DRNC Scenario

This scenario corresponds with Course Objective E: Identify related scientific disciplines used in forensic science cases and summarize how these disciplines can be utilized in a variety of crime scenes.

The following story is a fictional account of planning and preparation leading up to the mythical Democratic-Republican National Convention (DRNC) event in Miami, Florida. The story is loosely based on an amalgamation of real life occurrences in the lead up to the Free Trade Area of the Americas conference in Miami, Florida in 2003. The names of all the characters in the story are fictional.

Background

For the DRNC event, Miami-Dade County has formed a Host Committee, similar to the model used for the Super Bowl Host Committees of the past. The Host Committee is a small group of 15 appointed personnel from various county and municipal agencies, as well as the private sector. Miami-Dade Police Department Director Melanie Duncan is one of the committee members. The Host Committee is chaired by Mr. Horace Copeland, a long-time assistant to the County Manager, Miguel Herrera. The purpose of the Host Committee is to plan for the overall event. As such, they are responsible for recommending policy, but not for enacting policy. The enactment of policy remains the ultimate responsibility of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).

The Democratic-Republican National Party (DRNP) has designated Ms. Cassandra Armand as its chair of the DRNC’s Committee on Arrangements (COA). The COA is the main organizer from the DRNP for this event. Ms. Armand and Mr. Copeland from the Host Committee work hand-in-hand to plan this event and their recommendations to the BOCC carry considerable weight for policy formulation.

Miami-Dade Police has been designated as the lead local agency and lead operational planner for the event security.

This policy differs significantly from the 2003 FTAA in which the City of Miami was designated as the lead local agency.

Since this event meets the criteria of a National Special Security Event (NSSE), the U.S. Secret Service has been designated as the lead coordinating agency with overarching statutory authority for the planning and execution of the event. Supervisory Special Agent Samantha Salerno has been appointed as the lead agent in-charge for the event.
Neither the Miami Police Department (MPD), nor Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) have the forensic assets adequate to handle such a large-scale event by themselves. It would take some degree of shared responsibility between MPD and MDPD, as well as some of the 30+ other incorporated areas such as Miami Beach, Hialeah, and Coral Gables. Due to the influx of tens of thousands of delegates, visitors, and protestors, it is expected that the forensic processing and evidence retention for a mass number of assaults, larcenies and other crimes will increase considerably during the week of the event. It is clear that a multi-agency approach such as the ones used for the 2003 FTAA Conference, the 2004 Presidential Debates, and the Super Bowls of 2007 and 2010 must be employed for this large-scale special event as well.

Organization charts of the Security and Public Safety Subcommittee, as well as from the 2007 Super Bowl are provided for your reference.

Assignment Instructions

For the purpose of this assignment, you are playing the role of Major Susan Barker, the commander of the Crime Scene Investigations Bureau of the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD). MDPD Director Melanie Duncan has appointed you as the chairperson of the Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup under the Security & Public Safety Subcommittee in preparation for the DRNC special event. The organizational structure for the Security & Public Safety Subcommittee will mirror the one used for the 2007 Super Bowl. Your Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup can be seen highlighted in bright yellow on the attached org chart.

Your job is to assemble your Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup from the various stakeholder agencies that will be involved in the DRNC special event. After determining who should be in your workgroup, you are to prepare a meeting agenda that identifies the likely key issues associated with crime scene investigations during the DRNC. Some of the key issues are:

1. Who defrays the cost of CSI to each agency?
2. Who will handle what specific portions/categories of crimes and resulting evidence?
3. Who directs the overall forensic task force?
4. Where should evidence be retained and eventually consolidated for pending trials?
5. Will any Part 1 crimes that occur be processed by the larger agencies only?
6. Will agency CSI be pooled or remain autonomous? Who commands if pooled?
7. Who pays for advanced ordering of needed supplies and equipment?
8. How will the chain of custody be established and who is included?

The purpose of this assignment is not to answer these questions. Instead, you are to identify the key participants and assemble a workgroup that will collectively address these concerns, and that will later make recommendations to the chair of the Security & Public Safety Subcommittee. In this assignment, you will prepare a written meeting agenda that identifies the key participants who you are inviting to the first meeting of the Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup, and that addresses the key issues associated with the DRNC event.

Resources

- DRNC Host Committee Task Force Org Chart
- 2007 Super Bowl Org Charts

Grading Criteria

Your work will be graded on the following criteria:

- The student identified the key stakeholders that need to be invited to the first meeting of the Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup.
- The student identified the key issues that the Workgroup is expected to address.