



The first letters in financial intelligence are SAR

Intelligence doesn't just happen. It's a process. Suspicious activity reports (SARs) form a fundamental component of the financial intelligence cycle.

If an activity is suspicious, it must be reported.

But, what is considered suspicious? When there are enough details or circumstantial evidence for a reasonable person to make a logical conclusion or rational assumption that the activity is out of place, it should be reported as suspicious.

Proof that a crime has occurred is not required.

Sure, SARs are a regulatory requirement. But they are more than just a bureaucratic exercise.

As an integral part of the intelligence cycle, law enforcement investigators are the ultimate consumers of SARs. In their hands, suspicions can be investigated, crimes can be identified and prosecutions can be made.

What makes a good SAR?

1. Start with an impact statement explaining why the activity is considered suspicious.
2. Answer the who, what, where, when and how of the suspicious activity but particularly elaborate on why the activity is considered suspicious.
3. Conclude with a clear and concise summary.

For more on how to write better SARs, consult the following FIU Connect courses:

- FIU CONNECT (Financial Investigations)
- FIU CONNECT (Open Source Intelligence)
- FIU CONNECT (Report Writing)

- FIU CONNECT (Critical Thinking)
- FIU CONNECT (Fundamental AML)

