

INTERPOL: More Red Notices Than Ever

By [Michelle A. Estlund](#) on October 17, 2011

If you think that you are hearing more about Red Notices and INTERPOL than you did in the past, you're right. There is currently more Red Notice activity than there has been in at least the last decade, and quite likely in INTERPOL's history.

[INTERPOL's 2010 Annual Report](#) provides information regarding INTERPOL's various endeavors last year. Perhaps the most stunning information in the report is the section on notices and diffusions. INTERPOL reports that it issued 6,344 Red Notices in 2010. This may not sound significant given INTERPOL's worldwide reach and the growing world population, but when viewed in context of the number of Red Notices issued in previous years, the change is substantial.

The report shows that in the year 2000, only 1077 Red Notices were issued. By 2010, that number had jumped to 6,344 for the year.

What accounts for such an increase in Red Notices? Certainly we are a more mobile society, and that mobility results in more international travel, even for wanted persons. The majority of the increase, however, is most likely due to one of INTERPOL's newest database systems.

It's called I-link, and it was launched in 2009. INTERPOL'S 2009 Annual Report notes the following:

Through I-link, the National Central Bureaus of all INTERPOL member countries were given the ability to "directly access and record police information regarding wanted persons subject to Red Notices. Via I-link, NCB's (National Central Bureaus) can now directly issue Red Notices rather than requesting them through the General Secretariat."

With the passage of time, the effect of I-link has become evident. In 2009, Red Notice issuance jumped 61%. As mentioned above, 2010 saw a further increase. Thus we see that when NCB's have the power to issue Red Notices without INTERPOL's direct oversight and approval, suddenly more Red Notices are issued. Hmm.

NCB's can be expected to state that the increase in Red Notices is due to the efficiency offered by I-link, and perhaps that is true. Another possibility is that less scrutiny equals less restraint.

In the next post, a look at the safety mechanisms that INTERPOL uses to ensure that its rules are followed even when NCB's are given direct Red Notice issuing authority.

As always, comments and thoughts are welcomed.