

<b>Institution:</b> University of Leicester		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 19		
<b>Title of case study:</b> A bridge for spies: overcoming the practitioner-academic gap in intelligence and security		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2016–2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b> Dr Robert Dover	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b> Associate Professor of Intelligence and International Security	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> 1 February 2016–Present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> February 2016–December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>University of Leicester research led by Dr Robert Dover explores the professionalisation of intelligence communities—specifically in relation to their engagement and use of external expertise. This has influenced national and international intelligence practice. The research has contributed to the creation of officer training in the UK Cabinet Office and National Crime Agency and to training opportunities for government analysts and experts in NATO. Dover’s research has underpinned the formulation internationally of official protocols governing the engagement and management of external subject matter experts, particularly scholars. Moreover, Dover’s research has led to improvements in the use of academic materials in strategic assessments by the UK’s National Crime Agency, the Cabinet Office and NATO, leading to improvements in the identification and mitigation of threat.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>Dover, along with his collaborator Michael Goodman (Kings College, London), conducted research into the utility of intelligence analysts collaborating with academics and academic materials, to identify where and why this form of collaboration often failed. These issues were highly relevant after the post-Iraq war Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction. The report concluded that intelligence failures can be mitigated or avoided if a plurality of sources are utilised in producing government intelligence assessments. The 2011 Blackett Review reinforced this position, concluding that the Government was making insufficient use of the intellectual capital of universities and that this, therefore, increased the security risk to the nation.</p> <p>Dover contributed to addressing these issues through research on the professionalisation of intelligence analysis as a government business activity <b>[R1, R3]</b> by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encouraging the establishment of a culture that routinely makes use of external expertise and open-source challenge and puts these on a structured footing; and</li> <li>• developing common training standards and practices across the intelligence community.</li> </ul>		

Dover's research identified an under-utilisation of open-source materials and academic content in intelligence assessments and a corresponding over-reliance on closed or covertly collected sources. His research analysed the reasons for this under-utilisation. His conclusions, which have been widely accepted by scholars and practitioners, highlighted fundamental research techniques, resourcing, and a need to change the operating culture.

Dover's research identified analysts' lack of professional training and understanding as a key barrier to the use of open sources, and his research findings have been used to address these in the form of an intelligence academy [R1, R2]. Dover's AHRC-funded research findings [G1] explored the incentives and barriers facing intelligence practitioners and academics seeking to work with each other. Dover's research found an under-exploitation of positive lessons that could be drawn from intelligence practices, reinforcing the tendency in the sector to focus on operational failure for lessons learned.

Dover's research explored the uptake of knowledge exchange between academics (and other external experts) and the intelligence community: in this case, the National Crime Agency, Cabinet Office and NATO. Uniquely, he also researched the protocols governing those exchanges, particularly for the NCA. His research examined the opportunities, as well as the practical and normative barriers to this work. He researched the practical challenges around how to align the expectations of practitioners and scholars, what is reasonable for an academic to produce, and whether the material could be useful in other contexts. The research also addressed the question of whether academic scholarship requires translation for intelligence community audiences [R1, R3].

Dover's research critiqued the commonly held notion that intelligence activities and academic activities are necessarily distinct or incompatible [R1, R3, R4, R5]. Distinctively, he has also critically interrogated the value chain of engagement between academics and practitioners, with considerable access having been granted by two significant intelligence organisations. Dover's significant contribution has been to identify and explore the areas in which the activities of these two communities are complementary, reinforcing and synergistic and to find ways (in terms of protocols, appropriate forums and organisational culture) to bridge this divide. The differences that are to be found tend to be more in the direction of state assets, rather than method, technique or intellectual craft, at the strategic level [R1].

Dover's major contribution is rooted in: 1) realising the value that positive lessons from historical cases can bring to current intelligence analysis; and 2) extending this insight to the positive impacts that can be generated by embedding processes and protocols relating to interchange and exchange between government officials and university scholars, to the benefit of both communities.

### 3. References to the research

**R1.** Dover, R., and Goodman, M. S. (2018). "Impactful scholarship in intelligence: a public policy challenge". *British Politics*, 13(3), 374-391.

**R2.** Devanny, J., Dover, R., Goodman, M. S., and Omand, D. (2018). "Why the British Government Must Invest in the Next Generation of Intelligence Analysts". *The RUSI Journal*, 163(6), 78-89.

**R3. Dover, R.**, Goodman, M. S., and White, M. (2017). “Two Worlds, One Common Pursuit: Why Greater Engagement with the Academic Community Could Benefit the UK’s National Security”, in *The Palgrave Handbook of Security, Risk and Intelligence* (pp. 461-477). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

**R4. Dover, R.**, and Goodman, M. S. (2019). “Between Lucky Jim and George Smiley: The public policy role of intelligence scholars”, in *The Routledge international handbook of universities, security and intelligence studies* (pp. 343-351). Routledge.

**R5. Dover, R.** (2020). “Adding value to the intelligence community: what role for expert external advice?” *Intelligence and National Security*, 35(6), 852-869.

**G1.** Michael Goodman and **Robert Dover**, Lessons Learned Project II, AHRC - AH/M504208/1 (1 June 2014 – 31 May 2017), GBP56,905.

#### 4. Details of the impact

Prior to Dover’s work, the intelligence community’s engagement with outside experts occurred in an unstructured and piecemeal fashion, predicated on personal-professional networks and cold-call requests by analysts identifying a scholar researching interests related to theirs. This led to misunderstandings and mistakes, as recognised by numerous reviews, as referenced in section 2. Dover’s work addressed these issues through engagement with key stakeholders, particularly the Cabinet Office, National Crime Agency (NCA), NATO and Five Eyes Group (an intelligence alliance comprising Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and USA) and advocated for professionalising the intelligence.

In 2016, the NCA invited Dover to write and refine **research-led internal protocols covering external engagement and the open-source challenge**.

*“In coproducing the NCA Protocols for officers to engage external expertise, Dr Dover helped to change our professional practice . . . aligning our expectations with those of external experts and how we engage them in our work. This new protocol helped my analysts bring in more external expertise to their assessments, which contributed to more effective targeting of our resources. . . . Engagement with Dr Dover’s research enabled me to reach across my international counterparts to make the case for an international analyst’s programme, which led to important discussions and agreements about de-minimis standards for intelligence analysts, something that had not been agreed previously. The research was important in confirming the benefits of external expert challenge to officers engaged in government analysis, and provided us with the means to extend this practice to generate better results for the Agency.”* Former Head of Capability, NCA [E1].

Additionally, refinements to mechanisms by which NCA analysts are able to engage with outside sources who are not in possession of security clearance have *“contributed to an uptick number of external sources being consulted”*. This has allowed a greater number of academics to engage with NCA that consequently led to *“the greater understanding of threat”*. Director of Intelligence NCA [E4].

On the basis of [R3], NATO appointed Dover as the inaugural Commander’s Academic Advisor in June 2018. This helped to refine NATO’s *“understanding of the role academics and academic content can play in our intelligence assessments, to refine the ways they engage with outside*

*experts*". As the result of Dr Dover's work, NATO has "*refined the way we select and engage with external academic experts, and consequently we are confident the contextual element of our assessments are stronger*". NATO Analysis Division Chief [E2].

The UK Cabinet Office cited their adoption of the recommendations made by Dover in their decision to open an intelligence analysts' academy [R1]. Dover's research informed the "*initiative to create the UK's first Intelligence Assessment Academy, which opened in October 2019 in London, and which provides the intelligence community with the sort of common, but advanced level education and training that has been a bedrock of Dr Dover's research recommendations*". Professional Head of Intelligence Assessment, Cabinet Office [E3].

This is the first time that analysts have been systematically trained. Not only did Dover's research underpin the curriculum, he also played a key part in the Cabinet Office's recruitment process for the leadership of the Intelligence Academy and he is a member of the Intelligence Academy advisory group [E3].

Internationally, in 2017 Dover and Walsh were commissioned by the Five Eyes Group to design and deliver a professional development programme for 51 intelligence officers. The standard for this training was written by Dover et al and was adopted by the Five Eyes Group in 2018. It has been used by eight intelligence agencies as the platform from which to train their analysts [E1]. Their standard has also been adopted by the NCA, where it has informed the transformation of the training of new officers joining the agency [E4].

Without Dover's work, sections of the analytical community would still be reliant on older, informal forms of practice and engagement, missing out on the opportunities afforded by engagement with a greater number of external experts. Dover has contributed significantly to the professionalisation of practitioners in this field and built their capacity to engage successfully with external expertise. By doing so, he has contributed to greater understanding on the part of public policy officials and thus to improved national security.

#### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

**E1.** Letter from the Former Head of Capability, National Crime Agency.

**E2.** Letter from NATO Intelligence Fusion Center.

**E3.** Letter from Professional Head of Intelligence Analysis, UK Cabinet Office.

**E4.** Letter from Director of Intelligence, National Crime Agency.