

Chapter 12

Implementing Integrated Information Systems Project for Police Stations in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

In 2012, the Royal Thai Police launched “C.R.I.M.E.S.” - “Criminal Record and Information Management Enterprise Systems” – as the largest-scale information systems project ever to be implemented in the organization. The new system aimed to reduce duplicate work in all 1,400 police stations by digitizing all documents and providing a centralized database whereby information could be shared among all police officers. However, most users were accustomed to working with pen and paper and did not want to learn the new skill needed to interact with C.R.I.M.E.S. Other users, convinced that the purpose of the new system was “catch their mistakes,” were also unenthusiastic. In addition, the information in C.R.I.M.E.S overlapped with other legacy systems, and this overlap created confusion among users because they had to enter the same information into many systems at the same time. Hence, the police had to decide what strategies and measures should be used to ensure the success of C.R.I.M.E.S.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Royal Thai Police (RTP) was under the direct command of the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand. Currently, RTP currently consisted of approximately 230,000 officers for a police-citizen ratio of about 1:311. The nationwide total number of police stations was 1,459, spread out over 77 provinces. In addition to carrying out specific law enforcement activities as assigned by the Prime Minister in support of national development, the RTP’s main responsibilities fell into several categories: “1) provide security to His Majesty the King, Her Majesty the Queen, the Heirs to the Throne, members of the Royal Family, the Regent, Royal Representatives, and Royal Guests; 2) direct and supervise the operation of all police officers to ensure quality service and compliance with the laws; 3) prevent and suppress crime; 4) maintain public order and national security; 5) assist the public; and, 6) perform other

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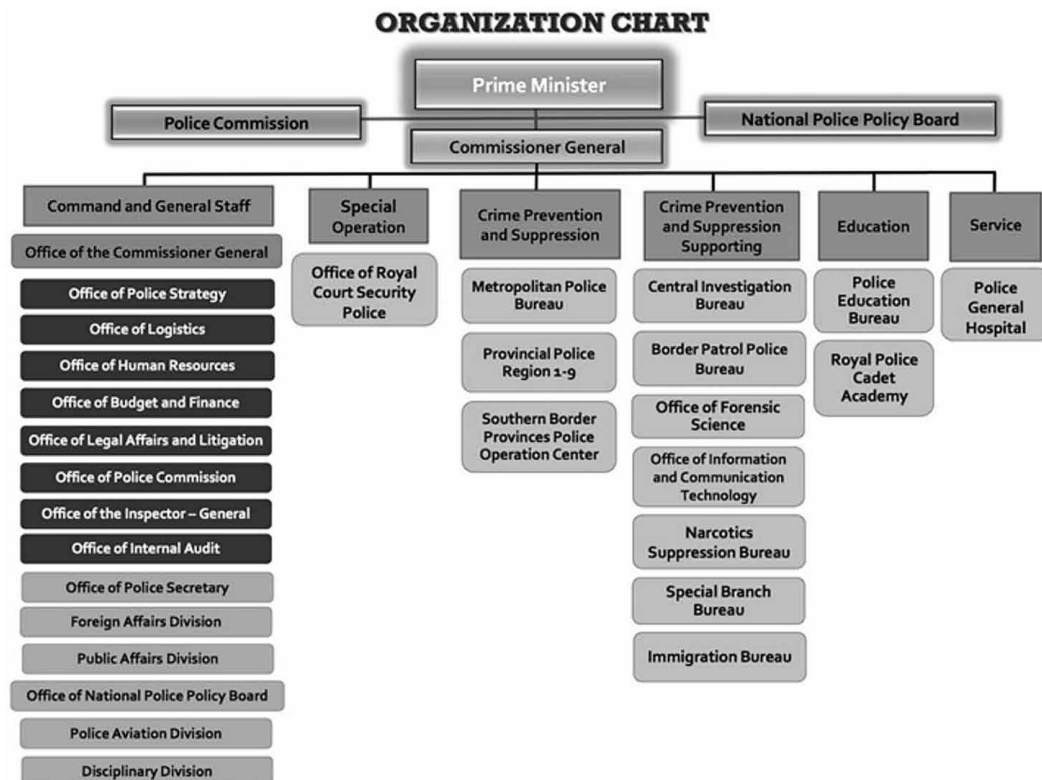
activities stipulated by Thai law” (Charoen, 2014). The RTP headquarters were located at the center of Bangkok, the capital (Interpol, 2013).

Structurally, the RTP consisted of six broad sections: 1) the Command and General Staff; 2) Special Operations; 3) Crime Prevention and Suppression; 4) Crime and Suppression Supporting; 5) Education; and, 6) Service (Interpol, 2013) The agency is highly centralized at the headquarters. The officers and staffs can be transferred across the units. Although the RTP has many units, the most important unit is the police station (see Figure 1).

The RTP played a very important role in enforcing the law and maintaining security in Thailand, which spanning 510,000 square kilometres, is approximately the size of France. The country is bordered by Myanmar to the west and north, by Laos to the northeast, by Cambodia to the east, and by Malaysia to the south. The nature of the borders in this region allowed easy and frequent crossings of people and goods. This condition gave rise to potential vulnerabilities that the police must anticipate. Besides having highly permeable borders with several neighbouring countries, Thailand faced the demographic challenge of the presence of a wide range of cultural, ethnic, languages and religions, which warranted special attention to prevent or resolve inter-group conflict (Wikipedia, 2003).

Police corruption remained a vexing problem in Thailand. In fact, Transparency International’s Global Corruption Barometer 2007, a survey assessing the public’s perceptions and experience of corruption in 60 countries, gave Thai police a “4” on a five- rating scale, where one represented “not at all corrupt” and five connoted “extremely corrupt”. Of the Thai respondents, 14% reported paying a bribe to the judiciary, including the police (International, 2013).

Figure 1. Roles, functions and challenges of Thai Police



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