

From: Skillen, Paul
Sent: Wednesday, 27 November 2013 11:39 PM
To: Wyllie, John; Sheridan, Scott; Holt, James; Ferguson, Jack
Subject: Systems and procedures surrounding possible crime scenes.

Hi All,

I just wanted to raise some issues that became apparent as a result of the hanging attempt at Delta 3 this morning, and they also relate to a number of incidents that we deal with on a semi regular basis.

It was very apparent from the incident this morning, that even basic scene preservation training is needed. There was little control over who was entering to what was essentially a potential crime scene. There is no facility (other than the gatehouse occurrence book) for a scene log to be set up, detailing all persons who enter or leave the scene and the times involved.

Also a number of people were handling the item of clothing that the client had tried to use as a ligature. Now I am not sure if PNG constabulary run to the use of DNA, but if they do, the item would have been very badly cross contaminated.

I photographed the items in situ once I arrived, but there has to be a chain of evidence, and some way we can prove that the photographs weren't tampered with in any way (coming over all technical for a second, if we photograph using RAW images the exif data details when the picture was taken and any changes to it)

Once the items were photographed, I seized them as evidence, however the only bags we had available to place them in was a black bin sack. This is not ideal as it is very difficult to seal properly, maintain a chain of evidence, cannot be viewed and opened without virtually destroying the bag, and in the case of clothing will effectively destroy any DNA, blood, or similar evidence as it will simply turn mouldy. Would it be possible to source some brown paper, double thickness, largish bags, big enough to put a thick jumper or similar in, which would be ample for most items we seize, and be relatively in-expensive.

Finally, we had no way of documenting the chain of evidence apart from on a scrap piece of paper. We ideally would need some purpose made exhibit labels, which are readily available commercially. I have already made enquiries with the local PNG constabulary officers, but they have run out at the moment. They have promised to provide some when they have fresh stocks. We also need to locate a secure area to store any potential evidence, somewhere big enough for numerous items, and secure enough that only certain staff (maybe duty ops managers) have a key.

If we are unlucky enough to have a death in custody, we may all end up before a PNG coroner, and these simple steps would assist us and the PNG constabulary greatly.

I submit this report for your information.

Regards

Paul Skillen

Supervisor

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