



# Investigating and Tracking the Global Arms Trade

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Corruption Watch UK

# OUTLINE

- Tracking and Monitoring the Formal Trade
- How Corruption Happens and What to Look For
- Digging Deeper – Using Online Tools
- Creating Informational Networks
- Finding and Managing Sources
- Safety and Security



# TRACKING AND MONITORING

- Numerous resources can be used to track the formal trade. This is useful in determining patterns and identifying anomalies. Sources include:
  - SIPRI Arms Transfer Database
  - PRIO Small Arms Database
  - UN COMTRADE
  - UN Register of Conventional Arms
    - Consult IPIS manual for usage instructions
  - SEESAC (Balkans and Eastern Europe)
  - Small Arms Survey (for identification of weapons)
  - National Arms Control Reports Filed in Parliament
  - Don't underestimate the power of Google Alerts/Youtube/Twitter

# A Word on Arms Trafficking

- Useful sources:
  - Omega (for identifying arms and ammunition)
  - Bellingcat (for stories and how-to-guides on how to verify information)
  - PRIO and UN Comtrade Databases
  - Maritime shipping databases (see online resources document)
  - RiotID (for non-lethal weapons in particular tear gas)
  - UN Security Council Reports for leads and other information
  - See the Small Arms Survey Report on Documenting Small Arms:  
<http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/G-Issue-briefs/SAS-IB14-Documenting-Small-Arms.pdf>



# CORRUPTION: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Two rough areas to examine: fund flows and formal agreements and the procurement process itself
- Within fund flows:
  - Most incidents of corruption involve consultancy, agency or broker agreements. Agreements with consultancies either recently established or registered in tax havens are a red flag.
  - OECD estimates that  $\frac{3}{4}$  cases of corruption involve agents or intermediaries
  - Offsets are a growing area of corruption investigations
  - Maintenance and subcontracts
  - Post-Employment

# CORRUPTION: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Procurement Processes
  - Single-bid tenders
  - Rewriting and restructuring bid specifications
  - Direct intervention on the part of political players, including, but not limited to, Cabinet and Ministers
  - Threats of – or actual filing of – legal complaints and review



# The New Threat: Offsets

- **Offsets:** when a defence company is obliged to provide defence or civilian investments in the economy of the purchaser
- **Major corruption threat:** huge commercial secrecy, easily escapes compliance checks as the company has to invest anyway so funds flows are expected
- **Two main avenues of corruption:** hiding illicit funds flows under guise of false work, or cutting in officials into profitable offset ventures
- **Recent examples:** Embraer in Dominican Republic, Finmeccanica in India, BAE Systems in South Africa (Conlog)

# DIGGING DEEPER – USING ONLINE TOOLS

- Company searches will become paramount in trying to establish beneficial ownership Resources include:
  - The Investigative Dashboard
  - Open Ownership Register
  - Dan O’Huiguin’s Panama archive
  - Open Corporates
  - UK Companies’ House
  - Gazettes (usually available online)
  - Online Sector-Specific Forums (SoaringDragon)



# DIGGING DEEPER – USING ONLINE TOOLS

- **Accessing COURT RECORDS** is often the key to establishing important facts. Remember to investigate court records that extend beyond corruption – often court records will provide useful information regarding beneficial ownership. Resources include:
  - PACER (for the US): Excellent for transcripts, founding affidavits and evidence exhibits
  - Have a look at the RECAP project – free PACER database and Justia for publicly available dockets
  - WorldLII – links to court registries around the world
  - SAFLII (for Sub-Saharan Africa)
  - Legal journals (LexisNexis)
  - Most countries will provide a means of searching court case, even if full text is unavailable. Consult their version of Department of Justice websites (through WorldLii)

# Investigative Journalist Databases

A magnifying glass with a dark handle and frame is positioned over a document with horizontal lines. The lens is focused on the text, which is the title and list of databases. The background is a dark, textured surface.

- Investigative Dashboard's document archive – useful archive of shared journalist documents uploaded for search
- The ICIJ offshore leaks databases, including Panama Papers and Paradise Papers
- DocumentCloud – Public aggregate data store



# DEEP SEARCHING

- Maximise the immense power of Google (Google Hackers Guide and PowerSearching with Google)
  - Filetype
  - Site
  - Inurl: Index
  - Intitle
  - Reverse Image Search
  - site:onion.to

Penetration Testing tools: Pentest!

The Old Internet

Wayback Machine (remember 'save page' feature)

Remember to use other search engines, especially DuckDuckGo

# DIGGING DEEPER – TRACING TRAFFIC

- There are now a number of different websites and databases that allow you track flight and maritime traffic, including, in some instances, bills of lading:
  - Equasis <http://www.equasis.org>
  - MarineTraffic.com <http://www.marinetraffic.com/ais/>
  - Ship to shore phone directory:  
[http://www.inmarsat.com/Support/Ships\\_Directory](http://www.inmarsat.com/Support/Ships_Directory)
  - MaritimeConnector.com <http://maritime-connector.com/>
  - FlightAware: <http://www.flightaware.com>
  - Flightwise <http://flightwise.com/>
  - Flightradar24 <http://www.flightradar24.com>



# Open Source Internet Intelligence Tools including Social Media

- Search for a huge range of data about websites and their ownership
- Detailed guides about how to conduct deep social media searches
- <https://netbootcamp.org/osinttools/>
- The Open Source Intelligence Framework! <http://osintframework.com/>
- Echosec for Tweet locations

# Finding People – Facebook Graph

- Facebook Graph is DEAD
- There are new utilities for searching. Perhaps the easiest to use is PeoplefindThor
- IntelTechniques Form
- Useful tip for contacting people:  
[https://www.facebook.com/paul.holden.587\\_becomes\\_paul.holden.587@facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/paul.holden.587_becomes_paul.holden.587@facebook.com) – sends to their private address!



# New Content Specific Search Engines

- Huri Search (Human Rights Website Search)
- Search wikileaks (<https://search.wikileaks.org>)
- Base Search (academic articles)
- Arachnys (subscription service)
- FD Sys (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/search/home.action>)
- Documentcloud.org

# DIGGING DEEPER – USING TRADITIONAL TOOLS

- Additional traditional tools exist for uncovering hidden information. However, these tools can usually entail using legal avenues and can thus be expensive. Routes include:
  - Creating informational networks within the media
  - Parliamentary Reports and Reports of Financial Comptrollers
  - Freedom of Information Requests (try partner with a relevant Free Speech NGO)
  - Legal applications (amicus curae)
  - Industry specialists



# IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING SOURCES

- Corruption tends to throw up numerous sources of information. These sources include:
  - Losers and Participants: probably the most important sources, as they can report on both formal and informal procedures
  - Members of the legal fraternity, especially prosecutors (more likely if political interference has prevented successful legal action)
  - Parliamentary figures in oversight bodies
  - Company employees and whistleblowers – more likely to be within technical and financial fields
  - Intelligence sources – but use with a great deal of caution
  - The diplomatic services, especially in large-scale government-to-government contracts

# IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING SOURCES

- Sources who approach you with information have taken a risk and deserve to be protected. You will need a rigorous source protocol, including:
  - Offering and maintaining anonymity
  - Open, honest and trust-building dialogue
  - Providing the right to review any published material where they are quoted
  - Useful to be able to offer access to legal or other resources if necessary
  - But it will always be necessary to verify their information, either with at least one other trustworthy source or documentary evidence



# FINDING AND APPROACHING ARMS DEALERS

- Remember personal security protocol at all times
- Finding arms dealers is usually remarkably easy, especially if one uses LinkedIn, Facebook (!) and Google
- Company registration data will often provide forwarding addresses and telephone numbers. Certain national company laws will require an appointed auditor who can be contacted.
- Arms dealers are usually either invested in a cloak-and-dagger mentality or have large egos. As such, usually the only way to get them to co-operate is through flattery and offering them a platform
- Avoid quid-pro-quo agreements