Exhibits, Forensic Information and Miscellaneous Property System (EFIMS)

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Chapter Owner: Forensic Evidence & Technical Services Command

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Refer also to the **EFIMS Standard Operating Procedures**.

Overview

The Exhibits, Forensic Information and Miscellaneous Property System (acronym: EFIMS) is the principle computer system used to record exhibits and miscellaneous property and manage Forensic Analysis and Scene Attendance Jobs.

Refer to the EFIMS eGuide (intranet site) for detailed instructions on how to use EFIMS features and functions.

Input of data into EFIMS

Record exhibits and miscellaneous property in EFIMS as soon as possible. Remember, this information might be of value to other officers, so it is imperative that it is accurate and entered into EFIMS in a timely manner.

Description of property

Describe property as accurately as possible. Ensure that the description on the field exhibit bag matches the same description that will be input into the description field in EFIMS.

Enter the details into the relevant fields. Include model and serial numbers, inscriptions, hallmarks, distinguishing features, brands etc.

EFIMS Access, Security and RFA

All members of Police Force must strictly maintain the confidentiality and security of all information on EFIMS.

Warnings and caveats on access to all Police Force computer systems also warn members of the Police Force of the criminal sanctions that may be imposed – including imprisonment – under the provisions of the *Crimes Act 1900*, *Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act* and other relevant State and Commonwealth legislation. The provisions of Clause 75 of the *Police Regulation 2008* also bind members.

Any breach in security or confidentiality by a member of the Police Force that compromises the integrity of a police investigation, operation, official police business or the secrecy/confidentiality of data on Police Force computer systems is a serious managerial matter that could also lead to criminal sanctions and will be treated accordingly.

All officers are reminded that access, use and/or disclosure of information contained in EFIMS must be directly connected with your duties. COPS integration is a significant feature of EFIMS. When an officer enters a COPS Event or Case Number into EFIMS, EFIMS accesses COPS information on behalf of the user and displays it on the EFIMS screen. It is important to understand that each and every time EFIMS access COPS information, an 'access' is recorded on COPS for that Event or Case.

Users are advised to utilise the RFA feature in EFIMS (top right of screen) to contemporaneously record the reason for Access.

Recording Exhibits

EFIMS is for the recording of exhibits.

Exhibits are all:

- Physical or documentary items seized and retained for evidentiary value

- Physical or documentary items seized and retained for evidentiary value that require forensic analysis.

All exhibits require recording on EFIMS to meet the court requirement of continuity of evidence for exhibits referenced in legal proceedings.

Prior to recording exhibits in EFIMS determine whether to record as one item or split over several items. For example, if multiple exhibits with different owners you should record these items as separate exhibits with their own unique barcode number in EFIMS. Remember, what was an item number in the manual exhibit book is now a barcode number.

Record exhibits and miscellaneous property in EFIMS as soon as possible. Remember, this information might be of value to other officers so it is imperative that it is accurate and entered into EFIMS in a timely manner.

<u>Labelling</u>

Property to be recorded in EFIMS must be identified with an EFIMS barcode number. Where an EFIMS barcode label has been damaged, it should be replaced with a new barcode number and EFIMS updated accordingly, (see <u>EFIMS eGuides</u> for instructions on how to do this). Make a notation in the 'note field' tab stating "barcode {number} replaced with {number}".

Note: Do not place EFIMS barcodes directly on an exhibit.

Security bags have a pre-printed Barcode: this is to be used as the EFIMS Barcode and the Security Bag No (in the Exhibit Entry "Security Bag" Tab.

<u>Item Movements</u>

All exhibit and/or sub-exhibit movements must be recorded in EFIMS. This is to meet the court requirements of continuity of evidence. Movements are recorded as transactions. Each transaction is logged by EFIMS. Transactions can be printed as a Chain of Custody report to support chain of custody requirements to be presented at court.

All miscellaneous property movements are to be recorded on EFIMS to enable item tracking / location.

Exhibit Check In

The Check In transaction is used to accept custody of exhibits. The Check In transaction requires verification through the check in officer's Domain (Windows) password. Where the exhibit is received from an external party, such as a courier, the receipt can be used.

Where an item has been checked out to an external organisation, a check in transaction is required to be created once confirmation is received that the item was received by that organisation. This is to be done by the officer who has either a signed receipt, or confirmation email from said organisation. A copy of this should be included in the check in transaction. If the external organisation is not listed in the EFIMS location list, a Blue Portal job should be created requesting it be added.

NOTE: Items sent to FASS DNA or Drug lab will have a check in created automatically once received by FASS, so is not included in the above process.

Exhibit Check Out

The Check Out transaction is used to move exhibits out of a storage location and transfer custody to another party (e.g., officer, courier, etc). This transaction requires a reason (Analysis / Disposal / Ongoing Investigation / Other) for check out and verification through the receiving officer's Domain (Windows) password.

Internal Move

The Internal Move transaction is used by the Exhibit Officer/Supervisor to move exhibits within a storage facility (e.g., Bankstown Exhibit Room 1 to Bankstown Exhibit Room 2).

Requesting a Hold

The Request Hold transaction is used to identify exhibits with a date to which the exhibit will be retained and the reason for retention:

- Long Term Retention
- Pending Court Outcome
- Pending Further Investigation

If the exhibit is appearing as a Candidate for Disposal, but the investigation circumstances require it to be retained until a later date, then the item can be placed on Hold.

Exhibit Disposals

Officers should ensure that exhibits have not been held unnecessarily and are destroyed or disposed of in a timely manner and are supported by a destruction certificate or appropriate records.

The process for obtaining authorisation to dispose of an exhibit occurs **outside of EFIMS**. Follow procedures as outlined in the Police Handbook for disposing of an exhibit. The authority for disposal of a physical object must have been obtained prior to recording the disposal transaction in EFIMS.

If an item is to be returned, disposed of or destroyed, the exhibit must **first be Checked Out** using the Check Out transaction. The Disposal transaction should only be performed once the item has been returned, disposed or destroyed (i.e., after the fact). It is best practice to scan and upload a copy of the signed Check Out receipt against the relevant disposal transaction in EFIMS.

Return to Owner

Prior to returning an exhibit item to the owner, the returning officer will check the item(s) out using the EFIMS Check Out transaction and print one (1) EFIMS 'Check Out' receipt. On returning the item(s) to the owner record the identification details immediately below the last item on the receipt, obtain the necessary signatures, take a copy of the receipt and give the original to the owner. Scan and upload the copy of the receipt into EFIMS against the relevant item or transaction. Filing of the hardcopy is at the discretion of the command.

The returning officer or Exhibit Officer will create the Disposal transaction in EFIMS and add all items that were returned.

Security Bag Seal details for Drug and Cash Exhibits

It is a corporate requirement that the Security Bag Seal details are updated in EFIMS each and every time a Drug or Cash Exhibit Bag is opened. Please refer to the EFIMS eGuides site for instructions on How to Update Security Bag Details.

EFIMS Receipts

EFIMS generates hardcopy receipts for exhibits and miscellaneous property. Receipts are not generally required for items being moved internally. A hardcopy receipt may be required for items being moved to outside the NSW Police Force. Signed receipts should be scanned and uploaded into EFIMS against the relevant exhibit or miscellaneous property.

EFIMS Responsible Officer

COPS dictates who the responsible officer is for all EFIMS related matters (Exhibits and Forensic Information).

Where an Event is linked to a Case: the OIC of the Case is provided by COPS. As COPS is the "source of truth" it CANNOT be edited within EFIMS. The only way to now modify the OIC for EFIMS in this circumstance is to either:

1. Change the OIC details of a Case in COPS; or
2. Arrange for the un-linking of the Event(s) from the case.

Where an Event is not linked to a Case: the 'EFIMS Event Officer' is displayed as 'Responsible Officer' and can be maintained by anyone who can edit an Analysis Job, Collection Job (for exhibits) or a Scene Attendance Job.

<u>**Storage Locations**</u>

Exhibit Officer

Ensure storage location data for your command is accurate and up to date.

<u>**Forensic Services**</u>

All forensic Scene Attendance Jobs and Analysis Jobs are created, tracked and managed on EFIMS. In the event that operational requirements prevent this occurring, or EFIMS is not online, contact the forensic Service Provider for instructions. The request must be recorded contemporaneously in an officer's notebook for updating EFIMS when back online.

Forensic Scene Attendance Jobs recorded prior to the implementation of EFIMS remain in and are managed from within existing systems.

Request for Examinations

Record all requests for forensic services in EFIMS as either a scene attendance job or a forensic analysis job. All analysis jobs for exhibit examination for Crime Scene Services Branch must be triaged before the exhibits are conveyed to their respective units for examination.

Once the item has been accepted for examination, the respective unit will notify the officer in charge through EFIMS or otherwise, that the exhibit can be conveyed for examination.

The requesting officer needs to enter the details into the relevant fields. Include a description of the job request outlining the analysis requested and any information for the forensic service provider. Scene attendance jobs and analysis jobs submitted without information will be returned for clarification.

Service Providers and Workflow

There are a number of forensic Service Providers providing Scene Attendance Job types to operational police. The OIC selects the appropriate Scene Attendance Job which workflows to the Service Provider. EFIMS workflows the Job to the correct Service Provider based on the Incident location and Service Type selected.

It is best practice to consult with forensic Service Providers to ensure correct selection. The Service Provider can reject any job and will provide a reason for rejection as a 'Note' within the job.

Service Types and Scene Attendance Jobs

Ensure that comprehensive notes are supplied in the notes field to allow for correct triaging of the exhibits.

EFIMS interconnects forensic Service Providers and Scene Attendance job types to operational police. To simplify job selection, the Scene Attendance Jobs are grouped into Service Types.

It is important that the OIC when considering requesting a Scene Attendance Job ensure it is relevant to the investigation and/or goes towards proof of an element of the charge(s). If the OIC requires further information about the Scene Attendance Job contact the Service Provider.

Forensic Results

The Analysis Result provides information specific to the Service Type that was requested (e.g., DNA Analysis, Fingerprint Identification). The Service Provider may refer the OIC to the Notes, Exhibits or Files tab for further information.

Once the analysis job result has been recorded, and where required verified, the Service Provider will complete the job. The Crime Coordinator will receive an Alert on the EFIMS Dashboard informing them that a Result has been recorded.

ALL Forensic Results are now communicated to COPS by way of a Forensic Job being created on an Officers WORKOFF. It is the responsibility of the Crime Coordinator (or equivalent role in a specialist location) to generate Forensic Jobs for ALL Forensic Results in EFIMS. Please refer to the <u>EFIMS 2.2 – Results Actioning SOPs</u> for details on how to send a Forensic Result To COPS.

Officers are required to investigate each Forensic Result appropriately and record their actions in the "Job Reply" of the COPS Forensic Job before completing the job.

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