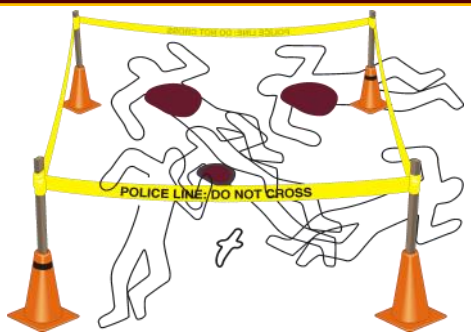
PROCESSING A MULTI-CASUALTY CRIME SCENE

LESSONS LEARNED

AFTER THE SHOOTING AT THE ACCENT SIGNAGE COMPANY



Excerpts from a presentation to the MNIAI by Minneapolis Police Department—Crime Lab

RECOMMENDATIONS

➜ Have a plan in place prior to any incident.

✓ Prior to Accent, we had nothing in place for how to deal with something of this scale.

✓ *Since we are a 24/7 team, we do not have a specified "on call" response team and staffing varies*

✓ Lab Supervisor is now the go to contact and will now act as lab/staffing coordinator. Typically responding to the lab as soon as possible.

✓ Define the roles of Supervisors

- Lab Coordinator
- Scene Coordinator
- Individuals willing to be called in

PERSONAL/STAFFING NEEDS

➜ *Don't overcompensate…hold off on bringing in an* army until you know what and where the war is!

✓ Advantage to having a CLU (Crime Lab Unit)

▪ 24/7 with overlapping shifts worked well for us. We were able to plan for coverage by utilizing personnel available

▪ Only one unscheduled person was called in (the lab supervisor). Too many would have been detrimental.

✓ Determination of needs can really only be done by responding to the scene (scene coordinator) then re-layed to the Lab Coordinator. Scene complexity will dictate staffing.

✓ Determine your processing needs (documentation, latents, blood spatter, etc.)

▪ This will let you know the size of the team you will need and when they would be required due to the order of processing.

▪ *Just because specific analysis is needed doesn't mean it is* needed right now.

✓ *Look ahead at the team's needs—Don't let people get too* fatigued. Plan for relief.

✓ Time needed for scene processing

▪ Is a second team needed?

▪ Do we need to secure the scene to get some rest?

✓ *Don't try to do too much with the personnel you have.*

▪ In our case, the lab Supervisor should have stayed behind to coordinate and maintain a presence in the lab.

▪ This created a gap in communication between the personnel on the scene and the personnel at the search warrant.

ON SITE

➜ Designate an appropriate staging area away from media and brass but in close proximity to supplies and evidence removal/storage

✓ *For a scene coordinator, find a "go to" investigator, a* point of contact.

✓ Recognize the need to manage people on scene (red tape scenario).

✓ Define a processing plan and delegate duties

▪ What is needed and when

▪ Who is going to perform these tasks

▪ Can processing overlap? (The physical size of the scene at Accent was an advantage here).

▪ Think of what you and others will want/need a year from now in terms of documentation, notes, and processing.

▪ Determine the needs of your personnel

▪ Water/food (Salvation Army/Red Cross) or have a CSO/ Reserve make a fast food run.

▪ Shelter (from the elements and from the media)

▪ Where to locate additional resources

▪ Help from outside agencies (Panoscan)

✓ Determine an exit strategy

▪ If and when the scene requires securing for a second team or a specialized response

▪ *Document what's been done*

▪ Exit meeting/debriefing with investigators

▪ Final walk though—use the entire team to walk the scene in it's entirety. "What have we forgotten or missed?"

COMMUNICATION

➜ Hindsight being 20/20, communication was our stumbling block for this crime scene.

✓ Breakdowns; These partially could have been averted by a scene coordinator

▪ HCSO and the Panoscan; full knowledge of their procedures

▪ HCMC; their arrival and CLU personnel not present

▪ *Investigators knowledge of victim's religious beliefs*

▪ Staying in touch with the investigators

▪ Constant updates as witnesses and victims talk with investigators

✓ Learning about investigative leads allows the story of the scene to evolve, which in turn allows you to make more informed decisions on processing.