial platforms within the blended threat.

The most effective way to penetrate and dismantle clandestine financial transactions is through strategically placed sources that possess the cultural acuity, access, economic clarity and financial insight required to distinguish the critical elements within a layered money-laundering transaction. This blended threat requires a blended response, calculated to address vulnerabilities within global terrorist organisations populated by drug-traffickers and money-launderers.

Illicit financial transactions damage official commerce and threaten official banking channels, as well as providing essential fuel for global terrorist networks. We must therefore address these issues before they eclipse our capabilities.

Further information

5 Stones Intelligence
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