



## MOBILE & DIGITAL FORENSICS PROGRAM

### *Overview*

Hive's Mobile & Digital Forensics Program assists the U.S. Government with computer and digital forensics advisory and training services, including advising on the recovery of information from computers, mobile phones, and other data storage devices. Hive's forensic experts provide expertise on collecting, processing, preserving, analyzing, and presenting digital evidence to support criminal, fraud, counterintelligence, and law enforcement investigations. To further partner nation capabilities to combat narco-trafficking and organized crime, Hive assists its partners to develop multi-faceted toolkits of digital forensic capacities through the provision of equipment and software, mentoring and advising, assistance with obtaining certifications and accreditation, and the production of training materials, operating procedures, and technical evaluations.

### *Regional Security System Project*

Through a Prime Contract with the Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) coordinated through the INL office in Bridgetown, Barbados, Hive supports the Regional Security System (RSS) Digital Forensic Laboratory (RSSDFL) and the INL office in Bridgetown, Barbados serving the eight Eastern Caribbean Island nations that make up the RSS. Hive provides full-time expert advisory support to the lab's digital forensics exploitation and investigative teams and is working to develop the RSSDFL as a regional forensic center of excellence for the Caribbean.

Hive assisted the RSSDFL to draft its Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Digital Evidence Analysis to govern the intake, handling, exploitation, and analysis of digital evidence. Hive also developed training materials, other operating procedures, and digital forensics capabilities for collecting, processing, preserving, analyzing, and presenting computer-related evidence in a court of law to further the ability of RSS Member States to combat and prosecute organized crime. Hive also guides the lab in updating and expanding RSSDFL processes and technical documentation to address changing digital evidence requirements, including moving the lab's evidence intake process from paper to a secure electronic platform. Additionally, Hive is assisting the RSSDFL in aggregating its archived digital information into a centralized database to enable regional investigative and police queries to identify, classify, organize, and compare traces within seconds. So far, Hive has helped the RSSDFL archive over 1 million case documents into the new centralized database. Hive has provided leadership and mentoring to the RSSDFL management that has led to a much more positive working environment for the staff. This has enabled the lab to retain nearly all its staff year-to-year. In 2023 Hive facilitated both initial access and INL funding to allow the entire RSSDFL staff to attend the only accredited digital forensic training program available in the world.

### *Select Project Accomplishments*

- Guided the RSSDFL in becoming a state-of-the-art digital forensics laboratory to accept digital evidence from all RSS Member States and a growing number of greater Caribbean countries including The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos. In 2022, RSS member states submitted over 400 digital forensic cases to the RSSDFL for review, a more than 650% increase in caseload from when the RSSDFL was established in 2017 (61 cases in 2017 to 405 cases in 2022).
- Even with such an increase in caseload, production within the RSSDFL continues to improve. In 2021, there were a total of 151 cases yet to be completed and returned, including both 2020 and 2021 cases. At the end of 2022, only 4 of the 151 prior year cases remained to be completed and returned, and of the 405 cases received in 2022, the RSSDFL has so far completed and returned 305.
- Hive assisted in converting the existing paper-based evidence submission form system into a digital tablet-based evidence submission system programmed to enforce legible data entry and clearer police guidance for digital evidence searches to be performed by the lab.

- Hive assisted the RSSDFL to develop a customized database repository and indexing system to support centralized storage and rapid indexing of 100% of the RSSDFL’s archive of digital forensic case data, comprising millions of individual case-related files stored on different types of digital storage media. The indexed repository now enables the RSSDFL and authorized regional investigative agents or police to query their case data using free-form keywords or phrases to determine correlations between disparate cases, returning results in seconds. Hive has successfully indexed over 1 million RSSDFL closed case-related documents spanning several years for the RSSDFL in Barbados.
- Assisting RSSDFL staff in obtaining the accredited certification in the field of Digital Forensics from the International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists (IACIS).


## Leadership

Hive’s Computer & Digital Forensics Program is led by Hive’s Director of Digital Forensics (DDF), Sam Brothers, an internationally recognized digital forensics technical specialist with over 20 different Digital Forensic certifications including: GCIH, GCFE, CFCE, EnCE, ACE, CCFP, AME, CCME, CCUDME, MPSC, CCLO, CCPA, C)PTE, DFCP, CDFR, CCE, C|EH, CIFI, CompTIA A+, CompTIA Security+, CompTIA iNet+, CompTIA Network+, and DEASTP. As founder of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Digital Forensics Program, Hive’s DDF has extensive experience guiding multiple digital forensics laboratories in evidence handling procedures, developing quality standards and best practice documentation, as well as assisting many other U.S. Federal labs to attain their own lab accreditation and ensure ISO compliance. Hive’s DDF has also been invited by both U.S. Government agencies and industry organizations to present digital forensic tool advancements and investigative methods to find specific electronic data, as well as presenting the latest forensic, response, and reverse engineering techniques and exploitation methodologies. Additionally, he has written several digital forensic certifications for numerous organizations. Hive’s DDF has been heavily engaged with a world-wide network of U.S. and international organizations including: SWGDE (Chairman of the Forensic Committee), AAFS (Program Committee Chair for the Digital and Multimedia Section), OSAC (Founding member and Co-Chair for the Digital Evidence Sub Committee), and NIST (Guest Scientist for Mobile Forensics). While at CBP, he was repeatedly requested by CBP and DHS Executive level management to present current forensic techniques and to deliver training in digital forensics techniques and methods to multiple international law enforcement entities, including: the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the RCMP Security Service, and several other European Union high-level law enforcement agencies.

## Company Profile

Hive International, LLC (Hive) specializes in designing, developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating foreign technical assistance and capacity building programs to achieve strategic U.S. Government foreign policy and security objectives. As an innovative small company formed by criminal justice and foreign policy experts built on the principles of customer service, Hive brings a streamlined Project Management Office structure and low overhead to reduce costs. Hive has become a trusted advisor and implementer to the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), serving in key positions with the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) Program, supporting INL at U.S. Embassy Barbados, and supporting INL’s Office of Knowledge and Management in designing how-to-guides on key INL programming, including Police Internal Affairs Units, Automated Case Management Systems, and Basic Police Academy Training, among others. Hive also supports curriculum development for the Department of State’s Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) Program and the development of program change maps for INL.

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