

ADAPTIVE COORDINATION CHECKLIST

Four concepts and seven questions for public safety leaders
evaluating centralization strategies



i Use this checklist before adopting or expanding a centralized command structure to fight organized crime. **Strong coordination is necessary. Rigid command can backfire.**

FOUR CORE CONCEPTS



Adaptive criminal networks

Criminal arrangements that preserve core functions by replacing actors, shifting routes, changing visibility, and learning from public intervention. They do not need to defeat the state. They need to survive and continue operating.



Exploitable predictability

The condition in which an institution's operational routines become sufficiently repetitive and readable that an adaptive adversary can anticipate them at low cost — without breaking legal constraints or conventional behavior.

Concept developed in Pires, Countering Adaptive Organized Crime (2026).



Managed predictability

Preserves legal rules, rights, accountability, and democratic controls while varying operational routines that would otherwise teach the adversary. The goal is not randomness. The goal is disciplined variation guided by feedback.



Adaptive coordination

The frame this analysis proposes: institutions strong enough to act across jurisdictions, distributed enough to learn from place, and disciplined enough to vary routines before the adversary stabilizes around public patterns.

SEVEN AUDIT QUESTIONS

1

Information or authority?

Does this measure improve the circulation of useful information, or does it only concentrate formal authority?

2

Will local intelligence reach strategy?

Will local signals influence strategic decisions, or will they be simplified, filtered out, or ignored?

3

Different regimes, different responses?

Does the plan allow different responses for different operational regimes, or does it impose uniform action?

4

Predictability check

Will standardization reduce institutional disorder, or will it create exploitable predictability?

5

Who tracks adaptation?

Who will detect displacement, functional substitution, and criminal recomposition after the intervention?

6

Weakened or rearranged?

What evidence would show the network has been weakened, not merely rearranged with different personnel?

7

Feedback loop

How will the strategy change when feedback shows unintended effects, displacement, or rapid recomposition?



THE RIGHT FRAME

Adaptive coordination: institutions strong enough to act across jurisdictions, distributed enough to learn from place, and disciplined enough to vary routines before the adversary does.



BASED ON THE ARTICLE
Why Centralizing the Fight Against
Organized Crime Can Backfire
ibralc.com.br/en



FOUNDATIONAL REFERENCE
Pires, S. F. S. *Countering Adaptive
Organized Crime*. IBRALC, 2026.

FULL ARTICLE AND
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