"A Classification of Agents and Entities Influencing Law Enforcement Agencies in the United States"

**ABSTRACT**

This work introduces a typology for classifying the entities and groups that influence law enforcement agencies in the United States. The purpose here is to begin the process of creating a more formal taxonomy to better understand the types of influences that bear upon law enforcement agencies. Through that work we will better understand policy and decision making in this distinct arena and improve law enforcement operations.

Using a soft systems approach this initial work involved a broad search of entities that may influence law enforcement agencies. The search involved extensive internet keyword searches, reviews of paper publications and field observation. In consultation with other researchers the list was reviewed and analyzed for classification.

Seven distinctive categories were identified: Law Enforcement, Government, Quasi-Government, Associations, Vendors, Media and People. The resulting typology may be used as a basis for further research in the area of law enforcement organizational behavior, policy development and program implementation. This work will lead to a more formal taxonomy for understanding these relationships.

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