

CRJ 548 – Crime Scene Investigation and Management

DRNC Scenario

This scenario corresponds with Course Objective I (see below).

Objective I: Definitively identify and assess crime scene requirements as to special needs and support logistics, to include, but not limited to, the needs and materials to establish proper search procedures and patterns, identify hazardous materials and situations, and considerations specific to mass crime scenes. Students will have a knowledge of the proper methods of crime scene photography as well as crime scene mapping and sketching and skills such as triangulation of crime scenes.

The following story is a fictional account of an incident occurring during the mythical Democratic-Republican National Convention (DRNC) event in Miami, Florida. The story is loosely based on an amalgamation of real life occurrences. The names of all the characters in the story are fictional.

Background

Miami-Dade Police has been designated as the *lead local agency* and lead operational planner for the event security. 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. U.S. Secret Service Supervisory Special Agent Samantha Salerno has been appointed as the lead agent in-charge for the event.

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.

Neither the Miami Police Department (MPD), nor the 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. In addition to the local and federal agencies already mentioned, crime scene and forensic units from Florida's Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF - Region 7) have been detached to this event. These include, but are not limited to the Bomb Squads of Broward and Palm Beach Counties, as well as the crime scene units from both of those Region 7 counties.

Other key players for the DRNC include the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco & Firearms (ATF), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Energy (DOE), and the Florida National Guard's 44th Civil Support Team.

For the DRNC special event, a multi-agency *Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup* has been created under the *Security & Public Safety Subcommittee*. This workgroup is comprised of personnel from the Miami-Dade Police Crime Lab, the Broward County Sheriff's Office Crime Scene Investigations Bureau, the City of Miami PD Crime Scene Section, Jackson Memorial Hospital, the FBI's Hazardous Material Response Unit, the Miami-Dade Police Bomb Squad, the ATF's explosive ordnance investigators, the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Office, the 44th Civil Support Team of the Florida National Guard, and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue's Urban Search & Rescue Team (see the DRNC Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup Org Chart provided).

The *Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup* created several multi-agency teams specifically designed to respond to mass casualty chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive (CBRNE) incidents occurring during the event. One such team was the *Joint Hazard Response Team* (JHRT). The JHRTs are comprised of multi-disciplinary experts from MDPD, MPD, ATF, FBI, and the 44th CST (see the JHRT org chart provided).

Another multi-agency team specifically created for the DRNC was the *Joint Forensic Investigation Team* (JFIT). The difference between the JHRTs and the JFITs is that the former responds to bombing and WMD incidents before, or during the threat, while the latter respond after the bombing or threat has become apparent. Simply stated, JHRTs are first responders and assessors of CBRNE incidents, while the JFITs are responsible for post-blast investigations. However, it should be noted that many of the same expert personnel serve on both the JHRT and JFIT teams.

In addition to these two event-specific teams, the *South Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force* (JTTF) is also involved in the DRNC security planning before the event, as well as investigative response during and after the event. The JTTF is a long-standing multi-agency investigative group that is headed by the FBI, and supported with personnel by the local law enforcement agencies. Table 1 provides a brief explanation of what each of these multi-jurisdictional organizations provide.

Jurisdictional Authority

While the U.S. Secret Service has been designated as the lead coordinating agency for the DRNC event, there are other jurisdictional issues that need to be aware of. Miami-Dade Police have jurisdictional authority for crimes occurring within Miami-Dade County. The same holds true for Broward County and Palm Beach County respectively. In other words, jurisdictional issues during the DRNC event will be no different than during regular times.

One important jurisdictional issue has to do with the investigation of bombings. If the explosion is determined to be a result of a terrorist incident, the FBI has the authority as the lead investigative agency. Non-terror related bombings are relegated to the ATF. Of course, immediately after a bomb explodes, it is almost impossible to determine whether it was due to a terrorist, or a non-terrorist act. Typically, that is determined later during the investigation, as the pieces of the puzzle start to point to one direction or another. Since there is so much uncertainty during the first few hours of a bombing incident, both the FBI and the ATF respond, along with the local bomb squads and crime scene investigation units. That is why both the JHRTs and the JFITs are comprised of ATF and FBI agents.

Table 1

Multi-Agency Group	Permanent or Ad Hoc?	Mission	Comprised of
Southeast Florida Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF – Region 7)	Permanent	This is a multi-jurisdictional agency that is headed by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and whose mission is to coordinate the flow of resources (funding as well as equipment), the flow of	Miami-Dade Police, Miami PD, Broward County Sheriff's Office, Ft. Lauderdale PD, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, FBI, ATF, Florida National Guard, Florida Highway Patrol,

		information, and the coordination of a multiple jurisdictional response to terrorist incidents.	Regional hospitals, and the Emergency Management departments of the four counties in Region 7.
South Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)	Permanent	This group is headed by the FBI. Its mission is to coordinate all terrorism-related investigations in the South Florida area. The JTTF also manages the Southeast Florida Fusion Center, which serves as a data collection, and intelligence dissemination function.	FBI, ATF, FDLE, MDPD, Miami PD, Broward Sheriff's Office, Ft. Lauderdale PD, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, and other local police departments.
Joint all-Hazards Response Teams (JHRTs)	Ad Hoc for the DRNC event only	This ad hoc team is responsible for mitigating chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) threats before they occur, and responding to an incident which has already occurred in order to minimize the effects of the threat.	Bomb squad and Hazmat technicians from the following agencies: Miami-Dade Police, Miami PD, Broward County Sheriff's Office, Ft. Lauderdale PD, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, FBI, ATF, Florida National Guard, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Dept., Broward Fire-Rescue...
Joint Forensic Investigation Team (JFIT)	Ad Hoc for the DRNC event only	This ad hoc team is responsible for post-blast investigations that may occur during the DRNC event.	Crime scene investigations and forensic laboratory assets of the above listed agencies.

Scenario

The DRNC is a five-day event that takes over a year to plan for. The epicenter of the convention is located at the American Airlines Arena (also known as the "Triple A") in Downtown Miami. A buffer zone has been erected around the arena, as well as the entire Bayside and Bayfront Park areas, and the Intercontinental Hotel. The area inside the buffer zone is considered as the "security zone" and is where the delegates who attend the convention will have free access. The security zone extends to the waters of Biscayne Bay, and includes the entire Port of Miami.

Entry into the secure zone is strictly monitored at four locations along the buffer zone perimeter. Only persons with the proper credentials are allowed into the security zone. Two of the four entry/exit gates are located at the AAA, and the west gate into the Intercontinental Hotel grounds. The other two access points into the secure zone are from the dockyard at the east side of the AAA, and the pier at the east side of the Intercontinental Hotel. These two access points are for pre-screened ferry boats that help to shuttle the delegates from the hotel to the AAA arena. All persons (including on-duty law enforcement

personnel) must be screened prior to entry into the security zone. The screening involves a multi-stop queue whereby all vehicles and persons entering the security zone are subjected to an X-ray examination (VACIS machine for vehicles), magnetometers, explosive detection K-9s, and a physical pat down search. In addition, SWAT team counter-snipers are placed at high locations at various places in order to prevent any terrorist bombers (and their vehicles) from getting access into the security zone. This screening process is one of the strictest and most elaborate in the world, yet it is not completely infallible. There have been several accounts of people getting past the security gates, into the security zone during previous Super Bowls and political conventions. So far, the intruders have been non-terrorists.

One week prior to the start of the DRNC in early August, a team of 40 K-9 officers and their dogs swept every inch of the AAA and its surrounding property. These K-9 officers came from all parts of Florida, as well as a few federal agencies from Washington, D.C. Immediately after sweeping certain areas in and around the AAA, security guards were posted on a 24-hour basis to make sure that no explosive devices would be placed after the sweep. Once the K-9 team's commander felt comfortable that the areas had been secured, a guard would be posted and then the K-9s would go onto somewhere else to sweep another critical area (such as the Intercontinental Hotel).

The police were not the only ones who were getting ready the week prior to the start of the DRNC event. It appears that some adversarial groups were getting ready as well. Five days before the DRNC, the Bomb Management Center (located at the Broward County Emergency Operations Center) received a barrage of suspicious device calls (i.e., bombs) at various locations in Miami-Dade County. The Miami-Dade Bomb Squad responded to seven different calls in which backpacks had been abandoned in the Downtown Miami area (outside the exclusionary area). One of them turned out to be the belongings of a homeless person who slept under the Metrorail station in Overtown. However, the other six turned out to be elaborate hoax devices. All six of these devices were determined by the bomb techs to be inert, and posed no danger of explosion. Nevertheless, the fact that so many hoax devices were turning up during the week prior to the DRNC was somewhat troublesome.

That week, Tim Johnson the FBI Supervisory Special Agent, and lead worker of the Miami JTTF, called an impromptu meeting at the South Florida Fusion Center, located in Broward County to discuss the recent rash of hoax bomb calls. Also present at the meeting were Mary Straight (Fusion Center Chief Analyst), Detective Mike Warner (MDPD and JTTF member), Detective Frank Gomez (City of Miami PD, and JTTF member), Detective Josh Marcussen (Broward Sheriff's Office, and JTTF member), and Detective Fred White (Palm Beach SO, and JTTF member). Sergeant James Boyd of the Miami-Dade PD Bomb Squad was also invited and asked to debrief the JTTF investigators regarding the hoax devices.

At the onset of the meeting, Tim Johnson asked Sergeant Boyd to describe the six hoax devices that were found at various locations around Downtown. Sergeant Boyd reported that in his opinion, all six hoax devices were very similar in composition, and were likely constructed by the same person. Next, Mary Straight reported that in five of the six hoax bomb cases had been captured on video from the pole cameras in the Downtown area.

Several months before the DRNC, pole video cameras were placed at almost every corner of Downtown Miami. These high resolution cameras covered almost every conceivable angle in the Downtown area, and could be zoomed in to get a fairly clear picture of individual peoples' faces. It is fairly well known within law enforcement and security realms that hired personnel cannot conceivably monitor every possible angle that these cameras reached. However, some new software advances had made the task of video surveillance much better in that the software was programed to sense when items had been left behind by suspects. If after 10 seconds the item had not been recovered by a person, then the alarm at the video monitoring station would sound, and the attention of the security monitor would be brought to

that screen. This was an excellent surveillance tool that had been first used at a large scale special event during the 2007 Super Bowl in Miami.

Mary passed out printed handouts of close-up screen capture photos of the two subjects who had dropped off the hoax devices in five out of the six cases. Mary stated, "we have run these two through our facial recognition software, and compared them to all of our data banks, but we don't have any matches so far. All I can tell you so far is that these guys are white males, about 5' 6" and both weighing about 140 pounds."

"Geez...these two guys look almost like the two Boston Marathon bombers," stated Johnson. They're dressed the same, and even their faces are similar. If I didn't know better, I would say that those two had been resurrected."

"Well...they haven't been resurrected, but it looks like these two guys have resurrected the idea," remarked Mary. "We don't have any other leads on these two at the moment...and we don't know if they're just Anarchist hoaxers who are doing this to spread our bomb squad resources thin, or whether these guys are serious bombers. There's no way to tell right now."

Sergeant Boyd interrupted, "yeah...even though these were all hoax devices, let's not discount the possibility that these subjects are real bombers who are placing these hoax devices to see how we respond to them. Every time that we go to a bomb call, we are always wary that someone is watching us and our procedures."

"Agreed," said Johnson. "We need to have a couple of surveillance teams on the ground in case these guys show up again. If we find them...we'll tail them for a while and try to find out if they're working alone, or as part of a larger group. I already have Detective Phil Herrera's surveillance team on standby in Downtown Miami from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Tom Sullivan's team from the Tampa JTTF is handling the evening shift."

Detective Mike Warner asked, "Tim...what are your thoughts of putting out a press release to the public with these guys' picture on it like they did up in Boston for the Marathon bombers?"

"Mike, we may have to that eventually, but I think it's premature at this point. Even if a concerned citizen who knows their identity reported them to us, we don't have much in the way of criminal charges against them."

"That's true, but at least we can nail them on State charges related to the building and possession of hoax devices," replied Warner.

"You make a good point Mike, but let's try to find them with our surveillance teams first...and if we don't do it within the next two days, then we'll release the information and pictures to the public and try that route. If we do the press release now, these two guys will know that we're looking for them, and they may take off to who knows where. So far, none of the devices contained any explosives, so I don't view this as an imminent threat to the public."

Warner responded, "OK...I see your point, and I agree with what you're saying. However, if by Monday morning we haven't found these guys, then I think we need to alert the public." Warner turned to Sergeant Boyd and asked, "Jim, we'll need your Bomb Squad on standby all weekend, in case we find these guys and they lead us to their stash of bomb making materials."

"No problem Mike. In fact, all six of my guys are already assigned to ad hoc J-HRT teams and their days off have been cancelled until the DRNC is over," replied Sergeant Boyd. With that, the meeting at the South Florida Fusion Center concluded.

Five Days Later (Monday, the first day of the DRNC event)

It was early Monday morning...the first day of the DRNC event in Downtown Miami. Supervisory Special Agent Tim Johnson called another meeting of the JTTF.

Johnson started the meeting, "alright...so far the surveillance teams or the cameras have not picked up on the two subjects that we've been looking for. I think it's time to release the subjects' pictures to the public and seek their assistance."

Detective Warner interrupted, "Tim, I just got a text message from the Bomb Squad sergeant. He said that his bomb squad got called out late Sunday night for five separate suspicious package calls at various Metrorail stations. According to Jim Boyd, so far his teams have rendered safe three out of the five, and this time no hoax devices...all of them turned out to be real bombs."

Johnson stated, "it sounds like we have some real live bombers on our hand. Mary, do we have anything on video this time?"

Analyst Mary Straight answered, "yes we do...as a matter of a fact, that's how one of the calls for the Bomb Squad came from. We have a video of the same two guys...wearing the same clothing as last week...dropping off a backpack at the train level of the Overtown Metrorail station. Unfortunately, by the time we got a hold of the surveillance team on the ground, the two guys disappeared and we have nothing on their location or direction of travel."

"Well I guess it's time to release the information to the public," said Johnson.

"Tim...I just got additional information from the Bomb Squad sergeant. He's now telling me that two other devices have detonated...one south in the Vizcaya Metrorail station, and another north of Downtown, in the Earlington Heights Metrorail. Apparently, there have been many casualties...as many as 100 dead or injured...it's too early to say," said Detective Warner.

"OK...I'm hearing the same thing from my sources," stated Detective Frank Gomez (City of Miami PD). "Over a hundred casualties...mostly Metrorail commuters...It looks like many of the injured at the Vizcaya station are being transported to South Miami Hospital. The injured persons from the Earlington Heights explosion are being transported to Jackson Memorial Hospital's trauma unit."

"OK...it sounds like we have at least five...maybe seven different crime scenes...not counting the two hospitals," stated Detective Warren. "I'll get a hold of Major Susan Barker, who's in charge of the joint forensic teams that have assembled for the event. They're going to have their hands full with so many different crime scenes. I hope she has enough people on her teams."

"Mary...can you please get a hold of our Joint Information Center (JIC) and give them the press release that we put together last week?"

Mary Straight nodded in agreement, but then said, "are you sure you want to release this information right now? You realize that the reporters are going to ask a lot of questions, and they are sure to ask why we didn't release the information last week, when we first had it."

“Mary, I realize that we will come under a lot of scrutiny for not having released the pictures earlier...but let me deal with that later. Right now we need to find these two guys as soon as possible.”

Assignment Instructions

For this assignment, you are to write a 1200- to 2000-word essay. Your essay must identify and assess crime scene requirements as to special needs and support logistics, to include, but not limited to, the needs and materials to establish proper search procedures and patterns, identify hazardous materials and situations, and considerations specific to mass crime scenes. Consider how you would handle these related multiple crime scenes as if you were in Major Susan Barker's shoes.

Resources (available in the course Doc Sharing area):

- DRNC Crime Scene Investigations Workgroup Org Chart (PDF)
- DRNC Host Committee Task Force Org Chart (PDF)
- 2007 Super Bowl Org Charts (PDF)