

**Economic Crime and Globalisation –  
New Challenges for the Police**

BKA Autumn Conference from 12 to 14 November 2008

**Illegal Information Leaks –  
Experience from the Private Sector**

Summarised presentation

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"It is essential to seek out enemy spies who have come to spy on us. They must be tempted with bribes, they must be instructed. They must be given directions and be comfortably housed", the Chinese scholar Sunzi said around 500 B.C. Spying, the "second oldest profession in the world", has been enjoying ever increasing popularity since the end of the Cold War. The proportion made up by immaterial assets in industrial value added is constantly increasing, and the possibilities and opportunities for gathering data illegally have multiplied in the recent past.

Re-engineering, spying activities and product piracy are frequently intertwined: even complex products are copied within very short periods of time, sub-sectors rise like "phoenix from the ashes" due to extensive gathering of information. German companies, research institutes and universities are always high on the wish list of internationally operating information collectors – with (economic espionage) or without (industrial espionage) intelligence background.

Although spying is among the most harmful forms of economic crime, the majority of German companies have not yet fully understood the situation. There is still a high degree of naiveté and light-heartedness with regard to the handling of one's own knowledge critical for success. The situation is characterised by a very high percentage of undetected incidents because the knowledge carriers are insufficiently sensitised and methods of attack are unknown. Many people have not yet realised that players in the international business world often fight with no holds barred and that part of these contests can even take the forms of economic warfare.

Only a small fraction of cases become known to the law enforcement agencies. The damages incurred can frequently not be attributed to a specific cause, they usually appear with a time lag, but they are nevertheless serious.

The accompanying loss of competitiveness is often a gradual process leading to losses in sales and declines in profits, and in the worst case even to insolvency.

In my presentation, I will describe the phenomena mentioned and provide concrete information on how innovative companies should position themselves in order to contain illegal information leaks effectively.