



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking



Anti-human trafficking manual for criminal justice practitioners

Module 7

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME
Vienna

Anti-human trafficking manual for criminal justice practitioners

Module 7:

Crime scene and physical evidence
examinations in trafficking in persons investigations



UNITED NATIONS
New York, 2009

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This publication has not been formally edited.

Module 7: Crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons investigations

Objectives

On completing this module users will be able to:

- Explain what a “crime scene” is and summarise the specific features of crime scene;
- Describe the types of physical evidence most commonly encountered in trafficking in persons investigations and information available when examining those various physical evidence;
- Outline basic actions required to preserve and document crime scene and recover physical evidence traces from crime scenes;
- Recall the key considerations and possible actions in trafficking in persons when examining:

Victims and suspects;

Locations;

Vehicles;

Documents found at the scene, on victims or suspects and in a vehicle;

IT and communications equipment found at the scene, on victims or suspects and in a vehicle.

Introduction

This module considers how examinations of physical evidence can be used to support trafficking in persons investigations.

The module focuses on the main types of physical evidence likely to be present in trafficking in persons cases, e.g., biological materials, finger marks, documents and communications technologies, and on specific features of crime scene examinations in trafficking in persons cases.

Forensic science in its broadest definition is the application of science to law. It can be used for traditional court evidence, as an investigative tool to guide the police investigation (i.e.,

relating trace to trace as well as trace to source and source to trace) or to gather intelligence to help detect trends and patterns, for example links to organized criminal networks.

Forensic science should always be seen as tool in an overall investigation, not the sole investigative approach. It can easily be discredited, particularly if crime scene are not properly secured and processed and physical evidence not collected, packaged, transported and stored in an appropriate way.

It is recognized that some of the techniques presented in this module may not be available at your national or regional level. However, an appropriate approach at the scene can help you build a more comprehensive picture of the trafficking process, add to intelligence or information and produce high quality of evidence at court (physical evidence properly collected and stored can be analyse at a later stage). Wherever possible this module suggests basic approaches that can be applied regardless of the technology available.

The module is intended to be a general guide for those conducting trafficking in persons investigations, non forensic personnel, first responder at the scene. It does not give detailed guidance on particular forensic techniques.

This module contains accurate and frank descriptions of various aspects of trafficking in persons victimization. Some readers may find this disturbing. It is important that all investigators fully understand these aspects of trafficking in persons to allow them to make informed decisions ultimately leading to safe convictions.

None of the suggestions made in the module are exhaustive. They are based on common experiences found around the world.

The first part of the material considers two questions that apply in all criminal investigations: What do you want to achieve? How are you going to achieve it?. The module then explains what a crime scene is, the types of physical evidence found in trafficking in persons and basic issues when processing a crime scene to recover those traces to a standard that will allow proper analysis and presentation as evidence in court.

The module moves on to highlight the issues found when examining trafficking in persons crime scenes and gives guidance on the trafficking in persons specific considerations and possible actions when examining victims, suspects, locations, vehicles, documents, Information technology and communications (ICT) equipment.

Initial questions

The first two questions to address when considering forensic examinations in trafficking in persons or other case are:

- What do you want to achieve?
- How are you going to achieve it, given the resources available and the circumstances of the case?

These questions will always depend on each other. For instance, using the example of a rape case, you may wish to obtain a DNA profile of a person suspected to have raped a woman, samples were properly collected and stored, but you do not have access to DNA profiling technology. Equally, you may have the most sophisticated technology in the world but possible sources sample have gone because the rape took place two weeks ago and no appropriate action took place at this time.

What do you want to achieve?

There are a number of potential goals you may wish to achieve from a forensic examination in a trafficking in persons case. These include:

- Identifying a suspect;
- Identifying a victim;
- Establishing the age of a victim;
- Corroborating a victims account;
- Identifying the links between suspects, victims, locations, vehicles, documents, etc;
- Identifying the authenticity of identity and travel documents.

How are you going to achieve it?

Available resources

An important first consideration is the resources you have available. As already outlined, this module gives guidance on basic approaches that may be used regardless of the resources available.

Some technologies are needed to achieve some objectives. The collection, preservation, storage of physical evidence is crucial but will not allow to achieve the objectives above-mentioned.

Circumstances of the case

The next question is how do the circumstances of the case affect what you want to achieve.

Some activities will irrevocably modify the scene of crime, create or delete physical evidence and adversely influence the final result of the investigation.



Case example

Police arrested seven people in an Eastern European country following an operation after they had received information and collected video and material evidence about an organized criminal group's activity in trafficking in persons. The police raided the operating premises after suspicions were confirmed through telephone wiretapping and agents' infiltration that revealed that trafficking took place from Eastern Europe to a Mediterranean country. During the raid, the police confiscated for evidence the groups cellular telephones and two vehicles that were used for trafficking. Examinations of the phones linked the traffickers to the phones and the phone numbers to the previous communications interception and communications data analysis.

Crime scene examination and physical evidence

A crime scene is any physical scene, anywhere that contains fragile records of past activities. Crime scenes can be locations (indoor or open air), vehicles and persons (victims and suspects).

"Crime scene examination" in this module means an examination of the scene using a technical and scientific approach.

Crime scene examination is guided by a fundamental principle of forensic science: every contact leaves a trace. Any contact of a person with a person, person with a vehicle or location, vehicle with a location, etc. in general all activities leave traces of them: also included are traces (both physical and electronic) found in and on electronic equipment.



Self-assessment

What is a crime scene?

Types of physical evidence

Biological materials

Biological materials are blood, semen, skin cells, tissues, organs, muscle, bone, teeth, hair, saliva, fingernails, urine, etc.

Preliminary tests can reveal the type of body fluid or the presence of drugs.

DNA is present in many traces originating from the human body.

Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) analysis

Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) is not a sample in itself but it is a substance present in many biological traces originating from the human body. It carries a genetic code that is virtually unique to an individual.

Some current DNA techniques are so sensitive that it is possible to detect traces that have been left after very limited contact. This can be very useful, but can mean a trace is detected that comes from a totally innocent contact. An example is trace evidence from police officers who have gone to a scene to start an investigation.

DNA analysis has been a massive advance for law enforcement investigations. However, using this technology requires highly trained scientists, ultra clean, specially designed premises and expensive equipment. If these facilities are not available within your State it is recommended that you consider sending samples for analysis in neighbouring countries.

DNA is fragile, it can be degraded rapidly if exposed to environmental factors.

Special anti-contamination measures should also be used.

Blood is a very good source of DNA but may be of use in other ways.

Blood samples may reveal the presence of drugs or diseases.

Where blood is found, the pattern is also informative to the investigation.

Dried blood can yield DNA evidence for many years if it is stored properly.

Semen is also a good source of DNA. The most useful part of semen for DNA analysis is the sperm itself.

It may be found on any part of the body (particularly bodily orifices), on victims clothing, bedding or around the location of a sexual offence.

Semen and other fluids drain rapidly from orifices or are rapidly degraded by enzymes and bacteria in or on the body. Typically there is very little chance of obtaining a semen sample after seven days from the vagina, two or three days from the anus or 24 hours from the mouth.

Where semen is dried on clothing or other material it may remain for many years and, in some cases, even remain after washing.

Saliva will generally leave traces of DNA.

Saliva may be found on victims' bodies, clothing or bedding. Examples of where saliva may be found include cigarette butts, cups or envelopes people have sealed by licking them.

Saliva may degrade rapidly in some circumstances, but in others may remain for a considerable time.

How many cells are available for DNA analysis in a saliva sample depends on a number of factors.

Breath

Breath will carry particles of saliva with it. DNA samples may be recovered from where suspects have breathed on someone or something (e.g., on phones). However, analysing samples from breath requires a very specialized and sensitive technique.

Urine may carry samples of DNA of those who have had sexual contact with a person (for example as it passes through the vagina). Urine may also contain traces of drugs or other substances that a person has consumed, had administered or been in contact with.

Urine very rapidly flushes material from the body. (for example, see “Semen” above). Urine rapidly deteriorates if not stored properly,

Hair is also a source of DNA, the type of analysis and results obtained are subject to the quality of the hair (with or without the “root”).

Hair may also record a person’s exposure to drugs, chemicals and other substances.

Depending on the length of the hair the record may go back many years.

Skin cells may carry DNA. They are shed continuously by the body, and are frequently transferred between two people when they have contact

Skin cells will pass between the two people who have contact simply by touching each other. An example is the transfer of cells during sexual intercourse.

Skin cell recovery

This is a specialized technique that requires proper training and equipment.

Finger marks and body part marks

Fingerprints are unique to each individual. Finger marks refer to traces left. Those marks can be visible or latent. The visible marks can be positive or negative. The latent marks require the application of optical (e.g., UV), physical (e.g., powdering) or chemical treatment in order to visualize them.

Other parts of the body, such as feet and ears, can also leave unique marks.

Fingermarks and DNA

DNA is present in natural secretions of finger marks. Finger marks deposited by the ridges of the finger can range from sweat, sebaceous to complex mixture of secretion and contaminations. that offers an opportunity for analysis. It require specialized and sensitive techniques.

Finger marks can be left on a very wide range of surfaces, including on skin.

Depending on the surface they are on, finger marks may remain for a considerable period of time.

Finger mark recovery

Identifying and recovering finger marks should be done by trained staff using a range of techniques. Trained staff should be able to advise you on where finger marks are likely to be found, if it is possible to recover them and how that recovery should be done.

Document evidence

The illegal reproduction of identity and travel documents are important evidence in trafficking in persons. Documents can be counterfeited (reproduced as original) or forged (altered originals by adding, removing or substituting relevant information). Any other documents for the transportation, recruitment may also exist. Those documents may contain direct evidence, for example some record about a victim being bought or sold. They are also likely to have other physical evidence on them such as finger marks and traces of DNA.

The detection of false document is crucial before sending it to the forensic laboratory for throughout checking. In some circumstance a document may show evidence of the device used in its creation such as marks from printing machines and typewriters.

Handwriting analysis, either of large amount of text or a signature, will identify the author of a document/note.

Please see, section on “Examination of document evidence found at the scene, on victims or suspects and in vehicles” for the actions to be taken when examining document evidence.

Fibres and other micro traces

Fibres from clothes and other material can be transferred on contact. For example a person lying on a bed when clothed will transfer fibres from clothing to bedding and vice versa.

Transfer of fibres between clothing and seats in cars and other vehicles has also proved useful in some trafficking in persons investigations.

Other micro traces, such as paint, glass, soil, seeds, fragments of metal can also be transferred and recovered.

Fibres and micro traces may remain where they were deposited for a considerable period of time. Washing, exposure to the environment and further contact with other materials are examples of how this type of evidence may be lost.

Teeth


Examination of teeth is a technique that is common in many criminal investigations. In trafficking cases it may have an application in establishing the age of a person, particularly suspected victims. Annex 1 “Forensic techniques in age assessment” gives more detail of this technique.

Information technology and communication (ITC) equipment

IT equipment and communications equipment often contains valuable evidence: documents or e-mails stored, details of financial transactions and records of contacts.

Equipment is also likely to have other physical traces such as finger marks or biological material which allow individuals to be linked to those pieces of equipment.

Properly handled ITC may be a significant element in an investigation. Annex 3 “Recovery and preservation of electronic communications and IT equipment” gives guidance on how this should be done.

	Self-assessment
Describe the types of physical evidence traces most commonly used in trafficking in persons investigation.	

General aspects of crime scene examinations

For additional information on the importance of crime scene investigations and the nature and relevance of physical evidence, see the UNODC manual on “Crime scene and physical evidence awareness for non forensic personnel”.

Laboratory results can only be as good as the evidence that is submitted for analysis. Even where no prosecution takes place basic crime scene examination can support future anti-human trafficking activities.

Early cooperation between investigator and forensic personnel

- Investigators should involve forensic personnel at the earliest possible stage of a trafficking in persons enquiry, for technical work or advice;

- Investigators should give forensic personnel as much detail as possible about the case. The investigator should outline what he or she wants to achieve and should work with the forensic personnel to establish a forensic strategy;
- The plan should be dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances. It should be kept under active and continual review by the investigator and those with forensic expertise.

Organization of the work at the scene of crime

- There should be a coordinated approach. The roles and responsibilities of those managing and attending a scene should be defined and documented;
Initial scene evaluation is required before you know which approach is to be followed. Need to keep the general approach flexible.

Depending on the size of the scene,

- Appoint someone to have overall control of the scene. In some jurisdictions who this is may be determined legislation and procedures;
- Consider appointing someone with the specific responsibility to manage the recording and storage of exhibits;
- The required specialized expertise should be available;
- Establish some means of communication between those managing the investigation and those making the scene examination.

Preservation of the crime scene integrity

- Scene protection starts when incident first discovered (arrival of first responder) and ends only when the whole examination process is completed;
- Make an initial decision on how large an area needs to be protected. Keep this under review: new information may mean the scene changes;
- Protect the scene from unnecessary activities that may irrevocably compromise the evidence;
- Access to the scene by the public and law enforcement, staff and others should be controlled. If a person does not need to be there, they should not be there;
- Use any kind of physical barrier to prevent access. Use tape or fencing if you have it available;
- If you have to enter the scene protective clothing should be worn to prevent contamination;
- Staff who have been to one scene or dealt with a suspect or victim should not go to another scene. This prevents cross contamination of scenes;
- Only use clean or disposable facilities/equipment when working at the scene;
- Enter and leave the scene by a marked pathway.

Reality of crime scenes

Even with the best scene management and equipment there will be an unavoidable destruction of some evidence because of the nature of the environment, the weather or through necessary activities such as providing first aid to victims or crime or preventing the escape of suspects.

Measures to protect the scene from environmental impacts should be taken as soon as possible. First responders and others should be made “forensically aware” to minimize the impact of necessary activities. Records should be kept of what activity has taken place before the scene was secured for examination. (see below)

Recording scenes

- An exhibits officer should record all activity at the scene and document the evidence seized.
- The exhibits should include any notes, photographs, sketches or measurements made and a log book of who entered the scene, when they left, etc.
- Documentation starts with arrival of first responder at the scene. They should record who entered the scene, what they touched, moved etc; (photo or video).
- Records should be chronological, written in ink with no alterations or gaps. They should be signed and dated.
- Records should show who seized an exhibit and where the exhibit came from. The exhibit should be packaged and labelled in accordance with guidance given in “Recovery and preservation of physical evidence” below.
- This “chain of custody” of exhibits should continue when the exhibits are passed on for storage or analysis and should continue until any court case and (in some cases) after a court case in case there is an appeal.

Scene examination and recognition of physical evidence

- Observe the scene before taking any action;
- Consider the circumstances, surfaces, nature of the incident in order to determine search strategy (flexible, methodical), including use of search techniques that are appropriate to the situation;
- Consider possible scenarios and search for any physical evidence that may result;
- The evidence found may support or alter the scenario and further refine the direction of the examination.

Recovery and preservation of physical evidence.

- Recording where the items are before they are recovered and packaged by taking hand-written notes, diagrams/sketches, and photographs;
- Use appropriate containers, collection bags and boxes for samples. The decision on what type of container to use is largely determined by the type of physical evidence;

- Samples should be representative;
- Control samples should be taken including substrates/blank samples;
- Each exhibit should be sealed with a tamper proof seal, signed by the person sealing it and labelled with unique identity number and/or letter;
- Early evidence kits may be used to recover evidence from victims. They include containers to collect urine and a variety of swabs to collect traces of material from the mouth or skin. Samples can be obtained by victims themselves in some cases. The applications they have in trafficking in persons cases are outlined below;
- Intimate samples (samples from the genital area, anus etc) should only be obtained by properly qualified medical staff. Annex 2 “Conducting intimate examinations of victims” gives more detailed guidance in this area.

There are a number of specific issues concerning the recovery and preservation of: biological material, finger marks and electronic communications and IT equipment. Please see annex 3 “Recovery and preservation of electronic communications and IT equipment” for more detail.

Other issues

- Wherever possible, physical evidence should be collected by trained staff. In some cases this may need a high level of training (for example a medical examination of a person). In some cases samples can be taken by staff with basic training;
- Staff should be provided with equipment appropriate for the case investigated. This should include health and safety clothing, cameras, video equipment (where available), collection bags, boxes and adequate containers, labels and record sheets;
- Proper storage facilities should be provided to avoid loss or degradation of evidence prior to the analysis in a forensic science laboratory.



Self-assessment

Outline the basic actions required to preserve and document crime scene and recover physical evidence traces from crime scenes.

Specific features of crime scene examinations to trafficking in persons

Crime scenes in trafficking in persons investigations present a number of challenges to investigators.

Investigators will have experience of using crime scene examination to support criminal investigations; this shows some of the differences between traditional crime scene and physical evidence examinations and trafficking in persons cases.

Early cooperation between investigator and forensic personnel

This is important in any case, but particularly in trafficking in persons investigations because of issues outlined below.

Accounts of victim-witnesses and other information

The information available to you when deciding a forensic strategy in trafficking in persons cases may be very confused initially, more so than in general crime cases. The reasons for this include victims' response to victimization (varying or incomplete accounts), language barriers, identification of suspects only by nicknames and vague or inaccurate details of locations.

Lack of knowledge about trafficking in persons

Trafficking in persons crimes, its consequences and the traces it leaves, may be outside the previous experience of the investigator or forensic personnel. Forensic personnel should be briefed by experience trafficking in person investigator about the trafficking process.

Many scenes

In many crime cases there is likely to be a small number of scenes: for example, the car where the rape happened or the bank where the robbery took place, etc. In trafficking in persons cases there is a greater likelihood that there will be a large number of scenes of interest to the investigator. These may require simultaneous management.

Linked scenes may be found at the source, transit and destination locations in a trafficking case. Forensic evidence of victims and traffickers is likely to be present in premises in all those locations. Similarly, there may be evidence linking a person to transport used in all locations, or a vehicle that has passed through all three locations. Advertising, communications equipment and finance documents are all potentially connected opportunities for forensic examination.

You should always consider what scenes might be linked and where those scenes might be located. Explore the opportunities to examine linked scenes or request an examination takes place. This may not be practical in every case, but you may have very local links that should not be overlooked. Even where a scene is in another jurisdiction, an examination may have taken place already and it may be possible to share the results.

Linking scenes may allow you to identify further victims or suspects, generate intelligence and present a more robust and comprehensive case at court.

Staff who have been to one scene or dealt with a suspect or victim should not go to another scene. This prevents cross contamination of scenes.

People present at locations

By definition, there are likely to be people present at locations linked to trafficking in persons, presenting a number of difficulties. The people may be “scenes” themselves (as victims or suspects) as will the location. Identifying who is suspect or potential victim is likely to be difficult and there may be cross-contamination issues.

Where people have been living or working in close proximity traces transferred between people may be the result of innocent contact or could be evidence of exploitation.

Managing exhibits to ensure chain-of-custody

The main difference between trafficking in persons and other cases is that there is a potentially very large number of items that require seizing as exhibits or for forensic examination in a trafficking in persons case. This makes a structured approach particularly important.

The “chain of custody” in a trafficking in persons case may be long and complex because there may be a need to transfer exhibits between jurisdictions. Any such transfer should always be done in a way that complies with the legislation of the States it is moving between. Do not assume your system is applicable in other jurisdictions.

Length of time of exploitation

A lot of general crime consists of single events that have been short lived. In trafficking in persons cases the crime is likely to be a series of events involving exploitation over a long period of time, or even one continual crime where it is very difficult to isolate single events. Trafficking in persons cases are likely to involve a large number of suspects.

Consequences of this include scenes (people, locations, etc.) that are likely to have many forensic traces, some of those traces may be relevant, many may not and evidence of crimes may have deteriorated to the point it is of no value.

Commercial processes

Human trafficking is a commercial process. The objective of any law enforcement investigation should not simply be to convict individual criminals, but also to dismantle networks. A forensic strategy in a trafficking in persons case should consider how forensic examinations may be linked to the five processes in trafficking in persons—advertising, premises, transport, communications and finance.



Self-assessment

Summarize the specific features of crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons cases.

Examinations of victims

General considerations

- It may not be clear who is a suspect or victim on first encounter. Indeed, in many trafficking in persons cases this may not become apparent for some time.
- There may be cases where forensic contact evidence alone will prove a victim of trafficking in persons has been assaulted, but this is likely to be rare. In many more cases the forensic evidence will corroborate the account given by the victim or other evidence.
- The value of examinations of victims may be limited because victims and exploiters (or recruiters and transporters) often have very close long term contact with each other. There are particular issues concerning intimate examinations in sexual exploitation cases that are explored below.
- It is important to establish the age and identity of a person believed to be a victim of trafficking in persons. Annex 1 “Forensic techniques in age assessment” gives further guidance.

Examples of objectives in sexual exploitation cases include:

- Showing that a particular individual had sex with or sexually assaulted a victim;
- Showing that a particular individual physically assaulted a victim;
- Corroborating a victim’s account of what happened to him/her;
- Identifying any injuries, illness or disease that may be related to their exploitation;
- Establishing how long a person has been victimized;
- Establishing the age of injuries to a victim;
- Identifying the victim;
- Establishing the age of the victim;
- Connecting a victim to a particular location, vehicle, etc;
- Identifying any drugs or alcohol administered to or taken by the victim.

The same basic principles apply in labour exploitation and other cases with the additional objectives of:

- Linking a particular piece of equipment or machinery to a victim.
- Establishing the scale of the exploitative enterprise.

Multiple exploitation

In labour and other exploitation cases you may not have sexual assaults as a priority but you should always bear in mind that victims of all forms of exploitation are often at increased risk of sexual abuse.

Examining victims—specific considerations in sexual exploitation cases

- An early decision should be taken by the investigator in consultation with forensic examiners about whether or not a full examination should take place (with victim consent). It may not be viable because of the reasons outlined above or it could be technically possible but not with the resources available to you.
- Guidance on conducting examinations of victims is found in annex 2 “Conducting intimate examinations of victims” below.
- Consider using early evidence kits. These kits include items such as flasks to collect urine, swabs to take samples of material from under the fingernails and buccal swabs to take samples from the mouth. There are bottles and bags, some with preservative, that help store the material properly.

As you have seen above time may have passed and there may be little evidence to recover. However, using these kits is simple and much of the sampling can be done by the victim herself. It is non invasive and the kits are not expensive.

- If it appears there may be samples present but you are reaching the time limit of any trace remaining make sure the person taking the sample knows what they are required to do and how to do it. An example is the recovery of semen from the higher parts of the uterus which may allow recovery after an extend time period but is difficult and very invasive.
- Where it is not possible to conduct a full examination consider undertaking a less intrusive examination (with the victims consent). Although this may not prove contact with an individual it may give corroboration of the victims account, for example showing visible injuries consistent with what she is saying.
- If a full examination is made (with the victims consent) have a secondary objective of corroboration of the victims account. The presence of semen from many men would be valuable to a trafficking in persons sexual exploitation investigation even if you cannot identify the men.
- In sexual exploitation cases under clothing can be particularly useful to obtain traces of semen that has drained from victims.
- In many trafficking in persons cases a victim may be disclosing an incident that took place some time ago and no samples remain.
- The effects victimization may mean accounts from suspected victims sexual exploitation are particularly vague and incomplete.
- Victims of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation may have had sexual contact with many people with the possibility that samples from many people are present on those victims.
- Semen may be found in the vagina, anus, mouth or virtually any other part of the victim.
- Hairs, both pubic and head hair will be transferred between the victim and the suspect.
- Semen may remain in the vagina and uterus for quite a long time (see “Semen” above) but recovery of samples is very invasive.

- Samples from different locations in the vagina and uterus may indicate when ejaculation took place and could corroborate an account of prolonged abuse.
- Victims may not have had access to clean clothes for some time. Numerous forensic traces may be present on the clothing.
- Informed consent of the victim to an examination may be difficult to obtain in an acceptable time scale because of traumatization of the victim, difficulties in translating and mistrust of the police.
- Examination is likely to be invasive and may be a pointless further victimization of the woman.
- For the reasons outlined above, there may be cases where a physical examination of a victim of sexual exploitation for trafficking in persons is unlikely to reveal any evidence of practical value. Investigators must (in consultation with forensic and medical experts) decide if the potential results of an examination justify asking a victim to consent to a physical examination.

Examining victims—specific considerations in labour and other exploitation cases

- In all trafficking in persons cases it is essential that any forensic strategy considers the account of the victim and any other evidence from the outset.
- Consider involving people you can trust with experience of the trade or industry you are investigating to identify what you need to look for.
- Consider speaking to medical practitioners who can identify the injuries or physical effects on the body of certain trades, etc. Any examination should take place with the victim's consent
- When recording where a person was on first contact include the machine they were working on, where they were in a field, what equipment they had, etc.

Injuries in trafficking in persons for labour

Examples include children working in textiles factories with calluses to their hands, mutilation in cases of begging, patterns of muscular development or injuries as a consequence of warfare or training for warfare.

- Fingerprints and or DNA may establish which equipment a victim has been using, with factories, rooms they have used or where they have slept.
- DNA may show a victim was injured on a particular machine or link a victim or suspect with a weapon as a “discipline” tool.
- Where appropriate (evidence of chemicals, drugs etc found on the premises) consider use of early evidence kits outline above in “Victims—Sexual exploitation”.
- Cross-contamination between victim and suspect may be likely because they have been living or working in close proximity for an extended period or time.
- Victims may have injuries or marks that can be linked to particular machines or other equipment.

- Clothing may have been adapted for particular work.
- Clothing may contain fragments of material from agricultural or industrial processes.
- Blood and urine samples may show that a person has ingested drugs, been exposed chemicals associated with particular processes or contracted a disease.

Examining victims

Actions

General crime scene approach is applicable

- Take health and safety precautions. If encountering a person through a tactical intervention (raid) or in the course of routine policing activity it may not be apparent who is a suspect or victim. There may be resistance, possibly with weapons.

In some cases the victims of trafficking in persons may present a risk of resistance and attack. An extreme example is the case of a child trafficked for warfare.

Appropriate health and safety measures should be provided and taken by those involved in bodily examinations or where bodily fluids are present. The need for safety should be balanced with the need not to stigmatize victims.

- Record where a person was on first encounter and what they were doing at the time.
- Record the general scene where a possible victim was found. (also see “Locations” below). This should be done using cameras and videos where available, drawings, plans and written descriptions.
- It is strongly recommended that before starting the examination of a victim you should establish what the victims account is and what else is known about things like the location she was found in. Finding out what is being alleged should always be balanced with the need for the recovery of evidence which may be rapidly disappearing or deteriorating. Any examination must take place in accordance with your legislation and the consent of the victim.
- Although trace transfer is more likely the longer a person is in the company with another there may traces of certain material in locations on a body that are difficult to explain no matter how long they have been in contact.

Obtaining a full account helps to identify those areas for examination where a trace would corroborate the account.

- You may consider a medical examination to establish age of victims. You should be aware this can be very difficult and may not be accurate. See annex 1 “Forensic techniques in age assessment” for further information.
- Make a note, draw or photograph the victim showing any visible injuries. Even where a victim consents to having non-visible injuries examined and recorded it is good practice to photograph or keep a record of how they were dressed before the examination. Whatever the extent of the examination the person consents to any record of injuries, etc. will add to the investigation.

- When taking photographs, be aware that showing a victim's face may cause problems in some cases. The defence may have access to the photograph or video leading to revelation in courts or to the suspect. Taking pictures of faces may reduce the changes of cooperation.
- Examination of clothing may reveal useful samples. Even where you are able to examine it is good practice to seize clothing.
- Clothing may be available for examination that the victim is not wearing at the time.
- Clothing may also have visible damage that corroborates the victims account.
- Bedding (see "Locations" section below for more detail) and other furniture may also yield samples of value.
- In all cases investigators should try to identify where the victims clothing is, where he or she slept, other areas of premises they had access to, worked or lived in, vehicles travelled in, etc. to increase forensic opportunities.
- Obtain control samples from the victim. Ideally this should include fingerprints, DNA and hair samples. These are required link to victims to locations etc.
- Collect any documents (identity, travel document and all other type of documents).



Self-assessment

What are the specific features of crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons cases when examining victims of trafficking in persons?

Examination of suspects

Considerations

- It may not be clear who is a suspect or victim on first encounter.
- Suspects may resist attempts to detain or search them or seize their property.
- Suspects may be in possession of weapons or other items that they could either deliberately use on those searching them or which could cause injury during a search.
- You may have some knowledge of what is alleged to have happened before you encounter the suspect either through a victim or witness account or the result of other enquiries.

Examining suspects—specific considerations in sexual exploitation cases

- Allegations of sexual assault are likely to leave samples of the victim on the suspect on intimate parts of a suspect's body (as well as the rest of the body).
- Alleged sexual assaults may have taken place some time ago.
- Although traces of suspects on victims bodies may be discharged, degraded quickly or washed from their traces of the victim may remain on the suspects' body for some time, particularly where the suspect has poor hygiene.

- While it can be argued a trace has been found because victims and suspect live or work in close proximity, some traces are in locations on bodies and are difficult to explain away by “innocent contact”.

Examining suspects—specific considerations in labour and other exploitation cases

- Clothing of interest could include any uniform or badges that suggest they are in a position of authority, anything that suggests they are involved in a particular operation at a factory, command a unit etc or weapons or other equipment that might be used in “discipline” such as sticks or whips.
- There may be traces on the clothing that links a suspect with a particular victim, for example blood from an assault.
- There may be traces on the suspect that show they have been involved in a particular process.
- Other property in their possession may indicate a person holds a position of authority at a location and may be a suspect.
- The property in a person’s possession may offer evidence from the information it holds, but may also have valuable contact–trace evidence such as finger prints.
- In some labour situations it may be clear who has authority and who does not. In other cases this may not be clear. Examples include groups of people begging, gangs stealing, children and young people trafficked for warfare.

Examinations of suspects

Actions

General crime scene approach applies in examinations of suspects.

Plan your forensic strategy around what you are aware of already. Continually review what you know and amend the forensic strategy accordingly. It is recommended you work with forensic examiners and analysts when making these decisions.

In all searches of people think health and safety.

- Record where suspects are found, for example where they were in a building, where they were sleeping, where they were sitting in a vehicle etc.
- Record who was with the suspect at the time he or she was encountered.
- Where possible record this with video or photographs.
- Photograph how they are dressed clothing.
- Search clothing—look for documents, phones (see document examination and ITC examination) etc, weapons, any objects that may suggest use of oaths or traditional religions (See module 4: “Control methods in trafficking in persons” for more information)
- Do so in a way you are not going to contaminate it or lose material.
- Record what is found and who it is found on, preferably with photo/ video if you can.

- Record any injuries visible when the suspect is clothed.
- Consider seizing the clothing of suspects. Do this in accordance with your legislation and in a way that protects the dignity and privacy of the person. It is best to seize clothing at a police station or similar place. If you do have to seize clothing “in the field” ensure it is done at a location and in a way that avoids cross-contamination and protects the person’s dignity.
- If suspects and possible victims are found keep them separate as far as possible (this is good practice not only for forensic purposes but to prevent intimidation).
- It may be inevitable that there is some cross-contamination when suspects and possible victims are found together. Do what you can to ensure initial searches are conducted by separate people. Keep a record of who searched who and by open with forensic examiners, prosecutors and courts about what happened.
- Where appropriate, consider a full physical examination of the suspect conducted by an appropriately qualified person. This should be done in accordance with your legislation.
- Obtain fingerprints from suspects. This will allow you to link them to particular equipment, documents or locations.
- Consider obtaining DNA where appropriate. This may have an application in detecting who sent letters etc.

Examining suspects—specific actions in sexual exploitation cases

- Consider conducting an intimate examination of the suspect by an appropriate person in accordance with your legislation.
- Work with the person conducting the examination to identify objectives and main areas of interest in the examination.

Examining suspects—specific actions in labour and other exploitation cases

- Record where people were in premises and what they were doing at the time of your encounter with them. In labour exploitation points of interest would include who was apparently supervising other workers, were they supervising with other supervisors, were they in offices that appeared to be used for management of an operation.
- Record how they are clothed and equipped at the time of your encounter with them.
- Record any injuries visible when clothed.
- Search them in accordance with your legislation. Property of interest includes mobile phones, pagers, work records, daily task sheets, weapons possibly used in discipline, tools that associate them with particular tasks, identity badges, business cards, letters, wage slips, etc.
- Searches should also be made of any property they have with them such as brief cases.
- Enquiries should be made to establish where and what that person has access to. This includes which office they work in, draws, cupboards and lockers they have access to, vehicles they use, computers, phones and filing systems they use. This information may be available through interviews with the suspect, other witness including victims or other enquiries.

- Consider a further examination of the suspects by an appropriate person. This is unlikely to be as extensive or invasive as those in some sexual exploitation enquires but may be of use in circumstances where the suspect may have a corroborating injury from assaulting a victim or industrial accident for example.
- Where sexual offences are alleged (many victims of trafficking for non-sexual purposes are abused sexually) the same considerations as found in trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation apply.



Self-assessment

What are the specific features of crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons cases when examining suspects?

Examinations of locations

Considerations

- Many locations in trafficking in persons cases will carry health and safety risks to your staff.
- In many trafficking in persons locations there is likely to be significant contamination of scenes with multiple traces.
- In many encounters it may difficult to identify who are exploiters and who are victims. This may not become apparent until some time later.
- On most premises there will be a very large number of fingerprints. Recovering all fingerprints may be difficult, time consuming and involve specialist techniques.
- In a trafficking in persons case you may need to secure a location for a long time to plan and complete a forensic examination.

Examining locations—specific considerations in sexual exploitation cases

- Body fluids and traces are likely to be present at brothels and similar locations. These may present a significant risk to health.
- Brothels are likely to have many DNA samples present in traces of semen, blood, other body fluids and material.
- Documents of interest include any accounts or other records that show prices for sexual services and details of things like “rent” paid Experience has shown that in many situations of commercial sexual exploitation quite detailed records are kept.
- Where the location is a brothel make a record of reception areas, public rooms, cubicles, etc.
- Bedding is likely to reveal many contact traces. Consider seizing bedding etc. after recording it in situ. Seizing it allows the option of examination. If full examination does not prove practical, the condition of the bedding may be valuable in corroborating an account etc.

- Record any sex toys, sexual implements, lubricants or similar material should be found and seized them. These may be evidence in themselves, but also give opportunities for fingerprint and DNA evidence recovery.

Examining locations—specific considerations in labour and other exploitation cases

- Labour exploitation sites may have particular health and safety risks because of the nature or the business or condition of equipment etc.
- Consider seeking advice from a person with knowledge of a particular trade or industry to assess risks in forensic examination of premises and equipment.
- Take someone with you who knows how to make equipment safe.
- A general and comprehensive record of conditions at the location should be made. This should include health and safety equipment (or lack of them), the condition of any machinery or other equipment should be recorded, notices, etc.

Machinery, tools and equipment can be examined to establish who has been using it.

If there is evidence of people sleeping on what should be exclusively work premises this should be recorded.

Samples of chemicals or other material at the location may allow you to link similar samples found on clothing of workers or to substances found.

Any evidence of who uses a particular office should be recorded. This evidence may include name plates on doors, photographs on desks, diaries, and business cards, etc. This evidence may help establish a “chain of command”.

Examinations of locations

Actions

General crime scene approach applies to examinations of locations.

- Use existing information and intelligence to plan a forensic strategy when entering premises, both in the case of tactical entries (raids) and visits on follow up enquiries.
- Record who is present and what they are doing when you enter a location.
- Ideally this should be photographed or videoed, and plans should be drawn.
- Use the guidance in “victims and suspects” (above) regarding the recording the clothing people are wearing and conducting searches.
- Ask people to identify where they work or sleep. Record their responses. Consider identifying who slept at a particular location, by photograph where possible, or other techniques such as fingerprinting the area of the bed or seizing bedding where appropriate.
- Consider interviewing those on the premises to establish who has access to where and for what purpose.
- Documents of interest should be sought on premises, recorded in situ and, where appropriate, seized for possible further examination. Examples include any notices showing

regulations, services offered, identity and travel documents, records of employment ledgers and similar recording transactions.

- Any suspected drugs or other substances of interest found should be recorded in situ and retained for possible analysis.
- Active review should take place to take account of any new information that emerges.
- Computers, laptops, cell phones should be seized



Self-assessment

What are the specific features of crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons cases when examining locations?

Examinations of vehicles

Considerations

- Vehicles may offer a useful opportunity to link victims to suspect and vice versa.
- Upholstery in cars and other vehicles may contain hairs and fibres from clothing from both victims and suspects.
- Property in vehicles such as receipts for petrol, parking tickets, etc. may also offer good opportunities for examination.
- Litter in cars such as cigarette stubs and chocolate may offer opportunities for examination
- The vehicle itself leaves tracks that may be useful in identifying it.
- Most vehicles carry registration or index plates which allow tracing.
- Documents such as driving licences and insurance certificates are required to drive and operate vehicles.
- Some traffickers will use vehicles without documents but others will drive legally as they do not wish to attract law enforcement attention.
- Even where no index number is available it is possible to trace vehicles through combinations of colour, manufacturer and individual marks. In some locations this can be done by automated searches.
- Vehicles can be removed by law enforcement and kept until they are able to examine it.
- Some vehicles may contain equipment that allows you to track its movements. This can include tachographs (journey recorders) in lorries, mobile phones or satellite navigation systems.
- If the vehicle itself does not have equipment that allows tracking, the people in it may have used or be using mobile phones that can allow tracking.

Examining vehicles—specific considerations in sexual exploitation cases

- If there is an allegation of sex or sexual assault taking place in a vehicle, semen and other material of interest may be left.
- Where there is an allegation of sex or sexual assault taking place in a car, forensic personnel should be informed. If forensic examiners are not aware of the nature of the allegation examination will not take place
- Where taxis and other forms of public transport are used, consider checks of drivers duties, calls for cabs, etc.
- In trafficking cases in some locations there a number of very short journeys from where the victim is living to where they are being exploited, often by taxi.

Examining vehicles—specific considerations in labour and other exploitation cases

- In the case of commercial vehicles, consider consulting experts in records that should be kept by transport managers and individual drivers, for example tacographs where used. These may give information on routes taken.
- Use experts such as police road traffic officers to identify alterations to vehicles that may suggest they have been used to conceal passengers, transport people as part of trafficking in persons process.
- Vehicles need to be dry to achieve best forensic evidence from them. Plan ahead for adequate storage facilities for the size of vehicle you anticipate examining. In trafficking in persons for labour exploitation some vehicles may be very large.

Examining vehicles

Actions

General crime scene approach is applicable

- If the vehicle is stopped with people in it record who they are and where they are sitting. Take action as outlined in above to search occupants and seize property.
- Record who has access to the vehicle after it comes into police possession, including where it has to be driven to a police station etc. for recovery. This allows elimination of samples from police officers etc.
- If a vehicle is damp it should be dried prior to examination.
- Consider photographing the vehicle before an examination takes place.
- Search the vehicle for other property before it is examined. Record where any property of interest was found (preferably by photograph) and seize it
- Collect micro traces on seats (fibres) and on the floor.



Self-assessment

What are the specific features of crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons cases when examining vehicles?

Examinations of documents found at the scene, on victims and suspects and in vehicles

Considerations

- Trafficking in persons is a commercial process and, as in any type of business, records must be kept. These records are frequently very valuable for investigators. Forensic investigations present a number of opportunities to determine the authenticity of a document or the author of an handwritten document or note. Examples of significant documents that may be found in trafficking in persons investigations include:
- Accounts of money taken in brothels or other illegitimate businesses.
- Bank statements and details of informal transactions (hawala type systems).
- Utility bills such as gas, electricity or phone bills.
- Records of rent paid, details of landlords, etc.
- Tickets, boarding cards and other travel documents.
- Records of bills paid for advertising.
- Credit card details of customers.
- Documents giving work instructions or “menus” of “services” available.
- Photographs of employees.
- Identity documents both genuine and counterfeited/forged.
- Cash.
- Documents in factories and other work places that record details of people working there.
- Documents that show the volume of trade in a particular location, such as material brought in and finished good despatched.

Examining documents—specific considerations in sexual exploitation cases

- Records may still be kept even by brothel keepers and similar even where prostitution is illegal. Examples include price lists, records of cash receipts, how many “clients” have visited a particular women.

Examining documents

Actions


Documentary evidence should always be handled with gloves.

Depending on the type of fraud or type of document involved the first examination will be done at the first line of inspection, in the field, the two first bullet points:

- Visual examination of features without specific equipment: e.g., watermarks, relief structure, mechanical erasure;
- Examination of features with technical facilities (e.g., visible light, UV, IR): e.g., fibres, chemical eradication;
- Examinations in the forensic science laboratory with sophisticated equipment that cannot be used in the field.

Actions specific to sexual exploitation cases when examining documents

- Always seize anything that appears to be a record, no matter how informal that record may look.

	Self-assessment
<p>What are the specific features of crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons cases when examining documents?</p>	

Examinations of IT and communication equipment found at the scene, on victims and suspects and in vehicles

Considerations

IT and communication equipment are essential to both legitimate and criminal organizations and present a number of forensic investigation opportunities including:

- Records of calls made, numbers held, photographs and videos, etc. on phones, both mobile and fixed line.
- Similar records from fax machines, pagers and phones which record messages (where these have a the tape the tape should be seized).
- E-mails, bank details, advertising material, accounts, etc. held on computers, including desk top, lap tops and small personal devices.
- Diaries and similar. These may include personal organisers, filofax, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), Blackberries, notebooks, etc.

IT and communication equipment

Actions

Wherever possible take a forensic IT expert with you when you believe you may have to seize IT and communication equipment. If you cannot take an expert with you, try to speak to one before you go to a scene. Annex 3 “Recovery and preservation of electronic communications and IT equipment” gives detailed guidance for circumstances where neither of the options above are available.



Self-assessment

What are the specific features of crime scene and physical evidence examinations in trafficking in persons cases when examining IT and communication equipment?

Summary

A crime scene is any physical scene, anywhere that contains physical traces of past activities. Crime scenes can be locations (indoor or open air), vehicles and persons (victims and suspects).

“Crime scene examination” is an examination of the scene using a technical and scientific approach.

There are a number of potential goals you may wish to achieve from a forensic examination in a trafficking in persons case. These include:

- Identifying a suspect;
- Identifying a victim;
- Establishing the age of a victim;
- Corroborating a victims account;
- Identifying the links between suspects, victims, locations, vehicles, documents, etc.;
- Identifying the authenticity of identity or travel documents.

Physical evidence that may be recovered at trafficking in persons crime scenes include:

- Biological material (e.g. blood, urine, saliva);
- Finger marks and other body part marks;
- Fibres and other micro traces;
- Document evidence;
- IT and other electronic equipment.

Effective management of crime scenes requires:

- Early cooperation between investigator and forensic personnel;
- Organization of the work at the scene of crime;
- Preservation of the crime scene integrity;
- Recording scenes;
- Scene examination and recognition of physical evidence;
- Recovery and preservation of physical evidence.

Specific issues of crime scene management include:

- Accounts of victim-witnesses and other information may vary or be very confusing;
- Crime scene examiners lack of knowledge of trafficking in persons and its challenges;
- There may be many scenes to consider;
- People are likely to be present at scenes leading to control of scene and contamination issues;
- The potentially large number exhibits means effective “chain-of-custody” procedures are essential;
- Length of time of exploitation may mean considerable volume of potential samples;
- Trafficking in persons is a commercial and criminal process. A forensic strategy should seek to prove facts in an individual case and also provide information that helps disrupt the commercial processes.

There are specific issues that may vary according to the type of trafficking in persons when examining:

- Suspected victims;
- Suspected offenders;
- Locations;
- Vehicles;
- Documents found at the scene, on victims or suspects and in a vehicle;
- IT and communications equipment found at the scene, on victims or suspects and in a vehicle.

Annex 1—Forensic techniques in age assessment

The age of a victim is very significant in many jurisdictions because it affects the charge and eventual sentence. It also has a significant impact on the victim care that the person is entitled to. In some locations there have been some issues with corruption of examiners to give an older or younger age as suits the traffickers' purposes.

In some locations there are no birth certificates and there is the possibility that parents may be involved in the trafficking. Some form of forensic examination may be the only option you have to establish age.

Similarly, identification of the victim using identity documents and identification by relatives may be problematic because the documents never existed or have been destroyed. Relatives can be unwilling to help because they are colluding with the traffickers or they are afraid.

Teeth are useful in estimating individuals' age as the development and formation of teeth is relatively independent of the external or nutritional status of an individual. This is an important aspect of trafficking in persons investigations, especially when trying to identify children. Age is an important factor as it impacts upon the legal status of the individual and subsequently what care protection would be required.

It is essential that only experienced and independent dentist are allowed to use this means to assess the age of a person.

An experienced dentist can accurately estimate a child's age by looking at:

- The number and quality of fillings;
- Presence of plaque and calculus, caries, gingivitis and periodontitis;
- Amount of dental wear;
- Type of teeth present;
- Tooth colour;
- Recessions;
- The number and type of teeth present in the mouth.

However, when trying to determine someone's age other methods should also be taken into account such as:

- A psychosocial age assessment (e.g. inspection of physical appearance, interviewing the victim);
- Physical and radiological examinations of (a) the hand wrist of the non-dominant hand and (b) the medial ends of both collarbones as well as (c) the radiological examination of the dentition.

Annex 2—Conducting intimate examinations of victims

Where a victim is to be examined, it should only be done with his or her consent.

The victim should be allowed to choose the gender of the forensic medical examiner and this should be complied with wherever possible.

Where a child victim is involved consent should always be obtained from the child's parent, guardian or other independent adult official who has temporary parental rights and responsibilities in respect of the child. Consent should be obtained before an examination takes place.

The victim must be told what the examination will consist of and why an examination is required before he/she gives her consent. Consent is not genuine if the victim does not understand what he/she has agreed to.

In the case of a child the explanation should be given to the parent or guardian but every effort should be made to help the child understand as much as possible about the examination and why it is being conducted.

Every effort should be made to provide proper clothing for the victim if his/her own clothing is to be removed: crime scene paper overalls are not suitable.

Do not transport victims in the same vehicles as suspects or detain them in the same place as suspects; doing so may transfer forensic evidence from suspect to victim or lead to allegations that this has happened.

Do not use the same investigation staff to work with the victims as deal with suspects. This can also lead to transfer of evidence or allegations there has been transfer.

No one who has been to a location where an offence is alleged to have happened should come near the victim before clothing has been removed or the examination has taken place because they may be transfer material from the location to the victim. The same advice applies to going near to suspects before they are examined.

Many victims may have physical or psychological impairment (or both). Examination for evidence of crime should not take place before the victim has been assessed by a suitable medically qualified person to establish if she is well enough to be examined.

If at all possible clothing should not be removed before forensic examination.

Consider photographing the victim before clothing is removed.

If clothing has to be removed it should be removed in a place and way that allows the victim to keep his/her dignity.

Members of the opposite sex should not be present when clothing is removed.

Clothing should be removed and packed in a way that preserves evidence.

Examinations should only be conducted by properly qualified people, often doctors or nurses. Where a country has laws or procedures that govern examinations these should be complied with.

Every effort should be made to examine the victim promptly.

Where it is not possible to do a full forensic examination you should consider what you are able to do with facilities you have available such as taking photographs and clothing.

You may be able to obtain samples from some types of offence by using non-intimate techniques that can be used by investigators. An example is a mouth swab for DNA etc. in cases where oral sex is part of the offence. Care should be taken to ensure this is allowed under local legislation.

Many victims are likely to want to wash, either because of the sex offence committed against them or because their traffickers have not allowed them to wash for some time. Washing may remove evidence and victims should be discouraged from washing until they have been examined. This must be explained as compassionately and sensitively as possible.

Allow victims to wash if they insist after it has been explained this may remove evidence.

Eating, drinking, smoking or washing teeth may also remove evidence of some types of sexual offence (oral sex for example). Victims may not have eaten properly or drunk for some time and may want to do so. Any request for the victim not to eat etc. should be balanced with an assessment of what evidence you think would be realistically obtained.

If doing any of things above appears likely to cause the victim to stop cooperating you should decide whether the evidence you are likely to get justifies the risk of withdrawal of cooperation.

Objectives of an examination may include:

- Any injuries consistent with the allegation, for example injuries to genitalia.
- Information that shows the extent of the injuries. This might include the severity of recent injuries or old injuries that have healed to some extent.
- The presence of traces of other people on the victim.
- Obtaining samples to link the victim to other locations, people, etc.

Remember to ask her to indicate if she has other clothes and if so where they are. Record or photograph the clothes where they are when you find them so you know where they are and try to seize this clothing for possible forensic examination.

Annex 3 “Recovery and preservation of electronic communications and IT equipment”

Where it is not possible to either take a forensic IT expert with you or to speak to one before you go to a scene try to follow this advice:

- Control the scene as soon as you enter.
- Search people found at the scene as well as the scene.
- Record everything found on each person including any IT or communications equipment.
- Records of who has what equipment should be exact. Consider photographing or videoing as you seize property from people.
- Do not allow anyone (including investigators) to touch any IT or communications equipment.
- Do not turn the equipment off.

- Shutting down some types of equipment may damage the information held on it. This should be done by experts, but where one is not available keep what equipment you can (for example that run on batteries) turned on for as long as you can. If it has to be moved, unplug it, do not turn it off.
- Video or photograph the equipment exactly as you find it.
- Video or photograph any connections from computers to other equipment.
- Before you disconnect the equipment consider marking the wires connecting the equipment with labels or pens.
- Photographs or labels on connections allow the equipment to be reconnected later by experts for forensic examination.
- Fingerprints and other contact evidence is likely to be found on equipment which could help link suspects to the equipment; when seizing equipment do it in a way that will not disturb that contact evidence. Store it in an appropriate way.
- Where possible seize all equipment, not just the hard drive. Printers, paper, blank paper and other items can be forensically compared later with other material recovered in the investigation.

Keep a log of everyone who enters a crime scene including police and investigators; this may become an issue when it comes to custody and contamination issues



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