

LAW ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION EXCHANGE (LInX)

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) – the felony investigative and counterintelligence arm of the Department of the Navy (DON) – launched the LInX initiative, which dramatically enhanced information sharing between local, state, and federal law enforcement in nine locations. LInX provides participating law enforcement agencies in areas of strategic importance to the DON with secure, web-based access to regional crime and suspicious incident data, along with the tools needed to process it.

LInX was the first-ever U.S. system capable of capturing, in real time, federal, state, and local criminal investigative data and enabling users to apply search and link analysis tools to that data – including both structured data (e.g., data from a “pull-down” menu in a police report) and unstructured data (e.g., narrative data in an investigative report.)

The principle behind LInX is simple. Local police collect large quantities of data on criminal activities and suspicious incidents in areas of great interest to the DON – for example, nuclear homeports. However, when responding to such events, local authorities may have little context for assessing whether they indicate a threat to DON equities or shed further light on a matter of concern. In most cases, responding officers will document their response in a report that is sent to their agency’s records management system. Normally, this report is not shared with other agencies. Thus, other law enforcement entities do not typically become aware of a potentially significant report unless the responding officer pursues unusual measures.

To remedy this, NCIS has created regional data warehouses that “mirror” the information in the records management systems of participating agencies and make that information available to all participants in the local LInX enterprise. The data is reformatted so it is universally accessible to all participating agencies, and sophisticated search and analysis tools are added to give all participating parties full access to the system’s benefits. LInX contains only criminal justice data, with each participating agency deciding what data it will share. A board of governance established for each region establishes rules for use and ensures that every participating agency in the region has full visibility and voting equality on all LInX issues.

LInX is currently operational in the following regions: Puget Sound, WA; Hampton Roads, VA; Gulf Coast, TX; Jacksonville, FL/Southeast GA; Hawaii; National Capital Region, Southern California; Rio Grande, New Mexico; and North Carolina. Cumulatively, the nine operational sites include over 7000 agencies. A pilot project to extend the reach of this program is underway that incorporates FBI, DEA, ATF, USMS, BOP, and ICE into LInX. This project is D-DEX.

LInX is a proven model for enhanced crime fighting, homeland security, and public safety – enabling investigators to search across jurisdictional boundaries to help solve crimes and resolve suspicious events.