



## Questioned Documents - 2017

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### **J12 From False Identity and Travel Documents to Forensic Intelligence: Profiling Methods to Support the Detection and Investigation of Organized Crime Groups**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will develop and improve their competence and performance in processing forensic case data to provide useful and timely intelligence. Attendees will learn how forensic evidence processed through systematic profiling methods may serve in fighting organized crime groups. This presentation also provides insights to questioned documents examiners as to how they can process their case beyond the usual expertise context.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by showcasing an innovative and original forensic intelligence approach that will be of interest to forensic researchers, practitioners, and policing partners. This presentation illustrates how forensic science can be used to support the fight against organized crime and also highlights the strength of bridging forensic research, forensic practice, and policing.

The presentation introduces an innovative and effective crime monitoring approach based on forensic intelligence. It is designed to support the proactive detection and investigation of organized crime and terrorist groups that produce, disseminate and/or use forged and counterfeit identity or travel documents. This approach developed at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, bridges research, forensic practice and policing, and is viewed as a powerful and original source of intelligence in support of crime investigations and national security. It is in the process of being implemented by several police departments in Switzerland and abroad.

In this approach, once a false identity or travel document (e.g., passport, driving license, identity card or visa) is seized by a police or border protection organization, it undergoes a scientific and systematic profiling process that extracts, analyzes and compares the documents material features. The strength of forensic findings is assessed and then integrated with alternative data to support crime analysis and crime intelligence. Such a forensic profiling process provides an objective and measurable mean to highlight links between different cases, to point to prominent *modus operandi* as well as to the production of prolific forgers and forgery workshops. Different profiling methods have been developed to support the process which leverages visual and physical examinations of documents, computer-imaging techniques, or chemical analysis. Some of these methods have already been the subject of scientific publications whereas others are still in the development phase.

The presentation describes the conception, validation and use of these profiling methods using real case data made up of hundreds of false identity and travel documents seized by police and border protection organizations in Europe and North America. It quickly illustrates the databases as well as the data analysis and evaluation tools that have been developed to support the methods. The presentation exposes also how the different profiling methods combine within a common intelligence framework in order to leverage their respective advantages. That framework operates at different levels of generality and may provide intelligence in support of tactical investigations as well as of strategic decision-making.

Specifically, the contribution of the forensic intelligence process is illustrated through a case study concerning a criminal network involved in human trafficking and human exploitation. The approach provided key insights for investigators and for the prevention of further cases. It assisted, for instance, in understanding the organization's



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*modus operandi*, in locating the forgers, in revealing cross-border connections as well as the extent of the criminal network activity.

The successful implementation of the method in that case and others paves the way for a new approach of detecting and investigating organized crime groups involved in the production, dissemination and/or use of false ID or travel documents for various crime purposes.

Besides false identity and travel documents, the proposed forensic intelligence methodology can be generalized to process forensic case data of any nature. That methodology extends the contribution of forensic science beyond the usual case-by-case expertise context and reveals useful to fighting organized crime.

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### **Forensic Intelligence, Profiling, Documents**