

GENERAL ORDER, OPERATIONS, NUMBER 10  
APRIL 3, 2001  
WATERLOO POLICE DEPARTMENT

A. SUBJECT:

Investigation of Criminal Offense Cases / Destruction of Field Notes

B. PURPOSE:

To provide a standardized, efficient and productive procedure for making preliminary and follow up investigations on criminal offenses reported to or coming to the attention of the Department and to fix the responsibility for said investigations.

C. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Department that the following procedures are adhered to by all employees, except when a more successful result can be accomplished by a reasonable deviation from the procedures and the deviation is authorized by a supervisor.

D. PROCEDURES:

1. Preliminary Investigations:

- a. The preliminary investigation of all criminal offenses and the entire investigation of some offenses reported to or known to employees of the Department shall be the responsibility of the employee(s) of the on duty Patrol Watch when the offense becomes known. An exception is an investigation initiated and conducted entirely by the Investigative Division.
- b. Each preliminary investigation shall be conducted promptly and as thoroughly as may be permitted, by the facts and circumstances of the offense, and by the time available to the preliminary investigator and other employees of the Patrol Watch. Every reasonable effort shall be made by the preliminary investigator and the Patrol Watch to identify and apprehend the perpetrator of the offense.
- c. In the event of a homicide or other major case, the Watch Commander shall promptly notify the following:
  1. Investigative supervisor

2. Crime Lab personnel

- d. Each preliminary investigation shall be accurately and completely documented on the Department "Offense Form" and appropriate accompanying forms with all pertinent information which is available or which can reasonably be obtained by the preliminary investigator.
- e. Each Offense Form and accompanying reports shall be submitted to the Watch Commander or supervisor for review. The reviewing supervisor shall inspect the report(s) for conformity to report writing instructions and for accuracy and completeness in content, to insure that all of the elements of the specific crime exist and that all solvability factors indicated are supported by documentation in the reports.

2. Case Screening and Assignment

a. Definitions

- 1. Case Screening: A process of evaluating criminal cases to determine which cases have a predicted solution potential as opposed to those cases which lack solution potential.
- 2. Solvability Factors: Conditions that exist in certain cases that have been recognized by researchers and the law enforcement community as indications that a degree of solution potential is present.

- b. During the preliminary investigation of criminal offenses, it shall be determined by the preliminary investigator if the following solvability factors are present and each factor present shall be so indicated on the Offense Form.

- 1. Primary Solvability Factors: Assign for follow up if one (1) factor is present.
  - a. Arrest made, follow up needed: Means that an arrest or juvenile custody has already been accomplished but follow up is needed, such as further interviews, statements or more arrests.
  - b. Suspect known, named, or identified: Means that the victim or someone else has told the investigator who committed the crime either by specific information, by name or by identifying the perpetrator.

- c. Suspect locatable: Means that an unnamed suspect can be located by an address, employment, hand out or other means.
  - d. Vehicle I.D. by license or description: Means that one or more specific vehicles used by the perpetrator(s) have been identified by license plate number and state or detailed description.
2. Secondary Solvability Factors: Assign for follow up if three (3) factors are present:
- a. Suspect described: Means a good, detailed physical description of the perpetrator has been obtained and/or something was unique about the appearance, clothing, etc. that would assist in the identification of the perpetrator.
  - b. Suspect familiar/previously seen: Means that although the victim or witness could not name or identify anyone, there is some possibility that the suspect's identity can be determined because of his familiarity or previous activity.
  - c. Significant evidence to link suspects: Means some physical evidence was discovered that would tend to identify the perpetrator. Example: billfold found at scene, latent fingerprints, etc.
  - d. Witness to crime: Means someone has been located who actually observed the crime committed and can provide detailed information.
  - e. Limited opportunity to commit: Means only one of a few persons could have committed this crime because they were the only person(s) who had an opportunity to do so. Example: a tenant in a duplex rents one side and shares the use of a locked basement with the tenant in the other side of the duplex. Property belonging to the first tenant disappears from where it was stored in the basement; there is no forced entry to the basement. There is a "Limited Opportunity to Commit" here because only the second tenant has access to the locked basement. This solvability factor is present as there is a probability that the second tenant is the perpetrator.

- f. Property traceable: Means serial numbers of property have been provided or other information is known that would find and identify stolen property.
  - g. Significant M.O. Pattern: Means a pattern has been recognized that would identify suspect(s) from past experience or link this case to other similar case or cases.
  - h. Vehicle described: Means a good description of a vehicle used by the perpetrator(s) has been provided but it is not detailed enough to pinpoint a specific vehicle.
- c. Certain cases due to their nature or public impact should always be assigned for follow up. Such cases are: all homicides, forcible rapes, armed robberies, serious aggravated assaults, bona fide missing persons and other cases as determined.
  - d. Other cases should only be assigned if a solution potential is present, therefore, if one (1) of the above primary solvability factors are present or if any combination of three (3) or more of the secondary solvability factors are present, the case shall be assigned for follow up, as the probability exists that further investigation will result in the case being closed.
  - e. The reviewing supervisor shall make a determination if a probability exists that the investigation could be closed with additional effort consistent with other duties by employees on that Patrol Watch. If there is such a determination, the case shall be assigned to the preliminary investigator or other Watch employees. If assigned to Patrol Watch employees, the reviewing supervisor shall mark "patrol" under "assigned follow up".
  - f. If the possibility exists that employees of the next oncoming Watch may successfully complete an investigation commenced by the preceding Patrol Watch, such cooperation between Patrol Watches is desirable and shall take place when possible. The case shall then be assigned by the oncoming Patrol Watch Supervisor who shall mark "patrol" under "assigned follow up".
  - g. If the reviewing supervisor determines that further investigation is warranted and that said investigation is beyond

the range of Patrol Watch capabilities, the supervisor shall mark "investigation" under "assigned follow up".

- h. The Offense Form and accompanying forms shall then be forwarded to the copy distribution process.
- i. A case received in the Investigative Division which is marked "investigation" under "assigned follow up", shall be analyzed by the appropriate Investigative Division Supervisor and assigned, if previously mentioned criteria are present.

3. Investigative Management Information System (IMIS) and Case Assignment/Prosecution Log (I.C.A.P. Log):

- a. A reviewing supervisor who assigns a case must fill out the ICAP Log and forward it to the Investigative Division for data entry into IMIS.
- b. An explanation of the ICAP Log status codes can be found on the back of the log.
- c. If a case is reviewed on or about its scheduled review date, the ICAP Log must be updated each time the case is reviewed with the status and next review date being filled in. The log must then be forwarded each time it is updated to the Investigative Division Supervisor for data update.
- d. When final Department action is taken, the ICAP Log must again be updated and forwarded to the Investigative Division.
- e. If the case is forwarded to the prosecutor (County Attorney), the ICAP Log must accompany the case/prosecution summary, etc. to capture the prosecutor's decision, date, and reason.
- f. If a case is reassigned, from one investigator to another, a second ICAP Log must be filled out for that case and forwarded to the Investigative Division.
- g. If a closed or inactive case is reactivated for further investigation, a second ICAP Log must be filled out and forwarded to the Investigative Division.

4. It will be the policy of the Waterloo Police Department that officer's **field notes** shall be destroyed once the information derived from the notes have been fully incorporated into the appropriate Department report forms.

Examples of Department report forms are, but not limited to: Incident Report Forms, Investigative Report Forms, Voluntary Statement Forms, etc.

- a. Field notes shall not be kept or maintained in any form.
- b. Field notes are defined as: All rough draft preliminary investigative/interview notes, not produced on official Department report forms.

By Order Of:

Thomas J. Jennings  
Chief of Police