
		NEW SOUTH WALES POLICE FORENSIC SERVICES GROUP Management of Major Crimes & Incidents			
FSG: Management of Major Crimes & Incidents					
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Forensic Management of Major Crimes and Incidents

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1. Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
CISB	Criminal Identification Specialist Branch, Forensic Services Group.
Crime Scene Examiner	Police officer attached to the Crime Scene Operations Branch, Forensic Services Group undergoing or possessing appropriate forensic science qualifications and skills. E.g. Diploma of Applied Science in Forensic Investigation or Degree in Forensic Science etc.
CSOB	Crime Scene Operations Branch, Forensic Services Group.
CT DVI	Counter Terrorism and Disaster Victim Identification Group
DAL	Division of Analytical Laboratories, Lidcombe.
FOC	Field Operations Co-ordinator who is a Sergeant working within the Sydney Metropolitan area between the hours of 0700 and 2300 providing support to crime scene staff at scenes of major crime. This role is a link between the on call crime scene examiner and the referral officer.
FSG Referral Officer	Commissioned Officer, Forensic Services Group contactable 24/7 by the Duty Operations Inspector, Sydney VKG.
Forensic Support Team	The additional FSG staff and others based within the Sydney metropolitan area that will be deployed to the crime/incident scene by the FSG Referral Officer.
ICPMR	Institute of Clinical Pathology and Medical Research, Westmead Hospital Westmead.
IOFM	Institute of Forensic Medicine, Glebe
Major Crime Response Section	The Major Crime Response Section is part of the Fingerprint Operations, CISB. The section is comprised of Forensic Fingerprint Investigators who are located at Police Headquarters Parramatta. They are developed to scenes of major crime.
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

Scientific officer	Civilian officer attached to the Forensic Services Group possessing appropriate forensic science qualifications and skills. E.g. Forensic Biology, Chemistry etc.
Senior Investigator	Police officer in charge of investigation from a LAC or the State Crime Command.
Stranger/complex homicide investigations	A homicide that is assessed as requiring more detailed and extensive forensic examination because there are no known persons suspected or arrested and there are no other leads.
Unusual deaths	Where the likely cause of death is not confirmed at the scene and/or after post mortem examination.
Zone Manager (and Satellite Laboratory Manager)	There are 28 decentralised Crime Scene Sections located State-wide that are divided into 2 Satellite Laboratories Sydney and Westmead, and six Zones in regional centres. Wherever the term Zone Manager is used in this document it equally applies to the two Sydney based Satellite Laboratory Managers.
Concept Of Operations Forensic Services Group	The 'Concept of Operations' details the Forensic Response to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Post Blast Crime and Incident Scene Investigation. . Forensic response to a chemical, biological or radiological (CBR) incident investigation. . Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) incident .

2. Policy position

This policy sets out how forensic evidence will be managed for:

1. Stranger/complex homicide investigations.
2. Unusual deaths where the likely cause of death are not confirmed at the scene and/or after post mortem examination.
3. Any other high-profile incident requiring exhaustive recovery and analysis of forensic evidence e.g. a terrorist attack, investigation into the cause of a disaster incident, serial sexual assault matters.

This policy primarily describes the roles and responsibilities of the Forensic Services Group in relation to the types of cases mentioned above. The policy describes how:

- FSG will respond to the crime scene,

- Allocate forensic resources State-wide,
- Review the forensic casework to ensure an exhaustive analysis of all forensic evidence,
- Communicate and collaborate with key stakeholders such as investigators and external agencies to ensure thoroughness of all forensic analysis options.

Note:

This policy is aligned to the Forensic Services Group ‘Concept of Operations’ relating to the Forensic Response to:

- ***Post Blast Crime and Incident Scene Investigation.***
- ***Forensic response to a chemical, biological or radiological (CBR) incident investigation.***
- ***Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) incident investigation.***

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff of the NSW Police with emphasis to:

- Forensic Services Group (mainly Crime Scene Operations Branch)
- State Crime Command (mainly Homicide and Serial Violent Crime Command)
- Local Area Commands (mainly Crime Managers and investigators).

In terms of external agencies the policy applies to:

- Department of Health (Forensic pathology and DAL)
- Any other Agency or individual that conducts forensic analyses on behalf of the NSW Police concerning the crime types mentioned under “Policy position”

4. Objectives

This policy is designed to:

- Ensure a timely response with improved capacity to deploy qualified forensic experts. These experts will use the latest techniques and technologies to recover forensic evidence at serious crimes Statewide. This policy will specifically improve forensic service delivery to Regional Centres.
- Improve the quality and timeliness of forensic evidence analyses for both investigative purposes and ultimately the Courts (including Coroner).
- Ensure a proper forensic response to acts of terrorism.
- Demonstrate to victims of crime, their relatives and the broader community that the NSW Police Service cares, and is committed to solving the most complex and violent crimes in NSW using forensic analysis options available.
- Minimise corruption risks generally and ensure that the integrity of forensic and other evidence is paramount.

5. Context

Forensic science is fast becoming one of the most valuable tools that police can use to help clear and reduce crime. Many high profile murder and sexual assault cases have been solved with forensic evidence gathered from the crime scene. Forensic evidence such as DNA and fingerprints identifies persons and provides critical leads in the investigation. Criminals routinely leave traces of fingerprints, DNA or other forensic evidence behind at crime scenes that will provide vital investigative leads for police to resolve investigations.

The sensitivity of techniques to find and analyse forensic evidence has radically improved over the last decade. Trace evidence is potentially abundant at each and every major crime scene. The number of items that can be examined and analysed is enormous and it is vitally important that adequate resources are assigned; initially to the crime scene and that detailed follow-up occurs to ensure all the evidence has been thoroughly analysed and considered.

Forensic evidence is now a proactive tool that can assist investigators to pursue various leads and/or eliminate suspects. Given the complexity and lengthy nature of the investigations mentioned under “Policy position” it is important that the forensic results are given appropriate attention during all phases of the investigation. This policy details a Review cycle (see 7.5 Review cycle) and has also established several performance measures (see 6. Details of the policy.)

6. Details of the policy

The objectives outlined in this policy will be measured on a quarterly basis as follows:

- No. of scenes attended by Forensic Support Team in the metropolitan and Regional Centres,
- No. of scenes attended by a Forensic Pathologist,
- No. of reviews conducted,
- No. of cases finalised,
- No. of preferred charges for these cases,
- No. of forensic links per case (DNA, fingerprints and other trace evidence),
- No. of complaints from clients and stakeholders,
- No. of compliments concerning service delivery from clients and stakeholders.

The responsibility for collecting and reporting of this data will be the primary role of the Operations Coordinator, Crime Scene Operations Branch, Forensic Services Group.

7. Responsibilities

At the end of this Section there are a series of flowcharts summarising the following:

7.1 Overall responsibility

Overall responsibility for compliance with this policy rests with the Director, Forensic Services Group, and the Commander, Crime Scene Operations Branch.

Responsibility for day to day operational compliance is delegated to the FSG Referral Officer (usually a Commissioned Officer) who is “on call” and contactable 24/7 via the Duty Operations Inspector, VKG, Sydney.

Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation is delegated to the Operations Coordinator, Crime Scene Operations Branch, Forensic Services Group.

7.2 Initial Notification of crime/incident

7.2.1 Crime Scene Examiners and Zone Supervisors

Crime Scene examiners must immediately notify their local Zone Managers and in turn the FSG Referral Officer of certain crime scene types including those outlined under “Policy position”. (See Appendix A, CSOB Call Out Guidelines)

7.2.2 FSG Referral Officer notifies State Crime Command

The FSG Referral Officer will ensure that the State Crime Command has been notified of certain investigations such as homicide.

(See Appendix B - PSW notice: 00/69 “Major crime notification”)
Appendix E – Major Crime Notification – Referral Officer

7.2.3 FSG Referral Officer assess resource needs

The FSG Referral Officer will upon initial notification of an incident, liaise with the Zone Manager /Crime Scene Examiner to identify the issues and tasks requiring support and the identification of resources, which are required.

7.2.4 Forensic Support Team

Where it is considered necessary, the FSG Referral Officer may assemble a Forensic Support Team. A Forensic Support Team may comprise the following Sydney based personnel: -

- Crime Scene Examiners including a Sergeant, (depending upon the size and complexity of the scene),
- Scientific officer/s from Westmead satellite laboratory,
- Major Recovery Unit, Westmead staff (fingerprint enhancement experts),
- Major Crime Response Section, Fingerprint Operations
- Staff from the FSG Counter Terrorism, Disaster Victim Identification Unit,
- Forensic Ballistics staff,

- Forensic Imaging Section staff;
 - Incident Reconstruction staff,
 - Video Operations staff
 - Collision Reconstruction Team
- Engineering Investigation staff,
- Forensic Pathologist.

7.2.5 Transport arrangements for Forensic Support Team

The FSG Referral Officer will identify the most appropriate means of transporting the Support Team to the scene of the incident. The Forensic Support Team may either be flown directly to the scene, travel by road or a combination of the two depending on:

- the size and complexity of the crime scene,
- the location and distance from Sydney (if driving time is within 5 hours the team is likely to travel by road transport),
- the immediate need for specific experts to be at the scene (e.g. it may be important to fly the forensic pathologist and ballistics expert to the scene as a matter of urgency).

Road transport may include the deployment of the Major Incident Response Vehicle and/or any other vehicle considered necessary to convey team members and/or equipment.

7.3 At scene duties

7.3.1 Attendance and management

The FSG Referral Officer may attend the scene to review operations in progress. The FSG Referral Officer may, in conjunction with local Zone Manager, nominate the Sergeant or other senior officer of the Forensic Support Team as the case officer for the forensic investigation (giving due regard to the level of experience and competency of available local Crime Scene/Zone personnel).

Officers comprising the Forensic Support Team will attend and provide support to the local Crime Scene/Zone personnel and to assist in undertaking expert

examinations and/or timely trace evidence examinations of scenes vehicles, premises and items collected during the investigation.

7.3.2 Zone Manager or delegate

The Zone Manager or a senior member of the Forensic Support Team will:

- Attend the scene and provide overall management of forensic resources with the primary objective of recovering all available forensic evidence and ensuring forensic staff welfare (e.g. meals, breaks, rotation, etc).
- Advise the senior investigator concerning security of the crime scene and the expected duration that police guards may be required.
- Provide updates from the scene to FSG Command via the FSG Referral Officer
- Progress updates of forensic examinations at the scene (verbal advice),
- Considers the use of various chemicals in the enhancement and identification of forensic evidence that may be within the scene and if considered necessary:
 - advises the senior investigator of the potential benefits and implications attached to the chemical enhancement,
 - advises the senior investigators that CSOB Commander, FSG will be briefed to seek financial approval to conduct a chemical enhancement of the crime scene (or related objects/items), [NB. The CSOB Commander FSG will assess the overall circumstances of the investigation, potential costs and whether funds are available to carry out the chemical enhancement/s.]
 - confirms with the investigator whether FSG funding for the chemical enhancement has been approved,
 - if funding is approved requests investigators to brief owners/victims on the details of the proposed examination to be conducted and awaits the investigators confirmation as to whether to proceed.

7.4 Post scene examination and analyses

7.4.1 Scene examination concludes

When the scene examination has concluded the Zone Manager or delegate will provide a verbal briefing to the senior investigator as to the results of the examination. A determination will then be made as to whether the scene should be retained under police guard until the conclusion of any post mortem examination or where required clean up procedures may be instigated. If the scene is not required to be retained and no clean up is required following chemical enhancement procedures, the scene will be handed over to the Senior Investigating Officer or his representative.

7.4.2 Welfare for forensic personnel

The Operations Co-ordinator, Crime Scene Operations Branch will also ensure that systems are in place to debrief Forensic staff within 72 hours of their attendance at the scene using either the Employee Assistance Program or Police Psychologists. The FSG Referral Officer may also take any other actions considered necessary to support staff in accordance with the FSG Welfare policy. Details of debriefs which are attended or invitations to staff to attend those debriefs shall be recorded by the CSOB Operations Co-ordinator.

7.4.3 Prioritisation and follow-up

The Zone Manager will ensure that priorities are determined and scene exhibits are submitted for examination:

- within 24 hours or earlier for high priority items, e.g. vaginal swabs taken from a homicide/sexual assault victim would be conveyed to the DNA laboratory at DAL and a request communicated via the Commander, Crime Scene Operations Branch (or in his absence the Director, FSG) for DAL to immediately process these items after hours if necessary,
- for lower priority items no greater than 7 days (many items collected will be important but are not critical in providing investigative leads),
- subsequent items that are obtained during the investigative process e.g. from a search warrant must be submitted in a timely manner (in some cases this may require high priority processing),
- any exhibits identified via the review cycle (See 7.5) are followed-up on and reported back to the investigator,

7.4.4 Operational quality control

The Operations Coordinator, CSOB is responsible for follow-up and operational quality control of each case that is received during the on call period and will on a regular basis continue to:

- liaise with the Zone Manager, crime scene staff and investigators concerning the forensic service delivery and the direction of the investigation,
- ensure that tasks especially high priority examinations are completed,
- ensure that the review cycle (See 7.5) is completed,
- ensure that all subsequent forensic analyses and options are thorough and meticulous.

7.5 Review Cycle

The Operations Coordinator, CSOB will maintain the responsibility for ensuring reviews are conducted in accordance with the following details:

7.5.1 Stage One – FSG Situation Report

The review cycle for forensic investigations commences with the submission of an FSG situation report to the FSG Referral Officer and the Senior Investigating Officer within 24 hours of report of the incident. This report is disseminated to the CSOB Command mailbox - #CSOB.

[Appendix C - Major Incident SITREP](#)

7.5.2 Stage Two – FSG Formal Review

Two weeks after the report of the incident the Operations Coordinator, CSOB will ensure that a formal review is conducted. This review must include relevant FSG personnel, senior and other relevant investigators, invited external experts i.e. Forensic Pathologists, DAL staff and any other relevant experts considered necessary by FSG staff or the senior investigator. On completion of this Review – A 'Major Crime Review Report' must be completed and forwarded to CSOB Command.

[Appendix D - Major Crime Review Report](#)

7.5.3 Stage Three – Monthly reviews

Similar reviews will be held on a monthly basis or as needed with the appropriate personnel. As a minimum this must include the relevant crime scene staff, and the Senior Investigating Officer. If considered necessary the Zone Manager or the Operations Coordinator, CSOB should also be included. These meetings may be held by teleconference. Reviews may only cease if all avenues of forensic analysis are exhausted and/or the case is closed for no further investigation.

Stages two and three require that a review be conducted of all the forensic related exhibits on hand which are relevant to the case. The details of the exhibits should be maintained by the Senior Investigating Officer with comment provided for each item as to the status and relevance of any required forensic analysis.

7.5.4 Monthly progress reports

Stage 2 and Stage 3 Reviews must be reported using the Major Crime Review Report Form. This must be disseminated via email to the Operations Coordinator, Zone Manager and Senior Investigating Officer. A copy of each report must also be retained locally in the relevant case file.

(See Details of policy).

The information supplied from the Major Crime Review Reports is collated and placed on the CSOB Major Crime Review Database. This database is maintained by the CSOB Operations Co ordinator.

8. Policy into action

8.1 Consultative process

This policy will be presented for approval and where necessary changed to meet the needs of the key stakeholders including:

- Deputy Commissioner, Support,
- Deputy Commissioner, Operations
- Staff of the Forensic Services Group,

- State Crime Command (mainly Homicide and Serial Violent Crime),

- Regional Commanders,
- Local Area Command personnel (mainly Crime Managers and Criminal Investigators),
- External Agencies:
 - Institute of Forensic Medicine, Glebe and ICPMR Westmead,
 - Division of Analytical Laboratories, Lidcombe.

8.2 Air transport

Aviation support for the Forensic Support Team exists which allows for the rapid transport of staff throughout the state when required. The Police Air Wing will support the transport of the Forensic Support Team where their operational commitments allow. On those occasions where the Police Air Wing is not able to meet the demands of the Forensic Support Team the Forensic Services Group has a contractual agreement with Airtex Pty Ltd to provide aviation support. The contractual arrangement with Airtex is similar to that arrangement that exists between the State Protection Group and Airtex re the rapid deployment of specialist Police.

8.3 Attendance of forensic pathologists from Sydney

Upon notification of a major crime the FSG Referral Officer will liaise with the Crime Scene Investigator as to the attendance of a Forensic Pathologist at the scene of crime. It is expected that the forensic pathologist will assess the details of the crime or incident scene and make a determination as to their attendance. Where appropriate the Pathologist may be transported to a country crime scene by the air transport in company with the Forensic Support Team.

9. Support Structures

Support for the implementation and application for the policy will come from:

- Deputy Commissioner Operations
 - Regions and Local Area Commands
 - State Crime Command (primarily Homicide and Serial Violent Crime)
- Deputy Commissioner Support
 - FSG Command:
 - CISB
 - Latents
 - Tenprints
 - Major Crime Response Section
 - Document examination
 - Criminal Records
 - Forensic Procedures Implementation Team
 - CrimTrac Coordination Unit
 - Scene of Crime Officers
 - CSOB
 - Westmead & Sydney Satellite – Crime Scene Investigators
 - Forensic Ballistics Unit
 - Forensic Imaging Section
 - Incident Reconstruction Section
 - Video Operations Section
 - Collision Reconstruction Team
 - Engineering Investigation Section
 - Major Recovery Unit
 - Zones (State-wide)
 - FSG CTDVI
 - Special Services Group
 - Police Air wing
- External Agencies
 - Contractor for air support eg. Airtex,

- Institute of Forensic Medicine, Glebe and ICPMR Westmead,
- Division of Analytical Laboratories, Lidcombe,
- Other external experts.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

The Forensic Services Group is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of this policy. This policy details monitoring and evaluation phases in “7. Responsibilities” including an ongoing review process. The performance measures as outlined in “6. Details of the policy” will be compiled quarterly by the Operations Coordinator, Crime Scene Operations Branch, Forensic Services Group.

Appendices

A - FSG Notification and callout guidelines.

B - PSW notice: 00/69 “Major Crime Notification”

C- FSG Situation Report
[online](#) [Major Incident SITREP](#)

D- FSG Major Crime Review Report
[online](#) [Major Crime Review Report.](#)

E- FSG Major Crime Notification (FSG Referral Officer)
[online](#) [Major Crime Notification – FSG Referral Officer](#)