



Best Practice Manual for Scene of Crime Examination

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<u>0</u>	
<u>1</u>	Content
<u>2</u>	
<u>3</u>	1. AIMS.....5
<u>4</u>	2. SCOPE5
<u>5</u>	3. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS.....5
<u>6</u>	4. RESOURCES7
<u>7</u>	4.1 Personnel7
<u>8</u>	4.1.1 Roles and Responsibility.....8
<u>9</u>	4.1.2 Competence Requirements.....8
<u>10</u>	4.1.3 Qualification and Experience.....9
<u>11</u>	4.1.4 Competencies9
<u>12</u>	4.1.5 Training and Assessment of Competence.....10
<u>13</u>	4.1.6 Maintenance and Reassessment of Competence10
<u>14</u>	4.1.7 Case Review11
<u>15</u>	4.1.8 Management Review12
<u>16</u>	4.1.9 Audit12
<u>17</u>	4.2 Equipment.....12
<u>18</u>	4.3 Reference materials13
<u>19</u>	4.4 Accommodation and environmental conditions.....13
<u>20</u>	4.4.1 Material storage area.....13
<u>21</u>	4.4.2 Dressing area.....14
<u>22</u>	4.4.3 Evidence area14
<u>23</u>	4.4.4 Dedicated areas14
<u>24</u>	4.4.5 Waste area.....14
<u>25</u>	4.5 Materials and Reagents14
<u>26</u>	5. METHODS.....14

<u>27</u>	5.1 Introduction	14
<u>28</u>	5.2 Generalist methodology	15
<u>29</u>	5.2.1 Upon arrival on site.....	15
<u>30</u>	5.2.2 First observation inside the crime scene	15
<u>31</u>	5.2.3 First examination at the crime scene	16
<u>32</u>	5.2.4 Second examination at the crime scene	16
<u>33</u>	5.2.5 Third examination at the crime scene	16
<u>34</u>	5.2.6 Trace examination outside crime scene.....	16
<u>35</u>	5.2.7 Final assessment briefing of examination carried out	16
<u>36</u>	5.2.8 Peer Review.....	16
<u>37</u>	6. VALIDATION AND ESTIMATION OF UNCERTAINTY OF MEASUREMENT	17
<u>38</u>	7. QUALITY ASSURANCE	17
<u>39</u>	7.1 Introduction	17
<u>40</u>	7.2 Purpose.....	18
<u>41</u>	7.3 Proficiency Testing/Collaborative Exercises	18
<u>42</u>	7.4 Documentation	18
<u>43</u>	7.5 Equipment.....	19
<u>44</u>	7.6 Material and Reagents.....	19
<u>45</u>	7.7 Accommodation.....	19
<u>46</u>	8. HANDLING ITEMS	19
<u>47</u>	8.1 Recovery of Forensic Evidence from the Crime Scene	19
<u>48</u>	8.2 Preservation and Packaging.....	20
<u>49</u>	8.3 Labelling and Documentation	20
<u>50</u>	8.4 Transport.....	21
<u>51</u>	9. INITIAL ASSESSMENT	21
<u>52</u>	9.1 Establishing the customer requirements.....	21
<u>53</u>	9.2 Feedback to/from customer	22
<u>54</u>	9.3 Case assessments.....	22
<u>55</u>	9.3.1 Introduction	22
<u>56</u>	9.3.2 Cognitive bias.....	22
<u>57</u>	9.3.3 Information requirements	23
<u>58</u>	9.4 Assessments at the scene.....	24
<u>59</u>	10. PRIORISATION AND SEQUENCE OF EXAMINATIONS	24
<u>60</u>	10.1 Undertaking the scene examination	24
<u>61</u>	10.2 Scene preservation	24
<u>62</u>	10.3 Documentation of the scene	26

<u>63</u>	10.3.1 Documentation of findings	26
<u>64</u>	10.4 Searching the scene	27
<u>65</u>	11. RECONSTRUCTION	27
<u>66</u>	12. EVALUATION AND INTERPRETATION	27
<u>67</u>	13. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS	28
<u>68</u>	13.1 Written Presentation of Findings	28
<u>69</u>	13.2 Oral Presentation of Findings	29
<u>70</u>	14. HEALTH AND SAFETY	29
<u>71</u>	15. REFERENCES	30
<u>72</u>	16. AMENDMENTS AGAINST PREVIOUS VERSION	30
<u>73</u>	APPENDIX: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY	31
<u>74</u>		
<u>75</u>		

76 **1. AIMS**

77
78 This Best Practice Manual (BPM) aims to provide a framework for procedures, quality principles,
79 training processes and approaches to the forensic examination.

80 This BPM can be used by ENFSI Member Institutes and other agencies to establish and
81 maintain working practices in the field of Scene of Crime Examination that will deliver reliable
82 results, optimize the quality of the information obtained and produce robust evidence. The use
83 of consistent methodology and the production of more comparable results will facilitate
84 interchange of data.

85
86 The term BPM is used to reflect the scientifically accepted practices at the time of creating. The
87 term BPM does not imply that the practices laid out in this manual are the only good practices
88 used in the forensic field. In this series of ENFSI Practice Manuals the term BPM has been
89 maintained for reasons of continuity and recognition.
90

91 **2. SCOPE**

92
93 This manual addresses the entire forensic process at the scene of crime as it is covered by the
94 standard ISO/IEC 17020 and ILAC-G19, from the arrival of the first officer at the crime scene to
95 the point where the report from the crime scene is written. It encompasses the systems,
96 procedures, personnel, equipment and accommodation requirements for the whole spectrum of
97 the process.

98
99 The process has various stages of action including the following:

- 100 • Undertaking initial actions at the scene
- 101 • Developing a scene investigation strategy
- 102 • Undertaking scene investigation
- 103 • Interpreting scene findings and order further examination
- 104 • Reporting findings

105 The law enforcement framework and the legal systems within which scene examination takes
106 place will determine the degree of direct control that an individual Scene of Crime Examiner
107 (SCE) has over each stage of a process, but even where he/she is not directly involved in any
108 particular stage he/she should still be in possession of comprehensive advice on best practice.
109

110 **3. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS**

111
112 In this document, the following definitions are used:

113
114 **Audit:** A systematic and independent examination to determine whether quality activities and
115 related results comply with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are
116 implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve objectives [ISO 8402: 1994 - 4.9].
117

118 **Calibration:** Operation that, under specified conditions, in a first step, establishes a relation
119 between the quantity values with measurement uncertainties provided by measurement
120 standards and corresponding indications with associated measurement uncertainties and, in a
121 second step, uses this information to establish a relation for obtaining a measurement result
122 from an indication [International vocabulary of metrology - Basic and general concepts and
123 associated terms ISO/IEC Guide 99: 2007 - 2.39, also known as JCGM 200: 2012].

124 Chain of custody: The chronological documentation that records the sequence of custody, control,
125 transfer, analysis, and disposition of evidence,
126

127 **Competence:** The ability to perform the task of a certain role by virtue of their training and/or
128 experience and demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities.
129

130 **Competence Assessment:** A formal assessment to check whether or not an individual meets
131 the standards of performance [QCC-CAP-006].
132

133 **Contamination:** Contamination is the undesirable introduction of substances or trace materials
134 to exhibits, which will be subject to forensic examination.
135

136 **Crime scene:** The term “crime scene” is used to identify a scene of incident prior to establishing
137 whether a criminal or illegal action has taken place or not. The crime scene is not solely restricted
138 to the location of the incident, but also includes areas where relevant acts were carried out
139 before or after the crime. Suspects and victims who are subject to an examination for the
140 recovery of forensic and/or medical evidence can also be considered to be crime scenes.
141

142 **Customer:** The customer is the authority/person(s) requiring the crime scene examination.
143 Whilst ultimately this is the Criminal Justice Service/Public Prosecutor and the public for all
144 practical purposes the customer is the senior investigating officer responsible for the outcome
145 of the investigation to which the crime scene is related.
146

147 **Documents, records:** As a rule, documents and records can be stored in either hard copy or
148 electronic form (on PC). For electronic storage, regulations must be in place governing access,
149 authorization and saving.
150

151 **Evidence:** Evidence is anything which may prove or disprove an assumption to be true, for
152 example an exhibit or the lack of expected findings.
153

154 **Exhibit:** An exhibit is an item or sample recovered as part of an investigation. This includes
155 everything recovered from a crime scene including swabs, whole objects, debris, etc. and
156 derived items like casts of footprints, finger mark lifts, etc.
157

158 **First Responder:** The first officer arriving at the crime scene. This person is responsible for all
159 immediate action taken at the scene of the crime. His responsibility ends when the officer
160 responsible for the crime scene takes over official responsibility for the crime scene
161 investigation. Also known as ‘first intervener’.
162

163 **Forensic process:** Forensic process is the gathering, evaluation and assessment of all types
164 of evidence using scientific procedures as well as the location, documentation and preservation
165 of evidence.
166

167 **Forensic Strategy:** Developed by the Senior Investigator this forms the foundation for the
168 application of forensic science to the investigation and will inform scene examination
169 plans/strategies.
170

171 **Investigator:** A person, trained to perform crime scene examinations and/or investigations.
172 Other names used for this function are Scene of Crime Officer (SOCO), Crime Scene
173 investigator, Crime Scene Examiner, etc.
174

175 **Management/Case Review:** A review of the case file and report, in each case, to ensure that
176 the customer's needs have been properly addressed, in compliance with laboratory policy and,
177 for the report, editorially correct.

178
179 **Quality Assurance:** All the planned and systematic activities implemented within the quality
180 system, and demonstrated as needed, to provide adequate confidence that an entity will fulfil
181 the requirements for quality [ISO 8402: 1994 - 3.5].

182
183 **Quality Control:** Operational techniques and activities that are used to fulfil the requirements
184 for quality [ISO 8402: 1994 - 3.4].

185 **Quality Management System (QMS):** This term is used to refer to the documented system
186 used for managing the technical aspects, quality, administrative procedures, etc. of an
187 organization.

188
189 **Scene of Crime Examiner (SCE):** A person competent to perform crime scene examinations.
190 Other names used for this function include Scene of Crime Officer (SOCO), Crime Scene
191 investigator, Crime Scene Examiner, etc.

192
193 **Scene Examination Plan/Strategies:** Devised by the SCE or Crime Scene Manager to meet
194 the requirements of the Forensic Strategy and to maximize the forensic opportunities.

195
196 **Standard Operation Procedure (SOP):** Authorized, documented specified way to carry out an
197 activity or process [ISO 21043-1: 2018]

198
199 **Trace Evidence/Material:** In the context of forensic examinations evidence types such as fibres,
200 hairs, glass, paint, soil, etc.

201
202 **Validation:** The confirmation by examination and the provision of effective evidence that the
203 particular requirements for a specific intended use are fulfilled [ISO 8402: 1994 - 2.18].

204
205 **Verification:** Where the techniques or procedures adopted have been validated elsewhere, the
206 organization is required to carry out a verification exercise to demonstrate that it can achieve
207 the same quality of results in its own environment.

208

209 **4. RESOURCES**

210

211 4.1 Personnel

212

213 People are likely to be the most important resource in any forensic application and in order to
214 allow staff to work effectively and efficiently everybody concerned in the process must
215 understand the nature of the tasks and the human qualities required to perform them.
216 Information is therefore provided in this manual that defines the key roles, the responsibilities
217 and also the competences required by these post holders.

218

219 Due to variations in the size of different organizations and variability within different operating
220 systems, absolute standardization of staffing cannot be achieved. It is also accepted that an
221 individual may be responsible for more than one of the defined roles and this manual states
222 where this is the case.

223

224

225

226 4.1.1 Roles and Responsibility

227

228 The key roles recognized for the examination of crime scenes are:

229

230

231

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244

- Scene of Crime Examiner – an individual whose primary role is the initial assessment at a crime scene and the subsequent collection of material for detailed scientific examination.
- Crime Scene Manager – The central role of the Crime Scene Manager (or equivalent) is to supervise the scene examination in a way that facilitates the input of specialists so that the maximum evidence and information is extracted from the scene. The Crime Scene Manager will be directly responsible to the Senior Investigator and the Scientific Support coordinator for the management of the crime scene.
- First Officer Responding - The first officer attending is responsible for all initial measures at the scene of a crime. This concerns police practices like aversion and termination of dangerous attacks, initial general assistance, first aid, calling for necessary assistance, including forensics and criminal procedures like protecting the crime scene area and avoid contamination.

245 Other roles are involved in the examination of crime scenes include:

246

247

248

249

250

251

252

253

254

- Crime Scene Coordinator
- Reporting Scientist
- Senior Investigator
- Forensic Medical Examiner
- Plan Drawer
- Firearms/Ballistics expert
- Exhibits Officer
- Coroner's Officer

255

256

257

An overview of these roles is provided in Appendix. However, the qualifications and required competencies are only defined for the main roles detailed above.

258 4.1.2 Competence Requirements

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261

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275

ENFSI wishes to promote consistent and reliable scientific evidence throughout the whole forensic process from the scene of crime to court. An aim of this is the policy of ENFSI that members strive to have a formal and documented system for the assessment of competence of their forensic practitioners and must accept and abide by the ENFSI Code of Conduct (reference number BRD-GEN-003). The competence assurance system shall be an integral part of the quality system according to ISO/IEC 17025 and/or ISO/IEC 17020.

The qualifications, competencies and experience that individuals require to carry out the various aspects of crime scene examination will depend on the intellectual and practical demands of the various aspects of the work. This manual identifies the standards of competence required for individuals to undertake the particular aspects of work, the training required and the assessments that will be applied.

276 4.1.3 Qualification and Experience

277
278 The practitioner should be educated to an appropriate standard and successfully completed
279 recognized training as defined by his/her own organization. The ENFSI Scene of Crime Working
280 Group (Soc WG) is currently working towards developing an agreed European Scene of Crime
281 Examiner curriculum.
282

283 4.1.4 Competencies

284
285 Performance Based Standards for Forensic Science Practitioners have been developed by the
286 ENFSI QCC Competence Assurance Project (CAP) Group for use by all ENFSI forensic science
287 practitioners, (reference to QCC-CAP-003).
288

289 The standards are presented in a generic format. They cover the 'forensic' process from the
290 actions of the first officer attending the scene, through scene examination, examination in the
291 laboratory, interpretation and reporting to presenting evidence in court. They are not
292 prescriptive. They recognize that there may be more than one acceptable way of carrying out a
293 task.
294

295 The standards are written in terms of outcomes. They give the desired outcome of carrying out
296 a task. In other words, they describe **WHAT** a competent practitioner should be able to achieve
297 but they do not describe **HOW** that outcome is achieved. In addition, they indicate the knowledge
298 and understanding that a forensic practitioner needs to achieve competent performance.
299

300 The standards relevant to crime scene examination are contained within the following activities:

- 301 • Activity A: Undertake initial actions at the scene of the incident
- 302 • Activity B: Develop a scene investigation strategy
- 303 • Activity C: Undertake the scene investigation
- 304 • Activity D: Interpret scene findings and order further examination
- 305 • Activity I: Documentation of findings

306 The following experience and areas of competence would be expected as the minimum standard
307 for the key roles defined above, in crime scene examination:
308

309 **First officer attending** – knowledge of procedures (including health and safety requirements)
310 applicable to undertaking initial actions at the scene of an incident. This includes ensuring control
311 is taken of the scene so that it is protected for those individuals who carry out detailed
312 investigation of the scene.
313

- 314 • Activity A: Undertake initial actions at the scene of the incident
- 315 ○ Standard A1: Undertake initial preservation and control actions at the scene
316

317 **Scene of Crime Examiner** – knowledge of the theories, techniques and procedures (including
318 health and safety requirements) applicable are:
319

- 320 • Activity A: Undertake initial actions at the scene of the incident
- 321 ○ Standard A1: Undertake initial preservation and control actions at the scene
322
- 323 • Activity B: Develop a scene investigation strategy
- 324 ○ Standard B1: Determine the requirements of the investigation

- 325 ○ Standard B2: Make assessment of the scene and determine requirements
326

327 NB. The development of a scene investigation strategy for complex incidents will become the
328 responsibility of a multi-disciplinary team of police investigators and forensic practitioners,
329 including experts/specialists. The Scene of Crime Examiner should only undertake this activity
330 within the parameters of their knowledge, training, experience and local requirements.
331

- 332 ● Activity C: Undertake the scene investigation
333 ○ Standard C1: Establish and preserve control of the scene
334 ○ Standard C2: Prepare to examine the scene
335 ○ Standard C3: Examine the scene
336 ○ Standard C4: Collect potential evidence material
337 ○ Standard C5: Pack items and samples
338
- 339 ● Activity D: Interpret scene findings and order further examination
340 ○ Standard D1: Analyse the likely sequence of events
341 ○ Standard D2: Decide on which items and samples are to be examined further
342 ○ Standard D3: Transfer the items to the designated locations
343 ○ Standard D4: Store items and samples
344
- 345 ● Activity I: Documentation of findings
346 ○ Standard I1: Produce report
347 ○ Standard I2: Participate in consultation before trial
348 ○ Standard I3: Present oral evidence to courts and inquiries
349

350 **Crime Scene Manager (or equivalent)** – knowledge/awareness of the theories, techniques and
351 procedures (including health and safety requirements) applicable to Activities A – D & I as above.
352 As this role includes the management and supervision of staff it is expected that they will
353 demonstrate competence in these areas.
354

355 4.1.5 Training and Assessment of Competence 356

357 Training programs and processes for assessing those trainees have achieved the required level
358 of competence. (reference to QCC-CAP-006).
359

360 Scene of Crime Examiners need to maintain and have evidence that demonstrates on-going
361 competence. It is generally agreed that practitioners should be carrying out scene examinations
362 on a regular basis. All training and the outcome of the assessments should be documented on
363 the individual's training records.
364

365 A trainee should be recognized as competent only when he or she has been assessed as
366 meeting the defined standards of performance and only then be permitted to undertake scene
367 examination under the minimum of supervision, in the relevant area.
368

369 4.1.6 Maintenance and Reassessment of Competence 370

371 4.1.6.1 Maintenance of Competence 372

373 Individuals will be required to demonstrate that they have maintained their competence. There
374 should be a system of ongoing assessment. A complete reassessment should be performed at

375 regular intervals in accordance with the organizational quality management systems
376 procedures.

377
378 Guidance should be provided on the assessment and the sources of evidence required for the
379 ongoing assessment of competence(s) in any particular work area for each of the role types
380 involved.

381
382 Evidence to maintain competence should reflect recent work and actual knowledge/experience.
383

384 Examples of these sources of evidence are:
385

- 386 ● successful involvement in a specified number of examinations of that type in the previous
387 period of time
- 388 ● documentary evidence of examinations reproduced by other 'competent' members of
389 staff
- 390 ● peer review (including re-examination of exhibits)
- 391 ● performance in competence tests
- 392 ● assessment through internal and external audits
- 393 ● feedback including customer and defence examinations
- 394 ● evidence of registration by an external accreditation body on competence assessment
- 395 ● review of a portfolio of recent and actual experience (court performance, publications,
396 training, projects, workshops, seminars, conferences, etc.)
- 397 ● validation projects

398
399 *4.1.6.2 Reassessment of Competence due to change of Circumstances*
400

401 If an individual cannot produce documents to show that he/she has actively carried out work in
402 the relevant area within a period of time, the competency of this individual should be deemed to
403 have lapsed. This should also be deemed the case if the assessor is not satisfied with the quality
404 of the documents produced.

405
406 In such instances a development plan should be put in place to facilitate any required
407 refresher/new learning to enable the individual to re-attain a competent standard.
408

409 Before individuals can carry out casework requiring the competency, they must demonstrate
410 that they have regained a competent standard. For this re-assessment a procedure should have
411 been developed.
412

413 For example, by means of:
414

- 415 ● practical tests
- 416 ● written and oral examinations
- 417 ● role exercises, e.g. simulated court situations
- 418 ● scene examinations conducted under close supervision
- 419 ● a portfolio of previous work

420
421 *4.1.7 Case Review*
422

423 It is important in certain aspects of crime scene examinations that protocols for case review are
424 established. These may include:
425

- 426 • statements/reports should be reviewed by line manager or competent individual to
427 ensure they comply with organizational requirements and legal frameworks
428 • review (walkthrough) of a major crime scene by a competent individual
429

430 A written document of these checks must be made on the case notes, bearing the signatures of
431 both the Scene of Crime Examiner and the reviewer/peer.
432

433 4.1.8 Management Review 434

435 A fundamental aim of management review is that the customer's requirements have been
436 adequately addressed and that a value for money service has been provided.
437

438 Management review may include:
439

- 440 • Key Performance Indicators
441 • Customer satisfaction
442 • Data on detections
443

444 4.1.9 Audit 445

446 Audits covering all aspects of crime scene examination (operational, research and development,
447 training etc.) should be conducted on a regular and planned basis by an appropriate individual
448 in conjunction with the QA Manager.
449

450 Where scene examinations are reviewed in audits, they should normally be chosen randomly.
451

452 Documents of each audit must be kept. These must include the date of the audit, the name of
453 the auditor, the findings and any corrective actions necessary.
454

455 All corrective actions must be designated to a nominated, appropriate individual for completion
456 by an agreed specified date. The QA Manager should ensure that the action is completed as
457 agreed.
458

459 4.2 Equipment 460

461 The search, localization, documentation and collection techniques applied at the crime scene
462 examination are directly linked with the type of equipment available for the SCE to perform the
463 examination in a correct way.
464

464 There is a huge diversity of equipment used in conducting a crime scene examination.
465

466 The equipment available for Crime Scene Examination should preferably include:
467

- 468 • Personal Protective Equipment (gloves, overalls, mask, booties, etc.)
469 • Photographic camera, filters and tripod
470 • Video Camera
471 • Flashlights
472 • Metrical and ABFO scales, numbers, arrows
473 • Different types/sizes of sterile packaging
474 • Different types/sizes of sterile containers
475 • Evidence seals/tape
476 • Measuring devices

- 477 ● Tweezers
- 478 ● Forensic light source and viewing filters
- 479 ● Fingerprint powders
- 480 ● Fingerprint brushes
- 481 ● Sterile swabs
- 482 ● Presumptive tests (blood, semen, saliva, etc.)
- 483 ● Footwear casting materials
- 484 ● Electrostatic Dust Lifter
- 485 ● Lifters/ casting materials
- 486 ● Metal detector
- 487 ● Tool Kit
- 488 ● Shovels/trowels
- 489 ● Chemical enhancement supplies
- 490 ● Disinfectant
- 491 ● Marking evidence flags,
- 492 ● Cords/strings
- 493 ● Forceps
- 494 ● Tape
- 495 ● Etc.

496
497 Quality assurance procedures of equipment are described in 7.4 and 7.5.

498
499 4.3 Reference materials

500
501 When the SCE is competent to carry out presumptive testing, reference material (e.g. blood,
502 semen. etc.) should be used before testing to confirm the validity of the results.

503
504 4.4 Accommodation and environmental conditions

505
506 When necessary, the scene of crime should be protected from environmental effects (rain, heat,
507 sunlight, snow, etc.) by using appropriate equipment such as tents and cover sheets.

508 All items recovered from the crime scene should be stored in a secure place to prevent the
509 contamination or degradation of the evidence.

510
511 Accommodation should guarantee:

- 512 ● separation between incompatible activities in order to prevent cross contamination
- 513 ● details of any access control measures that are necessary, from the point of view of
- 514 anti-contamination control and security
- 515 ● the measures required to ensure good housekeeping and any special requirements
- 516 when appropriate

517
518
519 Basic accommodation that should be available at the scene is described in 4.4.1 - 4.4.5.

520
521 4.4.1 Material storage area

522
523 Protected space for safely store all the equipment, material and the chemicals. This area could
524 be physically adjacent or separated from the scene of crime.

529 4.4.2 Dressing area

530
531 Area used to dress up with appropriate PPE before accessing the scene of crime. Access to
532 other personnel who do not intervene in security at the scene of crime should not be allowed.
533

534 4.4.3 Evidence area

535
536 Protected space for safely store all the items collected from the crime scene. The items should
537 be proper packaged and temporarily stored in this dedicated area until the end of the crime
538 scene examination. Attention must be paid to contamination with respect to other forensic traces.
539

540 4.4.4 Dedicated areas

541
542 Vehicle examination areas should be considered and where possible those should be close to
543 the laboratory or located in a protected space, like a garage.
544

545 4.4.5 Waste area

546
547 Protected space for safe storage of waste.
548

549 4.5 Materials and Reagents

550
551 There is a significant diversity of materials and reagents for use in conducting a crime scene
552 examination. The SCE only should use validated materials and reagents.

553 The materials and reagents used in a Crime Scene Examination are, among the others, the
554 following:

- 555
- 556 • Fingerprint powders
 - 557 • Small Particle Reagent
 - 558 • Cyanoacrylate
 - 559 • Ninhydrin
 - 560 • Amido Black
 - 561 • Leuco Cristal Violet
 - 562 • Hungarian Red
 - 563 • Coomassie Blue
 - 564 • Presumptive tests for Blood, Saliva; Urine and Semen
 - 565 • Presumptive tests for cooper and iron
 - 566 • Luminol
 - 567 • BlueStar
 - 568 • Etc.
- 569
570

571 **5. METHODS**

572
573 5.1 Introduction

574
575 The methodology used in a particular crime scene examination depends on the customer
576 requirements (e.g. only the search and collection of a type of traces or a full crime scene
577 examination), the size and characteristics of the crime scene (e.g. open space, in a house, in a
578 vehicle, etc.) and also the environmental conditions.

579 Also, the resources available (human, equipment and materials) have an important role to define
580 the working methodology.

581
582 Normally we can classify the criminal actions in two types:

- 583
- 584 • Volume Crime: Normally this category includes minor crimes such as fraud or burglary.
585 It is not possible to precisely define which crimes fall into this category as they vary from
586 state to state. Include the majority of offences which are committed.
587
- 588 • Major crime: Comprises of serious incidents like homicide, attempted homicide,
589 manslaughter sexual assaults and other serious offences. The impact of major crime on
590 force resources is significant. The SCEs must carry out in-depth investigations.
591

592 Although it is not possible to give a working methodology that describe the process in a precise
593 way for both cases, generally we normally have:

- 594
- 595 • a fast but effective search for evidence in the volume crime scenes
- 596 • a complete extensive search for evidence in the major crime scenes
597

598 5.2 Generalist methodology

599
600 Taking in consideration all the above remarks, we can define the following generalist
601 methodology:

602 5.2.1 Upon arrival on site

603
604 Upon arrival at the crime scene the SCE (or the CSM) shall gather all available information,
605 analyse the outside of the isolated or enclosed area (by the first officer), to observe whether
606 traces are in danger of destruction (in that situation they should be collected immediately). Also,
607 verify if the tapes that mark and isolate the location are correctly placed and try to identify the
608 pathways, in and out, used by the perpetrators.
609

610
611 With this initial effort, the aim is not only to protect all possible existing traces outside the site,
612 but also to carry out the first global assessment, which allow the SCE (or the CSM) to plan and
613 distribute the set of tasks and activities to be performed.
614

615 5.2.2 First observation inside the crime scene

616
617 After carrying out the above actions, the SCE (or CSM) should enter inside the crime scene in
618 order to be able to make the first assessment of the events that occurred within the scene.

619
620 In this first entry, the following procedures must take place:

- 621
- 622 • make a general framing photo report from inside the crime scene (frozen the scene)
- 623 • thoroughly analyse and search for traces at the crossing points to create access routes
624 in to the interior of the crime scene
- 625 • mark and protect all traces that are located, preventing their contamination/destruction

626 If there is a corpse on the site, access routes should be created and the area around it must
627 be searched to preserve and collect any possible traces.
628

629 At the end of this first site observation, all general photographs must have been taken.

630 After the first observation the SCE (or CSM) shall define in a clear and methodical manner how
631 the search and trace collection work at that location will be carried out. If there are traces in
632 danger of being lost or contaminated, they must be marked, photographed (framed and
633 detailed), collected and described in the relevant form. The first sketch of the crime scene should
634 also be made.

635
636 During the examination, all members of the team should be in permanent contact and all
637 information gathered should be promptly communicated to the CSM (or the investigator).
638

639 5.2.3 First examination at the crime scene

640
641 After carefully observing the crime scene, all visible traces must be collected and marked for
642 this purpose (logically according to the places of collection and the facts), photographed
643 (framing and details), described in the crime scene examination form and identified in the
644 crime scene sketch.

645 If there is a corpse at the scene of the crime, it should, whenever possible, be examined first for
646 better interpretation of the events and also to be transported to the forensic pathologist office as
647 soon as possible. The examination of the corpse at the scene must be carried out by a forensic
648 pathologist.

649
650 5.2.4 Second examination at the crime scene

651
652 Next, all not visible traces should be searched and collected using the available equipment (e.g.
653 forensic light sources have an important role). For this purpose they must be marked (logically
654 according to the places of collection and facts), photographed (framing and detail), described in
655 the crime scene examination form and identified in the crime scene sketch.

656
657 5.2.5 Third examination at the crime scene

658
659 After all visible and not visible traces have been collected, a final general examination of the
660 crime scene should be carried out, where the inside of the furniture and objects will be searched
661 and removed to find any traces that might have not been viewed in previous searches.

662
663 5.2.6 Trace examination outside crime scene

664
665 After all traces have been collected at the crime scene, an outside search should be carried out
666 to identify and detect possible traces (visible and not visible) there. For this purpose, they must
667 be marked (logically according to the places of collection and facts), photographed (general,
668 framing and detail), described in the crime scene examination form and identified in the crime
669 scene sketch.

670
671 5.2.7 Final assessment briefing of examination carried out

672
673 After the crime scene examination has been completed the SCE (or CSM) conducts an
674 assessment/ interpretation briefing to the investigative authority investigators of the observed
675 facts and/or traces collected, with the aim of assessing the customer requirements of the activity
676 carried out.

677 5.2.8 Peer Review
678 If applicable, peer review is handled through the organizational SOPs.

679
680

681 **6. VALIDATION AND ESTIMATION OF UNCERTAINTY OF MEASUREMENT**

682
683 Validation

684
685 Validation is the confirmation by examination and the provision of effective evidence that the
686 particular requirements for a specific intended use are fulfilled.

687
688 For established technical procedures documents of the validation should be retained and be
689 available for inspection.

690
691 The scene of crime examiner should use only validated techniques and procedures for the
692 examination of crime scenes.

693
694 Validation requires as a minimum that:

- 695
- 696 • there is an agreed requirement for the technique or procedure
 - 697 • the critical aspects of the technique or procedure have been identified and the limitations
698 defined
 - 699 • the methods, materials and equipment used have been demonstrated to be fit for
700 purpose, robust and reliable in meeting the requirement
 - 701 • there are appropriate quality control and quality assurance procedures in place for
702 monitoring performance
 - 703 • the technique or procedure is fully documented
 - 704 • the results obtained are reliable and reproducible
 - 705 • the technique or procedure has been subjected to independent assessment, and where
706 novel, preferably also peer review
 - 707 • the individuals using the technique or procedure have been trained and have
708 demonstrated that they are competent

709
710 Where the techniques or procedures adopted have been validated elsewhere, the organization
711 is required to carry out a verification exercise to demonstrate that it can achieve the same quality
712 of results in its own environment.

713
714 Estimation of uncertainty of measurement

715
716 The estimation of uncertainty can be determined at the end of the validation process.

717
718 **7. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

719
720 7.1 Introduction

721
722 Given the precise and critical nature of forensic examinations, it is highly desirable that it can be
723 demonstrated that there are effective quality control and quality assurance measures in place.
724 The ENFSI Members wish to promote consistent and reliable evidence throughout the whole
725 forensic process, from scene of incident to court. As one part of this aim, it is the policy of the
726 ENFSI Members that all Member organizations should have achieved, or should be taking steps
727 towards, ISO 17020 compliant accreditation for their crime scene examination activities. In
728 determining this policy, the ENFSI Members accept that progress will be slower in some
729 countries than in others for a number of reasons, including differences in national accreditation
730 systems and differences in the operation of legal systems. Where ISO 17020 compliant

731 accreditation cannot be achieved, the ENFSI Members encourage the use of other quality
732 management standards with broadly equivalent objectives.

733
734 7.2 Purpose

735
736 The purpose of this section of the Manual is to provide advice to Member organizations that will
737 assist them to put into place a quality system that will provide a systematic approach to crime
738 scene examinations so as to establish and maintain working practices that will provide reliable
739 and fit for purpose results. The approach should also ensure that the quality of the derived
740 information is maximized and therefore provide robust evidence. Adherence to the guidelines
741 should also provide a greater degree of consistency across organizations which will, in turn,
742 facilitate the interchange of data and the construction of meaningful databases.

743
744 7.3 Proficiency Testing/Collaborative Exercises

745
746 ISO 17020 does not include any requirement for proficiency testing. However, proficiency tests
747 (PT) and/or collaborative exercises (CE) should be used to test and assure the working quality
748 and the competence of the practitioners within an organization. The document called "Guidance
749 on the conduct of proficiency tests and collaborative exercises within ENFSI" (QCC-PT-001
750 issue number 001 27/06/2014) provides information for the ENFSI Expert Working Groups
751 (EWGs) on how to organize PTs and CEs for their members. At least one PT/CE test per year,
752 if available, should be done.

753
754 7.4 Documentation

755
756 The organization should have a documented Quality Management System for controlling all
757 systems, processes and methods used in the examination of crime scenes.

758
759 The QMS should include requirements for the following minimum documentation relating to
760 crime scene examination to be maintained:

- 761
- 762 ● Casework administration procedures:
 - 763 ○ details of systems for the safe storage of casework material
 - 764 ○ records of all transfers of possession of casework material, for proof of the chain
765 of evidence
 - 766 ○ records of all relevant communications
 - 767 ○ details and results of all examinations carried out
 - 768 ○ original crime scene examination notes and statements/reports
 - 769 ○ records of case file review
 - 770 ● Equipment:
 - 771 ○ inventories of equipment held and those responsible for them
 - 772 ○ documents of commissioning, suitability for purpose and validation records
 - 773 ○ maintenance schedules and records of breakdowns, work carried out etc.
 - 774 ○ calibration records
 - 775
 - 776 ● Materials and chemicals:
 - 777 ○ documents of acceptance testing
 - 778
 - 779 ● Documents and standard operating procedures:
 - 780 ○ for the examinations and processes used
 - 781 ○ for calibration and quality control
 - 782 ○ for documentation and presenting results

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- Training:
 - competence standards, training programs and assessment protocols
 - training packages
 - training/competence records for individuals

7.5 Equipment

The equipment inventory should record the manufacturer, model, serial number, date of acquisition, date placed in service and the current location for each piece of equipment.

The manufacturer's operating manual for each item of equipment should be readily available at the work place together with the repair and maintenance documents.

The performance of each item of equipment should be checked in accordance with the requirements of the examination document and records kept.

Only appropriate and properly operating equipment should be employed in crime scene examination, and then only within the limits of the performance checks carried out.

7.6 Material and Reagents

All materials and reagents used for crime scene examination should be of a suitable quality and have been demonstrated as fit for purpose.

Reagents should be shown to be functioning correctly with a reference sample prior to their use in casework. The results of these tests should be documented.

All reagents, whether produced internally or obtained from external suppliers, should be labelled with their identity, concentration (if appropriate), date of preparation or receipt, date of opening, date of expiry and any special storage or safety requirements necessary to comply with organizational policy or other regulations.

7.7 Accommodation

Any items recovered from the crime scene for storage or further examination should be handled with an appropriate way which prevents the contamination or degradation of the evidence. In some instances, such as DNA recovery, an appropriate environment will be an ISO 17025 accredited laboratory.

Accommodation should ensure:

- segregation between incompatible activities in order to prevent cross contamination
- details of any access control measures that are necessary, both from the point of view of anti-contamination control and security
- recommendations on the measures required to ensure good housekeeping, detailing any special requirements as appropriate

8. HANDLING ITEMS

8.1 Recovery of Forensic Evidence from the Crime Scene

834 Before exhibits are recovered, the forensic unit should consider the conditions encountered on-
835 site to ensure that the exhibits can be documented and recovered with as little disturbance as
836 possible. Consideration should be given as to the sequence in which samples are taken.

837
838 Seized material should be handled to avoid contamination or destruction/degradation.
839 Control/reference materials must be kept strictly separate from any surfaces, items, clothing or
840 people with whom it might subsequently be significant to establish contact.

841
842 Recovery of exhibits and sampling will be case specific and reference should be made to
843 organizational SOPs to ensure that the appropriate samples are taken and are truly
844 representative of the material available.

845
846 Consideration should be given to the following general points in the advice:

- 847
- 848 ● the order/sequence of sampling
 - 849 ● identifying the right items to sample and how to ensure they are representative
 - 850 ● the minimum amount of material required to obtain meaningful results for interpretative
851 purposes
 - 852 ● the amount and number of separate control samples required
 - 853 ● guidance on methods for sampling that aid/assure the prevention of cross contamination
 - 854 ● the need to preserve material for subsequent analysis by others (prosecution or defence)
- 855

856 8.2 Preservation and Packaging

857
858 The material for recovery needs to be protected from interference or alteration and from the
859 possibility of subsequent degradation and contamination. Consideration of health and safety
860 issues must also be made. Suitable containment is normally achieved through the selection and
861 correct use of approved packaging material. Packaging materials must be appropriate for the
862 given applications and compliant with your organizational SOPs.

863
864 Precautions must be taken to ensure the integrity of evidence, reduce the risk of contamination
865 and minimize degradation. These will include:

- 866
- 867 ● sealing containers to prevent accidental loss or contamination
 - 868 ● providing adequate protection to containers during transportation and storage to prevent
869 damage and hence subsequent loss or contamination of samples
 - 870 ● checking items at all stages of transfer throughout the chain of custody to ensure that
871 their integrity has not been compromised
 - 872 ● all items should be packed and sealed as soon as they are taken, using bags or
873 containers of an appropriate size
- 874

875 Packages should be sealed in such a way that all gaps are covered and secure, e.g. folded bags
876 should be sealed with adhesive tape along all open edges and not by stapling.

877 Once sealed, packages should not be re-opened outside of the laboratory environment. If under
878 exceptional circumstances they are re-opened then comprehensive documentation detailing the
879 conditions under which they are opened must be made.

880 881 8.3 Labelling and Documentation

882
883 To guarantee the integrity of the item, it is essential to be able to prove who has handled which
884 item and what he/she has done with it. The organization must have SOPs to describe how items

885 and evidential material recovered from an incident should be logged and labelled at the time of
886 seizure, where appropriate.

887
888 The crime scene examination must be comprehensively documented. Documentation may
889 include hand written notes, voice recorded notes, taking information directly onto computer,
890 sketches and diagrams, photographs, video recordings, etc.

891
892 Contemporaneous documents should be made at the time of seizure of items from the scene
893 describing the exact locations from where the items were recovered. It is also helpful to mark
894 this location on a sketch/plan of the scene or person.

895
896 Labels should be attached to each package at the time of packaging. Whilst the legal status and
897 use of labels can vary, the minimum details that should be recorded and be directly and
898 unequivocally attributed to each package are:

- 899
- 900 ● a unique identifying number/barcode
 - 901 ● the name of the person and organization (e.g. police force, pathology department, etc.)
902 responsible for collecting and packaging the material
 - 903 ● a concise and accurate description of the material
 - 904 ● the location or person from where or from whom the material has been seized
 - 905 ● the date and time the material was seized
- 906

907 8.4 Transport

908
909 SOPs should include reference to transportation arrangements including reference to any
910 constraints governing the movement of materials of interest.

911 These should include:

- 912
- 913 ● local postal restrictions
 - 914 ● regulations limiting the movement of 'dangerous' materials (e.g. flammable materials,
915 compressed gases, pathogenic organisms, etc.)
 - 916 ● the need for import/export licenses when moving materials (e.g. drugs) across national
917 frontiers
- 918

919 The method of transport should be chosen to ensure that the integrity and state of preservation
920 of the materials is maintained. The mechanisms for maintaining full records of all involved in the
921 transportation should also be covered, so that the chain of custody is complete.

922

923 **9. INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

924 9.1 Establishing the customer requirements

925
926 The decision for a SCE to attend any given crime scene will be made in reference to the
927 organizations scene attendance criteria and related policies. This may also include response to
928 current local crime trends.

929
930 It is essential before starting any examination at a scene to understand, or agree with the
931 customer, the purpose of the examination requested. This should be expressed in terms of what
932 the customer is seeking to establish rather than a menu of tasks to be carried out.

933
934 Documents should be in place to determine:
935

- 936
- 937
- 938
- 939
- 940
- 941
- what information is being requested in respect of scene examinations
 - the customer's priorities for the investigation
 - what other information is or may be available
 - what constraints may exist (e.g. the need to preserve material for other purposes, cost)
 - the intended end use of the information, i.e. intelligence or evidence

942 This may be defined in the forensic strategy for the investigation. All scene examinations should
943 be carried out within the parameters of the forensic strategy. These considerations should be
944 included in the final report.

945 9.2 Feedback to/from customer

946 It is also important to have in place communication protocols for feedback to, and from, the
947 customer as their requirements may change before, during or as a result of scene examination.
948 Issues that may affect the requirement or priorities include:

- 949
- 950
- 951
- changes in the direction of the investigation
 - changes in the status of a scene, e.g. weather conditions
 - changes in the status of suspects and victims
 - changes in the urgency for information
 - new and significant information coming to light
 - the impact of results already reported
 - contamination issues

952 9.3 Case assessments

953 9.3.1 Introduction

954 Whether examining the scene of an incident, recovering potential evidential material from a
955 suspect or victim, or dealing with material to be examined in the laboratory, the next step should
956 be to assess what is technically possible and what is necessary in order to meet the customer's
957 requirement.

958 The general approach to case assessment will be the same regardless of the evidence types
959 involved and an individual's involvement in an investigation. This manual provides advice on the
960 general aspects of case assessment but the detail, which will apply to specific crime scene
961 examinations will be defined within each organization's SOPs.

962 Any work carried out will be to meet a particular customer requirement. At each stage, however,
963 it is important that the course of action selected is based on an assessment of information
964 available at the time and this may change.

965 9.3.2 Cognitive bias

966 This BPM does not cover all different categories of cognitive bias but can point out the most
967 critical facts to be aware of when conducting a crime scene examination.

968 It is essential to guard against bias during the crime scene examination where many processes
969 require subjective evaluations and interpretations.

970

- 986 • Risk of bias is lower when results are clear and unambiguous and greater when results
987 are complex, of poor quality and there is an increased reliance on subjective opinion.
988
- 989 • Risks are lower when there is a methodical approach with defined standards built on
990 principles that have been tested and validated, and greater when the approach is
991 unresearched, ad hoc and personal to the SCE.
992
- 993 • Risk are lower when SCE are well trained, experienced and continuously meet
994 acceptable standards of competence - they are greater when SCE are inexperienced,
995 unmonitored and left to adopt their own approach.
996
- 997 • Risks are lower when interpretation is checked by a competent peer who conducts a
998 separate interpretation fully independent and without influence from a reporting scientist.
999 Risks are lower when checking is more less rigorous and/or conducted collaboratively.

1000
1001 It is important that the SCE avoids being misled during the entire process of the crime scene
1002 investigation, particularly during the information gathering stage and initial assessment of the
1003 crime scene. The SCE should always bear in mind that information provided by first
1004 responder(s), investigators, victim(s), suspect(s) and witnesses may have been affected by their
1005 interpretation of the event, or could even be false.
1006

1007 This does not mean that the SCE shall shield themselves from interacting with investigators, but
1008 they must be aware of and understand that bias can occur.
1009

1010 9.3.3 Information requirements

1011
1012 The type and extent of the information that will be required to make a proper assessment of the
1013 crime scene will vary from case to case. However, as a minimum, the following information
1014 should be sourced:
1015

- 1016 • what is suspected or known to have occurred before, during and after the incident
- 1017 • the persons involved
- 1018 • the sequence and timings of events
- 1019 • the nature and characteristics of the items that may have come into contact
- 1020 • the persons responsible for and the sequence and timing of events in the recovery of
1021 items submitted for examination
- 1022 • what kind of protective measures have been used by first responders on the scene
1023 before SCE arrives
1024

1025 This information may be obtained from several sources including the initial incident recording,
1026 the first responder, the investigating officer, the victim(s) and witnesses.
1027

1028
1029 During the scene assessment consideration should also be given to the potential occurrence of
1030 contamination, that is, the undesirable introduction of substances or trace materials to exhibits
1031 which will be subject to forensic examination.
1032

1033 In order to assess contamination risks, it is necessary to establish whether:

- 1034 • there was any opportunity for transfer between the suspect(s) and victims(s) prior to the
1035 incident
1036

- 1037
- 1038
- 1039
- 1040
- 1041
- 1042
- 1043
- there has been any opportunity for transfer between the suspect(s) and victim(s) and the scene, or items seized from the suspect(s) and victim(s) and the scene, since the incident
 - were items recovered relating to the suspect(s), victim(s) or scenes, properly handled/packed in separate areas, by different people at different times?
 - was there any opportunity for secondary transfer between suspect(s) , victim(s) and/or scenes?

1044 Throughout the scene examination reassessment may be necessary as further information becomes available or circumstances change.

1045

1046

1047 **9.4 Assessments at the scene**

1048

1049 There is normally only one opportunity to carry out an examination and recover relevant material from the scene of an offence or incident. It is vitally important, therefore, that all the possible evidential avenues at the scene are considered before any practical work commences.

1050

1051

1052

1053 All relevant available information about the incident should be obtained before starting any examinations and an agreement should be reached with the customer as to what is required to be ascertained. All possible hypotheses, from all sources, should be considered as part of this process.

1054

1055

1056

1057

1058 Based on the customer requirement and the potential scientific and technical processes appropriate for the crime scene examination the Scene of Crime Examiner should develop a scene examination strategy. The aim of the scene examination strategy should be to maximize recovery of forensic evidence and information from the scene within the parameters of the forensic strategy, existing policies and with due regard to cost effectiveness.

1059

1060

1061

1062

1063

1064 In developing the scene examination plan consideration should be given for other experts/specialists to attend the scene in support of the investigation or in compliance with organizational policy. It is best if the scene can be preserved until all the experts are available. Where this is not possible or practicable, each scene examiner should ensure that adequate records are made of the scene prior to any disturbance of the scene on their part and during their subsequent examinations.

1065

1066

1067

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10. PRIORISATION AND SEQUENCE OF EXAMINATIONS

1071

1072

1073 **10.1 Undertaking the scene examination**

1074

1075 This section of the manual describes the recommended approaches for the preservation, recording and recovery of items and other material during crime scene examination. It must be remembered, however, that in most instances the scene may contain multiple evidential opportunities. It is essential, therefore, for full consultation between all interested parties to be undertaken before any work is commenced if the maximum information is to be extracted from the scene.

1076

1077

1078

1079

1080

1081

1082 **10.2 Scene preservation**

1083

1084 All scenes, indoor, outdoor or vehicles, should be protected at the earliest opportunity to reduce the risk of the loss of any material or post-incident movement or contamination.

1085

1086

1087 Particular emphasis is given in this manual to the procedures for the preservation of evidence
1088 and the avoidance of contamination. Advice is given to assist individuals to manage the specific
1089 risks associated with crime scene examinations.

1090 The guidance is directed towards ensuring that nothing is done by anybody attending the scene
1091 of an incident, or by others responsible for taking samples from the victim(s) or suspect(s), that
1092 may lead to the loss, degradation or contamination of forensic evidence.
1093

1094 Preservation of the crime scene is paramount and must be considered from the moment an
1095 incident is reported. The first contact officer and first responder have a responsibility to ensure
1096 the scene is preserved to the greatest possible extent to give the Scene of Crime Examiner(s)
1097 the maximum opportunity for forensic recovery.
1098

1099 All personnel attending the crime scene have a responsibility to ensure their actions do not
1100 compromise the recovery of forensic evidence.
1101

1102 Scene preservation measures should include, as a minimum:
1103

- 1104
- 1105 • removal of non-essential personnel from the scene and subsequent controlled entry by
 - 1106 means of a scene log
 - 1107 • cordons around the crime scene and other areas with potential forensic yield
 - 1108 • establishing and using a Common Approach Path
 - 1109 • wearing appropriate barrier (protective) clothing
- 1110

1111 Anti-contamination precautions should be based on the assumption that any trace evidence
1112 types may be subject to contamination and therefore should encompass all potential risks.
1113 Measures are required to reduce the possibility of cross contamination prior to the safe
1114 packaging of the materials at the crime scene.

1115 The minimum preventative measures include:

- 1116
- 1117 • ensuring equipment is clean before deployment
 - 1118 • use of a validated cleaning method for equipment and surfaces
 - 1119 • correct storage, transport and handling of consumables
 - 1120 • the use of the correct protective clothing and disposable equipment
 - 1121 • the effective management of the collection of different items in the same case for which
 - 1122 connections are being sought
 - 1123 • the use of different personnel for collecting material from the victim(s) and each suspect
 - 1124 • when suspects are transported or interviewed ensure different vehicles, rooms and
 - 1125 officers are used
 - 1126 • having checks in place to ensure that recovered items, or materials obtained from them,
 - 1127 cannot be mixed up with or transposed with other items or materials
 - 1128 • the preventative measures required to avoid cross-contamination due to local
 - 1129 environmental conditions
 - 1130 • the principle that after material has been recovered, packaged and sealed it must only
 - 1131 be re-opened under controlled conditions (refer to section 8.2 Preservation and
 - 1132 Packaging)
- 1133

1134 No one should attend or examine multiple scenes unless this is absolutely unavoidable and must
1135 then have thoroughly decontaminated themselves (e.g. by showering and changing their
1136 personal protective equipment). To minimize the possibilities of contamination it is preferable to

1137 examine all items relating to one individual or scene before commencing with items relating to
1138 other people or scenes.

1139
1140 10.3 Documentation of the scene

1141
1142 The crime scene should be accurately recorded prior to evidence recovery. The exception to
1143 this would be if there was a risk of losing evidence, e.g. through inclement weather, whilst this
1144 process was being carried out. However, in this instance and if practicable, markers should be
1145 used to indicate where evidence has been recovered from. The extent and level of details of this
1146 recording may be limited in first instance, however it will ensure that a record of the scene prior
1147 to any further disturbance is captured.

1148
1149 The aim of recording the scene is to be able to clearly show the scene and any items within, for
1150 the following purposes:

- 1151
- 1152 • briefing authorized parties
 - 1153 • evidential purposes
 - 1154 • recording of any significant features of the scene
 - 1155 • prior to examination and subsequent recovery of items
 - 1156 • documentation of any significant items.
 - 1157 • to allow reconstruction of the crime scene

1158
1159 The methods used to record the crime scene can include:

- 1160
- 1161 • Writing
 - 1162 • Drawing
 - 1163 • Voice recording
 - 1164 • Video
 - 1165 • 3D laser scanning
 - 1166 • Plan drawing
 - 1167 • 360°imaging
 - 1168 • Still photography
 - 1169 • Unmanned Aerial System (drone) photography

1170
1171 The documentation should be carried out in a methodical manner to ensure all areas are
1172 captured thoroughly and should be continued throughout the examination as necessary.

1173
1174 The documents required to support conclusions shall be such that in the absence of the original
1175 member of staff, another competent member of staff could evaluate what had been performed,
1176 interpret the data and if necessary repeat the activity.

1177
1178 10.3.1 Documentation of findings

1179
1180 The SCE's findings are normally provided in the first instance in written form, as a report or
1181 statement of witness, for use by the investigator and/or the prosecutor/court. Oral evidence, in
1182 addition, may be required subsequently.

1183
1184
1185
1186
1187

1188 10.4 Searching the scene

1189
1190 Abnormalities or irregularities at the scene shall be recorded and be clarified before the on-sight
1191 examination begins (e.g. signs of a disturbance or clean-up or point of entry damage being
1192 inconsistent with the victim's statement).

1193 Scenes should be searched systematically and thoroughly for the relevant materials, targeting
1194 and prioritizing areas, which in the context of what has been alleged, are most likely to yield
1195 significant material of evidential value.

1196
1197 Consideration should be given using a range of light sources to locate potential evidence that
1198 cannot be visualized using white light sources. SCE using this type of equipment must be fully
1199 trained in its use and ensure appropriate health and safety measures are taken to protect
1200 themselves and others present at the crime scene.

1201
1202 Items/areas of interest should be noted to ensure all potential evidence is subsequently recorded
1203 and recovered. The use of numbered markers should also be considered to assist with the
1204 recording of the scene. The area and parameters of the search should be agreed and
1205 documented.

1206
1207 Additional searches may be carried out by specialists, for example dogs or specialist search
1208 teams. Such searches should be co-ordinated via the Crime Scene Manager (or equivalent) to
1209 prevent contamination and loss of evidence.

1210

1211 **11. RECONSTRUCTION**

1212
1213 Reconstruction of events can be particularly relevant for the investigation and can be undertaken
1214 in different methods. The assumptions and limitations of reconstructions should be noted.

1215

1216 Normally for the reconstruction of events could be use the following methods:

1217

- *Physical reconstruction* is a process where the interpretation (as far as possible) of the
1218 position, format, set and framework of all the items at the crime scene, using physical,
1219 chemical, biological and mathematical principles allow to determinate the sequence of
1220 events, the position of the victim and the aggressor, etc. This assist the interpretation of
1221 the events by the SCE.

1222

- *Ad-hoc* testing (e.g. test to explain a determined blood pattern) can be carried out either
1223 at the scene or at a later stage in the investigation and must be fully recorded including
1224 any assumptions made and the value and limitations of the test.

1225

- Use of *computer modelling* (e.g. explanation of a bullet trajectory) must be approached
1226 with caution and all assumptions, limitations and uncertainties associated with the
1227 models clearly recorded.

1228

1229 **12. EVALUATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1230
1231 Reaching this point in the crime scene investigation, it is important to determine if the purpose
1232 of the examination has been reached. It is also important to conclude if further examinations of
1233 items or the scene are necessary to perform. The forensic unit shall also decide if samples
1234 need to be sent away for further examinations to a forensic laboratory or to subcontractors or
1235 other organizations. This decision may depend on organizational SOPs.

1236 Following the examination of a crime scene where there is a large number of forensic exhibits,
1237 the scientific support coordinator or crime scene manager should collate the exhibits and identify

1238 the examinations that should be carried out. A conference between the senior investigator,
1239 scientific support coordinator, crime scene manager, exhibits officer and forensic scientist
1240 should take place to determine if any further examinations are required. A formal record of the
1241 decisions will be made.

1242
1243 Items recovered from the crime scene that require further detailed forensic examination should
1244 be identified and an evidence recovery plan developed for each item.

1245
1246 Where there is more than one item and/or evidence type involved in the examination of a case
1247 then priorities and sequences for the examinations will need to be considered. Before
1248 commencing any examinations within a case, the following matters should be considered:

- 1249
- 1250 • the urgency and priority of the customer's need for specific aspects of the information
 - 1251 • the other types of forensic examination which must be carried out and whether
 - 1252 examination for a particular evidence type or by a given examination technique will
 - 1253 compromise subsequent examinations
 - 1254 • which evidential types or items have the potential to provide the most information in
 - 1255 response to the various propositions and alternatives
 - 1256 • the perishable nature of any material that may be present
 - 1257 • health and safety and/or security considerations

1258
1259 Considerations for further examinations should also include:

- 1260
- 1261 • the availability of items for examination
 - 1262 • the amount of material, within the items, available for examination
 - 1263 • the number and nature of the different forensic examination techniques that will be
 - 1264 usable, dependent on the above
 - 1265 • the potential value of the information available from each technique and which will
 - 1266 provide the most information in response to the various hypotheses
- 1267

1268 **13. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

1269 1270 13.1 Written Presentation of Findings

1271
1272 The purpose of the report/statement is to provide the reader with all the relevant information in
1273 a clear, concise, structured and unambiguous manner, to make the task of assimilating the
1274 information as easy as possible.

1275
1276 Whilst formal advice is available on the format of documents and statements the scope for
1277 consistency may be limited by the requirements of the criminal justice system for the country of
1278 jurisdiction. In general, however, the following should be included:

- 1279
- 1280 • the unique case identifier
 - 1281 • the name and address of the organization where the witness is employed
 - 1282 • the purpose of the examination, as agreed with the customer
 - 1283 • the identity of the witness, and evidence of his/her status and qualifications where this is
 - 1284 a requirement
 - 1285 • the signature of the author
 - 1286 • the date the report/statement of witness was signed
 - 1287 • the date of attendance at the crime scene that has been examined

- 1288 • a list of all recovered material
1289 • details of all relevant information
1290 • details of the examinations carried out
1291 • the results of the examination
1292 • comment covering any item or part of the crime scene that was not examined, and the
1293 reasons for this
1294 • details of any material forwarded for further examination, including reference to the chain
1295 of evidence
1296

1297 Subjective or speculative information/observations should be avoided wherever possible. The
1298 use of a tabular format and images can be a helpful aid in presenting the information clearly.
1299

1300 13.2 Oral Presentation of Findings

1301 Persons expected to present oral testimony should have received instruction and/or mentoring
1302 in the procedural requirements of the particular criminal justice system in which the evidence is
1303 to be presented.
1304

1305 Only information that is supportable by the examinations carried out should be presented, unless
1306 specifically directed by the court.
1307

1308 The SCE should resist responding to questions that take them outside their field of expertise
1309 unless specifically directed by the court, and, even then, a declaration as to the limitations of
1310 their expertise should be made.
1311

1312

1313 **14. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

1314 Health and safety considerations are extremely important in all aspects of the work and at all
1315 stages of the forensic process. The materials dealt with can be inherently hazardous and/or
1316 often found in hazardous circumstances but the exact facts are not always known or
1317 communicated to everybody in the process.
1318

1319 Consideration also needs to be given to the fact that materials may have to be handed back to
1320 others with no scientific training or particular facilities for handling the materials. Ultimately, they
1321 may go back to members of the public or could be encountered by them in situations such as at
1322 court. There is an obligation on those involved in the forensic process to ensure the safety of
1323 anyone handling materials that are inherently hazardous or rendered hazardous by the scientific
1324 examinations performed.
1325

1326 In setting up any process, consideration must be given to these issues and it is suggested that
1327 as a minimum the following should be carried out:
1328

- 1329
- 1330 • an assessment of the hazards at the scene of incidents where crime scene examinations
 - 1331 are to be carried out and how to minimize these
 - 1332 • an assessment of the risks involved in all the scientific processes carried out at the crime
 - 1333 scene
 - 1334 • the documenting of any safe systems of work (or equivalent) required, the details of
 - 1335 which should be provided in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
 - 1336 • the appropriate protective clothing and equipment for all processes involved in the
 - 1337 examination of crime scenes is identified in the SOPs

- 1338 • the mechanism for documenting and communicating the risks associated with any stage
1339 of the process and especially where materials may be brought into the public domain
1340 (e.g. courts)
1341

1342 **15. REFERENCES**

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1379 **16. AMENDMENTS AGAINST PREVIOUS VERSION**

1380 This Best Practice Manual is the first version.
1381

1382
1383

1384 APPENDIX: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

1385 In a coordinated approach of the crime scene, several specialists are attending the crime scene,
1386 each with their specific role and responsibility. The exact names, roles and responsibilities may
1387 vary per country.

1388
1389 First officer attending

1390 The action of the first officer attending the crime scene is crucial to its subsequent successful
1391 examination and the recovery of all available evidence. It is therefore essential that all officers
1392 are aware of the importance of scene preservation and the actions they need to take to ensure
1393 that any subsequent scene examinations are not compromised. The first officer attending is
1394 responsible for all initial measures at the scene of a crime.

1395
1396 A summary of these practices is given in the table below.
1397

Task	Activities
Assess the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary function: Preservation of life • Considering and recording contamination risks • Taking notes of the names of all persons at the scene
Protect the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the extent of the scene and setting cordons • Preventing access by any other persons • Protecting the scene if there is a likelihood of a loss or damage to evidence by adverse weather, etc.
Communicate the situation at the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform control of the full situation • Request specialist support and a supervisor
Commence log of scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of all persons, police and other agencies from outside the cordon, together with vehicles attending the scene. Date and time of arrival and departure, and reason for visit are recorded as well. • Documentation of any initial actions taken to preserve the integrity of evidence.

1398
1399 First police supervisor

1400 The first police supervisor is usually the highest-ranking officer present at the scene. The tasks
1401 of this person are summarized in the table below.
1402

Task	Activities
-------------	-------------------

Ensure that the above actions have been completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The actions mentioned in the previous paragraph, allocated to the first attending officer, have to be completed
Review and/or implement appropriate cordons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is better that cordons are set too large than too small: they can always be reduced later.
Protect the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there is a likelihood that physical evidence may be damaged or destroyed by weather conditions or other means, undertake appropriate emergency preservation.
Establish a rendezvous point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rendezvous point should be established at the outer cordon The rendezvous point should be communicated to all staff in order that they can report to the Crime Scene Logger on arrival at the scene.

1403

1404 **Crime Scene Examiner**

1405 Following the actions taken by the first officer and supervisor at the scene, a Scene of Crime
 1406 Examiner (CSE) will attend and make an early assessment, taking any actions necessary to
 1407 further preserve the scene prior to starting the examination. In the case of serious and major
 1408 crime the CSE may wait for the Crime Scene Manager (or equivalent) before commencing the
 1409 examination. In these cases, the Senior Investigator in consultation with the Crime Scene
 1410 Manager, will agree a scene examination plan based upon this early assessment and the
 1411 overarching forensic strategy. Most often a multi-disciplinary team including CSE's and forensic
 1412 specialists / experts participates in this strategy setting along with the CSM and SIO.
 1413

1414 Apart from the assessment, it is the responsibility of the Scene Examiner to locate and gather
 1415 photographic, video, forensic and fingerprint evidence, using a variety of techniques. He/she
 1416 should also document all actions carried out with regard to the preservation and recovery of
 1417 evidence.
 1418

1419 The tasks of this person are summarized in the table below:
 1420

Task	Activities
Examination at the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On arrival, review and revise the scene protection afforded by a properly managed cordon Initiate a Scene Examination Log of all evidence gathering activities undertaken. Establish what police action has already taken place at the scene.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, search and secure a Common Approach Path to the scene or deceased and ensure that this is identified by the use of crime scene tape. • Undertake an initial assessment of the scene and communicate the findings to the Crime Scene Manager • Documentation of the initial scene by use of video, photographic equipment and/or sketch plans. • Take any necessary actions to secure and preserve physical evidence • Prior to removal of the deceased record its position by suitable means • Search for, identify, preserve and recover all types of contact trace evidence • Provide specialist support to Forensic Scientists and other Scientific Support personnel at the scene • Ensure the integrity and security of evidence recovered from the scene • Provide appropriate documentation of all actions taken to the Crime Scene Manager • Prepare an indexed photograph album of all photographs taken and pass to the Crime Scene Manager <p>Provide consultancy regarding the submission of forensic evidence for examination</p>
<p>Post-mortem examination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photograph the deceased to assist with identification. • Photograph the deceased to show injuries, using scales and other indicators as necessary • Receive samples taken from the deceased by the forensic pathologist • Package and exhibit deceased's clothing in liaison with the Exhibits Officer • Assist in packaging, exhibiting and storage of the Pathologist's samples from the deceased

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take fingerprints and palm prints of the deceased at the conclusion of the post-mortem and footprints where it may assist the investigation. Consider the use of other forensic specialists in the identification process (e.g. Forensic Odontologists) • Attend any subsequent Pathologist's examination of the body, whether it be for the Defence or Prosecution, taking any further forensic samples and photographs as required • Ensure that any weapon taken to a post-mortem is packaged, boxed and exhibited so that it can be viewed through a polythene window for the Pathologist's information, without fear of contamination
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1421

1422

Forensic pathologist

1423

The tasks carried out by the forensic pathologist are summarized in the table below.

1424

Task	Activities
Attend the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give an estimate of the time of death • Assist in the interpretation of the scene with reference to general disposition of the body and its surroundings • Identify the remains as human, its gender and approximate age. On occasion, the movement of a body from the scene may hamper the findings at a subsequent post-mortem examination. The examination of the body in situ, by a Pathologist, may prove invaluable.
Carry out the post mortem examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the cause of death • Comment on how death occurred and give a scientific/medical evaluation as to the time of death • Produce a body plan of the deceased, recording every injury • Examine all injuries to the deceased, giving indications as to the sequence of the attack, nature of weapons used and degree of force used • Provide comparison between any recovered weapons and injuries sustained

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take anatomic samples for further analysis
--	--

1425

1426 **Crime Scene Manager**

1427 The central role of the Crime Scene Manager is to supervise the scene examination in a way
1428 that facilitates the input of specialists so that the maximum evidence and information is extracted
1429 from the scene. The Crime Scene Manager will be directly responsible to the Senior Investigator
1430 and the Scientific Support Co-ordinator for the management of the crime scene. Scene
1431 examination should be driven by any available intelligence and directed pro-actively to solve
1432 investigative problems. This will be achieved by attention to the following points:

- 1433
- 1434
 - Assess, prioritise and advise the Scientific Support Co-ordinator (if appointed) on the requirement for Scientific Support services
- 1435
- 1436
 - Provide for a structured approach, co-ordinate resources and disseminate information concerning scene examinations, briefing Scene Examiners accordingly
- 1437
- 1438
 - Ensure all persons entering the scene wear protective clothing, overshoes, face masks and gloves and that they are exhibited
- 1439
- 1440
 - Provide advice and quality assurance on all scientific matters, including the storage and packaging of exhibits and release of the scene
- 1441
- 1442
 - Documentation of all actions and policy decisions within an appropriately designed Crime Scene Manager's Log Book
- 1443
- 1444
 - To receive actions from the Scientific Support Co-ordinator (if appointed) in relation to scene examinations, forensic and other scientific support matters
- 1445
- 1446
 - Ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation and regulations
- 1447
 - Brief the Scientific Support Co-ordinator and Senior Investigator on completion of the scene examination prior to its release
- 1448
- 1449
 - Ensure the welfare needs of those attending the scene are met
- 1450
 - If not appointed, carry out the duties of the Scientific Support Co-ordinator
- 1451
 - Take responsibility for receipt and co-ordination of all scene examination documents created during and subsequent to the scene examination
- 1452
- 1453
 - Take responsibility for all photographic albums produced
- 1454
 - In complex cases such as those involving multiple scenes it may be necessary to appoint a number of Crime Scene Managers, one for each crime scene. In consequence, a contamination log should be kept in such cases in order that no problems arise in this area. In such cases it is recommended that a Crime Scene Manager be appointed for each scene to ensure that no contamination occurs
- 1455
- 1456
- 1457
- 1458

- 1459 • In cases of multiple offenders, it is recommended that a different Scene Examiner is used
1460 for each individual

1461
1462 **Scientific Support Coordinator**

1463 The role of the Scientific Support Coordinator (or Crime Scene Coordinator) within the major
1464 incident management team is to ensure:

- 1465
1466 • All aspects of the scene examination are conducted in a coordinated manner
1467 • A full range of Scientific Support techniques are made available
1468 • Effective and efficient communication channels between Scene of Crime Examiners and
1469 the investigation team are essential in every case
1470 • The optimum use of forensic, photographic and fingerprint evidence
1471 • The Senior Investigator is fully informed and properly advised
1472 • The provision of accurate briefings to all agencies involved in the investigation
1473 • Minimum risk to Investigating Officers from any health hazards
1474 • Quality assurance of scene examination and subsequent forensic submissions
1475 • Through liaison, a structure and priority for any subsequent examination of forensic
1476 submissions
1477 • A full debrief on completion to consider items of good practice/strategy for future use,
1478 health and safety and risk assessment.

1479
1480 **Senior investigator**

1481 The Senior Investigator is the law enforcement officer in charge, and therefore has overall
1482 responsibility for the management of the investigation, including the scene examination. The
1483 Senior Investigator acts as the interface between investigators and crime scene officers,
1484 forensics scientists, experts and the justice and prosecution services. The duties of the Senior
1485 Investigator also include conferring with the court or prosecution service with regard to further
1486 measures following consultation with the crime scene officers and investigators, forensic
1487 scientists and other experts.
1488

1489 **Forensic Scientist**

1490 A forensic scientist can enhance the scene examination, possibly increasing the value of the
1491 recovered evidence in the criminal justice chain. The decision as to whether or not a Forensic
1492 Scientist attends the scene should normally be made by the Scientific Support Co-ordinator
1493 following consultation with the Senior Investigator.

1494 The presence of a Forensic Scientist can enhance the scene examination in the following ways:

- 1495 • Advising on the most appropriate items/samples to be taken to further advance the
1496 investigation

- 1497 • Examination and interpretation of the scene to establish the sequence of events leading
1498 up to an incident
- 1499 • Giving an opinion on whether the information provided by witnesses is supported by the
1500 scientific evidence
- 1501 • Applying techniques not available to scientific support staff to locate or enhance scientific
1502 evidence
- 1503 • On completion of the scene examinations to fully brief the Senior Investigator and provide
1504 a preliminary, written, scene examination report outlining all the main observations

1505

1506 **Other experts**

1507 The Scientific Support Co-ordinator will decide whether the attendance of other specialists is
1508 required at the crime scene in consultation with the Senior Investigator. The scene of any crime
1509 involving the loss of life warrants the deployment of a scientific support coordinator or a
1510 designated crime scene manager. However, the level of response needs to be tailored to the
1511 nature and complexity of the offence being investigated.

1512

1513 **Forensic Medical Examiner**

1514 It is the role of the forensic medical examiner (where appropriate) to certify the death of the
1515 deceased, to record the time this was done and to give the Senior Investigator an estimate of
1516 the time of death and any opinion as to the cause.

1517

1518 **Firearms/Ballistic experts**

1519 In all cases involving the use of any firearm or explosive device ensure that an appropriate
1520 Forensic Scientist attends each scene to direct and advise on the recovery of all available
1521 evidence.

1522

1523

1524 **Plan drawer**

1525 It is the responsibility of the plan drawer to record the crime scene. First, the crime scene is
1526 drawn as it is initially found. As the search progresses, the plan drawer records the finding of
1527 any items which may be relevant. In some circumstances the Plan Drawer prepares a plan of
1528 the scene showing the zoning for the search.

1529

1530 **Exhibits officer**

1531 The exhibits officer has a responsibility throughout any major enquiry for the receipt, control,
1532 security, continuity and co-ordination of all exhibits and their subsequent movements. This will
1533 culminate in the provision of an accurate recorded exhibits and the availability of all exhibits
1534 required throughout the criminal justice process. In certain instances, it may be necessary to
1535 appoint more than one Exhibits Officer to prevent contamination of evidence.

1536 The primary duties of the Exhibits Officer are:

1537

- 1538 • Maintain a continuous liaison with the Crime Scene Manager to facilitate all actions
1539 relating to physical evidence packaging

- 1540 • To receive all exhibits coming into Police possession during the course of the

1541 investigation
- 1542 • If required by the Senior Investigator, to attend all post-mortem examinations and receive

1543 all exhibits taken by the Forensic Pathologist or Scene Examiner
- 1544 • Ensure all exhibits have been recorded and suitably described prior to receipt and to

1545 bring all relevant evidence to the notice of the Senior Investigator at the earliest

1546 opportunity
- 1547 • To ensure appropriate storage and security of all exhibits, throughout the investigation
- 1548 • Ensure that all items are correctly packaged, presented and labelled with full proof of

1549 continuity
- 1550 • Compile a complete and contemporaneous master record of all exhibits and their

1551 subsequent movement.
- 1552 • Obtain full statements from all officers submitting exhibits or responsible for their

1553 movement, to ensure proof of continuity
- 1554 • In consultation with the Scene Examiner and the Crime Scene Manager, prepare and

1555 forward all forensic, fingerprint and other items to the appropriate department or agency

1556 for examination, identifying exactly the scientific examination required
- 1557 • Provide a photocopy of all appropriate documentary exhibits for the Senior Investigator

1558 and investigation teams

1559
1560 **Coroner's Officer**

1561 In case a body is present, a Coroner's Officer may be present at the crime scene as well. The
1562 coroner must enquire into all cases of sudden or unnatural death within his or her jurisdiction.
1563 The coroner's officer performs duties on behalf of the coroner. The role is as follows:

- 1564

1565 • To liaise with the Senior Investigator and the Coroner to obtain permission to use a

1566 forensic pathologist
- 1567 • To liaise with the mortuary to arrange facilities and staff who will assist the pathologist to

1568 perform the post-mortem examination
- 1569 • Provide continuity of identity of the deceased

1570

1571 This list of roles is drawn from the European Crime Scene Management Good Practice Manual,
1572 produced as part of the European Crime Scene Management Project, UK 2000. It is not an
1573 exhaustive list and the role titles and duties may vary among organizations.