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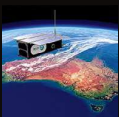
The Australasian magazine of surveying, mapping & geo-information

MAPPING EVIL

Shining a spotlight on the dark side of humanity



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Mapping Evil



Crime mapping technology and geospatial analytics are putting a spotlight on the dark side of humanity – and helping law enforcement leaders solve some of the world's most macabre and perplexing crimes.

As a renowned criminal investigator, Mike King has seen many extraordinary breakthroughs throughout his career.

For more than 40 years, the former police chief has worked with law enforcement agencies around the world and trained hundreds of investigators in the art of criminal profiling. He's been on the frontline in the hunt for serial predators and broken open some of the world's most perplexing cases, including the take down of one of the United States most notorious cults.

But ask this veteran investigator about the real turning point in his career, and he'll share it came while experimenting with geospatial technology in the investigation of a prolific serial killer whose final victim was murdered in his home state of Utah.

"I was researching the case of a notorious US predator known as the 'Truck Stop Killer', Robert Ben Rhoades," said King. "In the early 90's, Rhoades had been charged with three murders but only convicted of one – the murder of Regina Kay Walters – for

which he is still in prison today.

"I suspected Rhoades was responsible for many more murders than he had initially been charged with, so I used geospatial technology to map and analyse his commercial trucking data – including every weigh station visit, fuel stop and recorded break logged –

enforcement agencies around the world, working to establish Geographic Information System (GIS) technology as a foundational platform for contemporary investigations.

He cites groups including Singapore Police Force, New York City Police Department and UK National Fraud

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alongside information about missing persons and unsolved murder cases in the same areas at those same times.

"For the first time, we had a clear picture of the full extent of Rhoades' reign of terror and it supported the theory some FBI agents had that Rhoades may have killed as many as 300 victims."

Since making the chilling discovery, King has championed the use of crime mapping and geospatial analytics with law

Intelligence Bureau as leaders in their application of geospatial technology – but indicated there is significant appetite from his Australian counterparts for expanding the use of GIS across the full spectrum of public safety operations.

"Understanding the element of 'location' is one of the most important pieces of the puzzle when it comes to law enforcement," said King. "Not only can it uncover answers to unsolved crimes, but it can

also reveal insights that enable officials to put preventative measures in place to reduce the risk of similar crimes occurring again."

It's a concept King explores comprehensively in the breakout new Australian podcast, *Mapping Evil* – which he hosts alongside award-winning journalist Tory Shepherd. The series explores a number of unsolved Australian crimes, using King's trademark geographic analysis to shed new light on the cold cases.

"Being able to demonstrate in a very tangible way just how much insight this technology can provide to an investigation is very important, particularly as there's a growing need for geospatial capabilities, not just in law enforcement, but across the entire public safety domain.

"The challenges faced over the past few years have really brought home the importance of using maps and geospatial analytics to understand and get ahead of any kind of public safety situation – whether its monitoring the risk of COVID-19, tracking moving fire fronts or detecting criminal activity.

"The technology has also emerged as a valuable tool to support cross jurisdictional public safety efforts – as criminals and crises don't stop at geographic borders.

"Creating a common operating picture of all public safety threats – regardless of jurisdiction – is critical to ensuring quick and accurate decisions can be made to keep communities safe." ■

Season One of Mapping Evil with Mike King is available now at mappingevil.com.au. Register your interest to join a live, virtual Q & A with Mike King at mappingevil.com.au/MikeKing

Information provided by Esri Australia.