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Spy vs Spy: the science of surveillance and security
Session 6: 2.45pm Securing our shores

Presentation: Intelligent Intelligence
Clive Williams MG
School of Asian and Pacific Studies
Australian National University



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Counterterrorism

In recent years, Western intelligence agencies have increasingly relied on intelligence collected by sophisticated technical means.

Some of the new technologies being developed will enhance intelligence collection, analysis and fusion, monitoring and surveillance, biometric tracking, and the ability to conduct remote small-scale surgical strikes without causing collateral damage.

There has also been increased realisation of the value of human intelligence for providing advance information.

Lessons learnt

Good intelligence has always been a key weapon in fighting terrorism, but terrorist groups are now more wary and security conscious.

The failure to anticipate attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11 2001, was not due to a shortage of US intelligence resources, but to poor analysis, a system that did not “fuse” available intelligence, sloppy management, and a failure to think outside the square. On the other hand, the terrorists excelled in all of these areas and were able to undertake their complex and protracted preparations without detection.

A major review is being undertaken in the US to ascertain how this could have happened. At the same time Homeland Security is being tightened up to the point of xenophobia.

Enduring Freedom clearly demonstrated a range of advanced technologies developed by the US since the Gulf War. This process continues as the “war” against terrorism moves away from the battlefield and into societal structures.

Profile

Clive Williams MG is a specialist on terrorism and politically motivated violence who has worked and lectured internationally on terrorism-related issues for more than 20 years. Currently based at the Australian National University’s Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, he was until October 2001, the Director of Security Intelligence at the Department of Defence.

Mr Williams has a BA Honours in Political Science and a Masters Degree with Honours in Criminology, both from the University of Melbourne.

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UTS Faculty of Science
Project Manager: Mary Mulcahy 0439 448 861
Consultant: Jenny Eather 0417 207156
mary.mulcahy@uts.edu.au, jenny.eather@uts.edu.au
phone 61 + 2 + 9514 2249, fax 61 + 2 + 9514 9968