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Challenge INTERPOL's Red Notice

Nlets, INTERPOL, and U.S. DOJ's Global: Partnerships and Technology for International Justice Information Sharing

Nlets released the following:

By: Kayelyn Means

"Nlets, INTERPOL, and U.S. DOJ's Global: Partnerships and Technology for International Justice Information Sharing

Prior to in-car computers, smart phones, or other hand-held technology, law enforcement officials had very limited access to comprehensive and up-to-date criminal justice information. For example, an officer would stop a violator, issue a warning or citation and then send the individual on their way, in spite of the fact international warrants or other information existed; this occurred because the information was out of the technological reach of the officer.

Supported by the efforts of the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global), Nlets, The International Justice and Public Safety Network, and International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) the power of technology has been combined with old-fashioned collaboration to provide the criminal justice community with real-time access to a world of never-before available information; information that can truly make the difference between life and death.

Providing the secure means to electronically exchange critical international information between the United States and INTERPOL databases gives law enforcement real-time, roadside access to international warrants, stolen vehicles, stolen passports and other travel documents from around the globe. This access immediately enhances officer safety and makes them more effective on the roadside or in an investigation.

"Through INTERPOL's Federal membership with Nlets, INTERPOL Washington and Nlets have forged a partnership extending access to local law enforcement across America into the INTERPOL database in Lyon, France. Leveraging the extensive national presence of Nlets and extending real-time international access to more than 18,000 domestic law enforcement agencies sets the framework for delivering tools and information that enhances our national security," states Mike Muth, INTERPOL Washington State and Local Liaison Assistant Director.

What does this Nlets/INTERPOL justice sharing capability "look like" on the street? Consider this: On April 15th, 2011, Manuel Albert Soares was pulled over in Elizabeth, New Jersey, for driving in a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) carpool lane with fewer than the required three passengers. Soares maintains dual-citizenship with Portugal and the U.S. The officer – by using Nlets and leveraging this enhanced capability– queried the driver's license and international credentials information. What he discovered was an international warrant for Soares's arrest, issued by Portuguese authorities in March 2009. Soares was immediately taken into custody and held until his extradition order earlier this year.

How did this Nlets/INTERPOL query work behind the scenes? When law enforcement officials in Elizabeth, New Jersey, pulled Soares over and ran his driver's license, the query transaction – initiated from the New Jersey State Police state switch –traveled across the Nlets network, to the DOJ's U.S. National Central Bureau (USNCB). This transaction was securely transmitted to the INTERPOL Automated Search Facility database in Lyon, France; the INTERPOL database that houses data from 190 countries. This multi-layered query searched the available databases, for wanted or missing persons by name and date of birth, stolen vehicles by vehicle identification number, and lost or stolen travel documents by document control number. All findings, including the international warrant, were returned roadside to the officer in New Jersey in under 2 seconds.

The Nlets/INTERPOL query capability is available to all states; currently, 33 states have implemented the direct data exchange at this time. Additionally, four states and Washington, DC, have chosen to federate the inquiry to Nlets on all person and motor vehicle inquiries, automatically polling the INTERPOL database across the Nlets network.

- "Maryland currently uses the federated messaging model. We chose this method because it is more user-friendly and avoids a two-step process. When a wanted check is conducted in Maryland, an INTERPOL check is automatically forwarded to Nlets," says Mike Roosa, Maryland State Police. "We do this because we border Washington, DC, which means we're a 'mid-point' for everyone traveling in and out of DC in our region."
- Detective Sgt. Eugene Aldrich, Michigan State Police, responsible for orchestrating the implementation of the messages to INTERPOL in Michigan states, "Michigan values this information sharing as important to protecting the public from threats literally around the globe, including terrorists, violent gang members and pedophiles, as well as cautioning officers of potential threats to their own safety, crimes afoot, and missing persons that would be otherwise unknown ... With access to a criminal database for 190 countries; it's another invaluable tool in an officer's tool belt."

• Texas is one of the most recent states to tap the INTERPOL databases via Nlets on every inquiry run in the state, implementing the capability in October 2011. "The Texas Department of Public Safety [DPS] made a decision to send inquiries to Lyon, France via INTERPOL with every stolen vehicle check containing a vehicle identification number, and for all wanted person inquiries that contain a name and date of birth. Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunication System [TLETS] supports 'multiple purpose' formats that trigger wanted person and stolen vehicle transactions along with other transactions. These formats were modified to also trigger the INTERPOL inquiries," Tena Watson, Law Enforcement Support Division, TLETS, Texas DPS explains. Since implementing the automatic queries to INTERPOL, Texas has become the highest volume user of the INTERPOL data exchange message key on the Nlets network. "We send an average of 1.3 million person queries and 175,000 vehicle queries over the Nlets network each month, each with an accompanying query to the INTERPOL databases," Watson adds. "We know that some of the people traveling through Texas are wanted internationally and will eventually come into contact with law enforcement." She advises, "Other states may have chosen not to check INTERPOL on every roadside stop because they haven't had enough training on its significance, but this is imperative and greatly beneficial, especially to Border States. Sending each of these messages to Lyon, France has taken the place of the previous manual inquiry method, many of which were done improperly because so many law enforcement officials didn't have the proper tools or training."

The advancement of technology that allowed this secure exchange through Interpol was not completed by Nlets and INTERPOL alone. In support of this effort, and a whole range of similar efforts, Global and the Global Advisory Committee (GAC) has developed national standards-based information sharing policies, practices and technology solutions for over 13 years. Nlets and INTERPOL are longstanding and valuable members of Global and the GAC, assisting in the development and implementation processes of these national standards.

"Global's support and participation in the building of standards for information exchange has been invaluable to Nlets and the law enforcement and justice community as a whole," says Steve Correll, Nlets Executive Director. "Nlets was the first national entity to adopt GJXDM, a precursor to NIEM, to check wanted persons, stolen vehicles, and travel documents is a perfect example of how using off the shelf protocols and agreed upon and widely adopted Global standards can save lives, protect property, and get the bad guys off the street."

One of Global's hallmark standards is the Global Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM), developed in response to the critical need to streamline and standardize the exchange of public safety data between, and among, law enforcement agencies throughout the nation.

As the need for national information sharing has expanded to include health, immigration, and other non-traditional justice partners, DOJ, Global, and the Department Homeland Security evolved the GJXDM into the acclaimed the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM).

"A project is underway at Nlets to convert all of the nearly two hundred message keys to be NIEM compliant, but GJXDM support will continue. We are working to support 'tri-directional' message format transformations that will allow the continued use of versions of GJXDM and NIEM available to our users. 'Tri-directional' transformation gives states and federal agencies the

ability to send and receive messages in their respective format [text, XML, etc.], regardless of which format other states are sending and receiving," says Kate Silhol, Nlets Senior Software Engineer. As Nlets converts all its data exchange message keys, information returned on queries is streamlined for end users; this is particularly beneficial to users sending queries to INTERPOL's international database.

What's ahead for the three partners, Nlets, INTERPOL and Global? The GJXDM/NIEM foundational work that paved the way for the Nlets and INTERPOL "global" information exchanges continues to broaden sharing capabilities. NIEM recently made strides toward becoming an international model with the signing of a tri-lateral information sharing Memorandum of Understanding agreement between the United States, Canada, and Mexico, which includes two pilot projects using NIEM.

And, the advancement of innovative justice and public safety information sharing capabilities is about to lead to further expansion with the inclusion of video and images, to and from INTERPOL via Nlets. This image / video capability could empower officers on the roadside to eliminate at least 90% of all 'potential hit' responses because a photo could be included within each record.

Nlets and INTERPOL strongly encourage states to begin federating their in-state wanted and stolen vehicle inquiries through Nlets to INTERPOL. States are encouraged to contact their industry partners about implementing the federated INTERPOL queries in conjunction with the message keys they currently support. The information returned could save lives, enhance officer safety and help apprehend high-profiles wanted throughout the world...and here at home."

To learn more about Nlets, please visit www.nlets.org (http://www.nlets.org).

For more information about U.S. DOJ's Global, please visit	: <u>www.it.ojp.gov/global</u>
(http://www.it.ojp.gov/global)	

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Douglas McNabb and other members of the U.S. law firm practice and write and/or report extensively on matters involving Federal Criminal Defense, INTERPOL Red Notice Removal, International Extradition Defense, OFAC SDN Sanctions Removal, International Criminal Court

Defense, and US Seizure of Non-Resident, Foreign-Owned Assets. Because we have experience dealing with INTERPOL, our firm understands the inter-relationship that INTERPOL's "Red Notice" brings to this equation.

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