



GENERAL ORDER OPS-36 CRIME ANALYSIS

EFFECTIVE APRIL 16, 2007

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. CRIME ANALYSIS UNIT
- III. ANALYSIS PROCEDURES
- IV. DAILY CRIME INFORMATION BULLETIN
- V. CRIME SERIES ALERTS
- VI. CITIZEN REQUEST FOR STATISTICS
- VII. PROGRAM REVIEW
- VIII. CANCELLATIONS

I. POLICY

The Howard County Department of Police (HCPD) shall use resources effectively and efficiently. Deployment of resources will, whenever possible, be based upon a detailed analysis of information likely to support the HCPD mission.

II. CRIME ANALYSIS UNIT

- A. The Crime Analysis Unit will report to the OPS Support Section of the Operations Command.
- B. The Crime Analysis Unit will be responsible for the following tasks:
 - 1. Collection of crime data from police incident reports, field interrogation reports, HCPD memoranda, law enforcement electronic information systems, arrest reports, supplemental reports, Watch Commander reports, and other pertinent documents.¹
 - 2. Collation of crime data in a logical manner
 - 3. Analysis and dissemination of crime data for operational planning and deployment²
 - 4. Continual evaluation and improvement of services offered

III. ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

- A. The Crime Analysis Unit will examine and process information to develop recognizable patterns of criminal activity and identify offenders by using the following two (2) types of analysis techniques, which will enable the unit to comprehensively analyze data while providing validity and integrity to their conclusions.
 - 1. Modus Operandi (MO) Pattern Detection and Correlation
 - 2. Statistical Analysis
- B. Crime Patterns - The goal of the Crime Analysis Unit is to combine data so that a true "picture" of criminal activity can be determined. These pictures manifest themselves as crime patterns in following two (2) ways:
 - 1. Geographic concentration patterns which are identified on the basis of crime type similarity and multiple occurrences in well-defined geographic areas.

¹ CALEA 15.3.1 a

² CALEA 15.3.1 b

2. Specific and recurring MO patterns which are identified on the basis of similarity of suspect and/or suspect vehicle description(s) and unique MO characteristics.
- C. Crime Pattern Detection (Manual and Automated Techniques) - Geographic concentration patterns can be identified if the analyst highlights portions of maps to indicate locations of criminal occurrences. This map provides the analyst with a visual identification of crime patterns. An automated system makes the task of detecting crime patterns easier for the analyst by allowing the person to query the system and request a report of certain crimes in which one or more data elements are common.
- D. Case Matching - Also known as the suspect/crime correlation process, this takes place after a suspect has been arrested. In this activity, the analyst considers the offense for which the arrest was made and then attempts to link the suspect to similar, unsolved crimes.
- E. Suspect identification - The analyst attempts to identify suspects through the use of the crime/suspect correlation process. When used before an arrest is made (when the analyst has a crime, an MO, but no suspect), this process involves searching files for previously arrested persons, examining the MO's they used to commit their crimes, and then determining if they might be responsible for the crime(s) currently under analysis.
- F. Informational Strategies
1. The District Commanders, Special Operations Bureau (SOB) Commander, and the Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB) Commander will utilize crime analysis information in developing tactics for operational components, general crime suppression strategies, support to officers, Community Oriented Policing projects, community services to pass on information to community liaisons, and manpower resource projections for long range planning.³
 2. Any member wishing to obtain crime analysis information may do so with a verbal or electronic request to the Crime Analysis Unit including name, the type of information needed, the reason for the information and the date the information is needed.
- G. Informational Effectiveness
1. Any member who uses the provided crime analysis information in the successful investigation of an incident should notify the Crime Analysis Unit for documentation purposes.
 2. The Crime Analysis Unit will submit a monthly report to the Deputy Chief of Police, Operations Command (OPS Commander), or his designee, detailing the documented activity of the preceding month's crime incident data.⁴
- H. Crime patterns and trends that are identified by members of the HCPD will be relayed to the Crime Analysis Unit for review. The unit will brief the Chief of Police regarding the relevant information through a Crime Series Alert.⁵
- I. Crime analysis information may also be relayed to the Chief of Police through the following:⁶
1. Daily briefing with the OPS Commander
 2. Daily Bulletins and Crime Series Alerts
 3. Weekly maps of statistics on robberies, burglaries and auto thefts
 4. Weekly Command Staff Meetings
 5. Monthly briefings on crime trends with CIB and the Vice and Narcotics Division
 6. Monthly report of year to date robberies, burglaries and auto thefts

³ CALEA 12.1.4

⁴ CALEA 15.3.1 b

⁵ CALEA 15.3.1 c

⁶ CALEA 15.3.1.c

IV. DAILY CRIME INFORMATION BULLETIN

A. The Crime Analysis Unit will publish the Daily Crime Information Bulletin which will contain, at a minimum, the following factors relating to crime information:⁷

1. Short description of significant criminal incidents that have occurred since the last publication;
2. Descriptive information regarding frequency by: type of crime; geographic factors; chronological factors; and temporal and geographic distribution of selected crimes, for crimes that appear to be part of a continuing pattern;
3. Description of individuals believed to be involved in criminal activity or who pose a threat to officers or members of the community;
4. Victim and target descriptors;
5. Suspect descriptors;
6. Suspect vehicle descriptors;
7. Modus Operandi factors;
8. Physical evidence information;
9. Incident Report (IR) numbers for each listed incident

B. Information Collection

1. All personnel needing to submit information for dissemination in the Daily Crime Information Bulletin may submit, preferably by e-mail, information to the Crime Analysis Unit for review.
2. All notices shall contain an IR number, date written, date(s) of suspension, name of investigating officer and any other pertinent information.
3. District Commanders, CIB Commander, and SOB Commander, or their designees, will meet with the Crime Analysis Unit on a daily basis to discuss information available for publication in the Daily Crime Information Bulletin. Information will be reviewed and a consensus reached on publication issues.
4. Prior to the meeting with the Commanders, or their designees, the Crime Analysis Unit shall collect information submitted on Watch Commander's Reports and conduct Records Management System (RMS) incident queries.⁸
5. The Crime Analysis Unit will form a partnership with surrounding police agencies to gather information about any crime patterns, methods of operation, or information relating to criminal suspects who may be operating in the multi-jurisdictional area.
6. Each District/Bureau will be responsible for collecting pertinent information from its assigned personnel and providing sufficient detail for publication by the Crime Analysis Unit.

C. Publication Procedures

The Daily Crime Information Bulletin will be published by the Crime Analysis Unit by 1400 hours each business day.⁹

⁷ CALEA 11.4.1 a & b

⁸ CALEA 15.3.1 a

⁹ CALEA 11.4.1 d

D. Bulletin Dissemination¹⁰

1. The Daily Crime Information Bulletin will be prepared and electronically disseminated to all HCPD members, Maryland State Police, Waterloo Barrack, Howard County Sheriff's Department, Howard County State's Attorney's Office and will be made available to all HCPD members via an electronic format.¹¹
2. The Office of Public Affairs will redact and upload the Daily Crime Information Bulletin to the HCPD website each weekday.
3. The Crime Analysis Unit will maintain historical copies for a minimum of thirty (30) days.
4. If organizational units receive analytical data from outside sources, they are responsible for distributing that information within the HCPD where it would best be utilized. Copies of analytical data from outside sources should be forwarded to the Crime Analysis Unit.¹²

V. **CRIME SERIES ALERT**

A. Development

The Crime Analysis Unit will publish a Crime Series Alert when needed. This Alert is a detailed description of all information known with reference to an identified series of related incidents.¹³ The Alert will contain, at a minimum, the following factors relating to crime information:

1. Series type, describing the type of crime
2. Location of the crimes
3. Target, describing the area/type of location targeted by crime
4. Synopsis, describing briefly the details of the crime
5. Modus Operandi (M.O.) factors.
6. Day of Week/Time of Day
7. Suspect descriptors
8. Suspect vehicle
9. IR numbers for each listed incident
10. Recommendations on how the Patrol Officers can best address the crime problem.

B. Information collected for the Crime Series Alert will be consistent with the collection procedures for the Daily Crime Information Bulletin in this policy.

C. Publication Procedures

The Crime Series Alert will be published by the Crime Analysis Unit as soon as information becomes available. Updates will be provided as additional information is received.¹⁴

D. Alert Dissemination¹⁵

1. The Crime Series Alert will be prepared and electronically disseminated to all HCPD members, Maryland State Police, Waterloo Barrack, Howard County Sheriff's Department, Howard County State's Attorney's Office and made available to all HCPD members via an electronic format.¹⁶

¹⁰ CALEA 15.3.1 b

¹¹ CALEA 11.4.1 e

¹² CALEA 15.3.1 a

¹³ CALEA 11.4.1 c

¹⁴ CALEA 11.4.1 d

¹⁵ CALEA 15.3.1 b

¹⁶ CALEA 11.4.1 e

2. The Crime Analysis Unit will maintain historical copies for a minimum of one year, or for the time that the Crime Alert remains active.

VI. CITIZEN REQUESTS FOR STATISTICS

A citizen request for statistical information will be handled in the following manner:

- A. Any citizen requesting general crime information by telephone will be provided with a "calls for service" summary for the previous annual period. The summary will be limited to the Statistical Reporting Area (SRA) that corresponds to the address provided. No information will be provided to citizens which impacts on the privacy and confidentiality of a crime victim.
- B. All requests for detailed information will require the completion of a Crime/Traffic Statistics Request Form.
- C. Requests for detailed information and any associated fees will be received by the Records Section. After the fees are recorded, the requests will be forwarded to the Crime Analysis Unit for processing. All requests will be satisfied within thirty (30) days, unless an extension is granted by the Chief of Police.

VII. PROGRAM REVIEW

- A. The Crime Analysis Unit will conduct an ongoing review of all crime analysis efforts and modify them, as needed, to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
- B. All members are encouraged to submit suggestions to the Crime Analysis Unit to enhance effectiveness and efficiency.
- C. For the crime analysis function to be effective, feedback from all members is essential. The utility and effectiveness of crime analysis may be evaluated by:¹⁷
 1. Seeing crime reduced in certain areas because of useful crime analysis information.
 2. An increase in arrests in dealing with certain problems identified in the analysis process.
 3. Having specific problem areas identified by the analysis of data gathered through police reports.

VIII. CANCELLATIONS

This General Order cancels and replaces the following:

General Order OPS-36, Crime Analysis, dated March 30, 2000.
SOP C/A-01, Information Distribution To Outside Persons, dated March 1, 1990.

AUTHORITY:


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¹⁷ CALEA 12.1.4