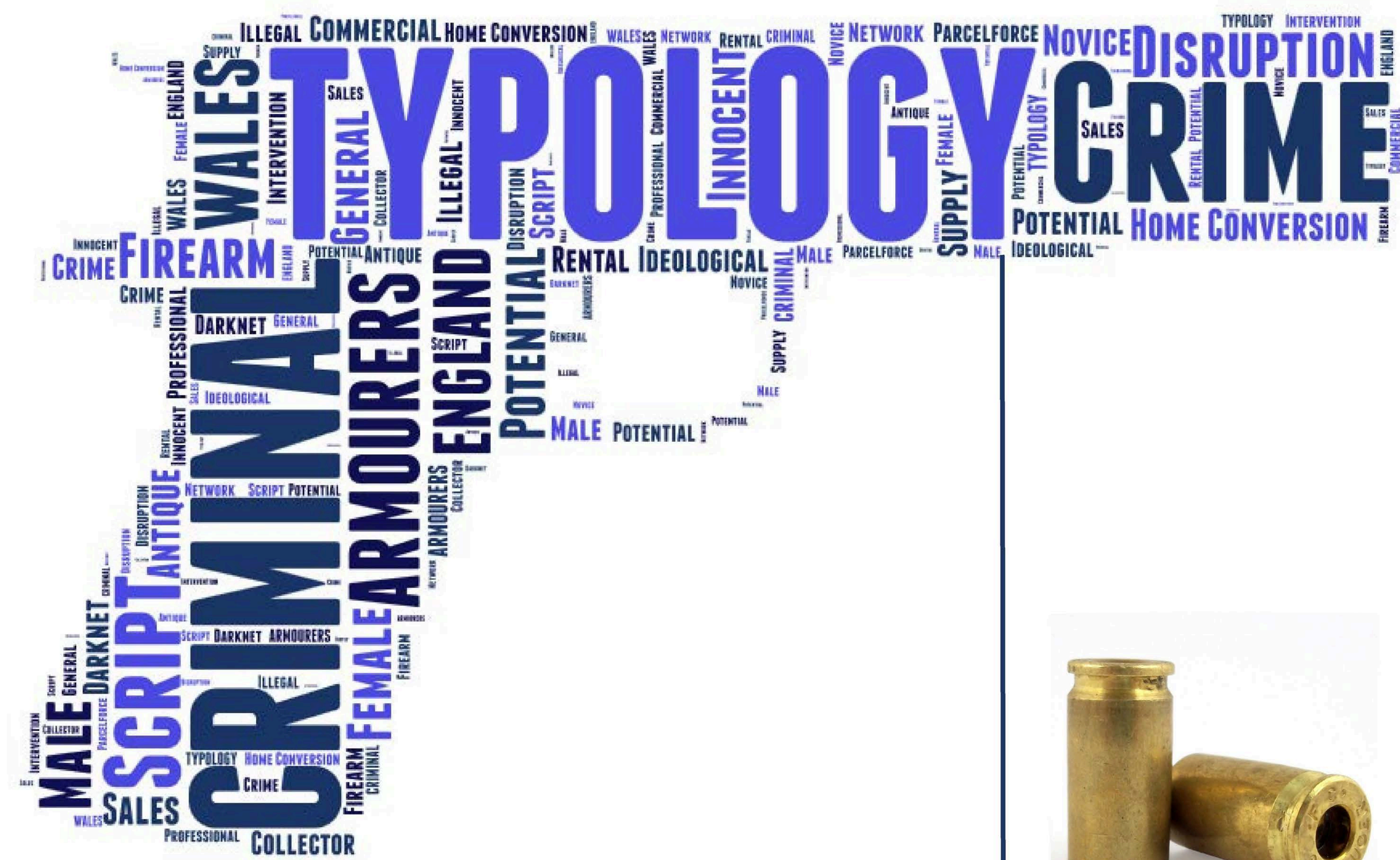


# Disrupting Illegal Firearm Supply Through Crime Script Analysis



## Research Overview

Media sources have revealed the existence of a number of criminal armourers, often involved in elaborate arrangements to access supplies of (deactivated or convertible) firearms, employing their knowledge, skills and contact to adapt these weapons and sell them on. Open-source data provides some details of such individuals however it tells us relatively little about their **backgrounds, criminal histories, motivations, attitudes and working practices**. This research aims to address this gap in knowledge.

## Initial Typology of Criminal Armourers

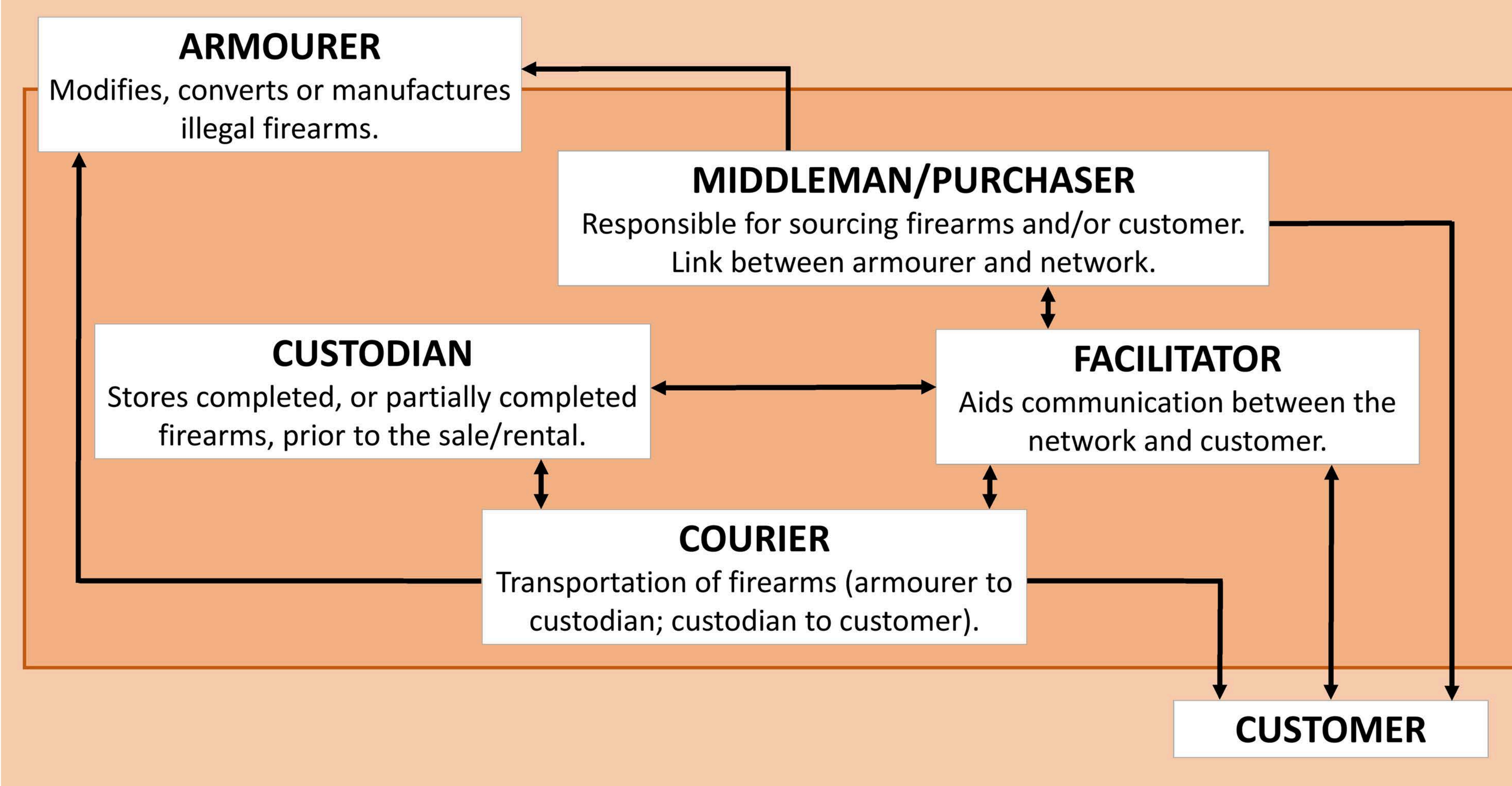
Interrogation of **open-source data** enabled information to be collated (when available) in relation to employment, education, service history, lifestyle choices, contacts, working practices, social and criminological background of individuals previously involved in arming criminals in England and Wales. Leading to the identification of alternative scripts a criminal armorer may adopt during illegal firearm supply, and the development of **7 potential categories** of criminal armorer.

Future work aims to further develop this typology by exploring the role of each criminal armorer in more detail. Collaboration with the **National Ballistic Intelligence Service** has provided access to data currently not openly available. Interviews are now sought with police officers involved in successful operations in relation to firearm supply and post-conviction criminal armourers in order to establish a greater understanding of the **activities, motivations** and ***modus operandi*** of illegal armourers in making firearms available to criminals.



## The 'Sales/Rental' Network

Interrogation of open-source data highlighted a number of positions within small sales and/or rental networks responsible for the onward distribution of illegal firearms. Five categories of criminal armourers have been identified as supplying firearms to these small sales/rental networks either by direct involvement with the network or indirect involvement via contact with a 'middleman/purchaser'.



## Further considerations

In addition to criminal armourers a number of other avenues are exploited in order for sales/rental networks to supply illegal firearms such as weapons converted or modified outside of the UK being **smuggled** into the country either by trade trafficking or abuse of the **postal service** and the use of the **DARKNET** as a means of bypassing legislation, some of which arrive in the UK via **courier services**.

## Disruption Through Crime Script Analysis

Working on the initial assumption that criminal armourers act as rational decision makers, exploiting a unique market opportunity, this research will adopt the theoretical framework of crime script analysis to identify potential **intervention points** in the crime commission process of illegal firearm supply.

### A crime script:

- describes a **sequence of events** in a particular context, underpinned by the processes of rational choice
  - provides a useful analytical tool for looking at behavioural routines in the service of **purposive, goal-orientated action**
  - generates, organises** and **systematizes** knowledge about the procedural aspects and requirements of a particular crime
  - is generated from **multiple sources of information** (material routinely collected by police, interviews with offenders, investigative notes and information inferred by someone closely connected with the case)
  - is **evolving and dynamic**, can be created from partial or incomplete data which can later be added to or amended
  - enables the **identification** of stages, decisions and actions essential for the crime (script) to be completed
  - supports the identification of a **fuller range of intervention points** in order to disrupt the crime (script) before completion
  - can be applied from the perspective of the **offender** (interventions to **disrupt** the script) or the **crime controller** (measures to **complete** the script)
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