

DOCUMENTING SCENES OF WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

COURSE OUTLINE

MODULES, OBJECTIVES, CONTENTS AND OUTCOMES

1. Investigation and documenting crime scenes

Objectives: To provide persons investigating scenes of alleged war crimes and grave human rights violations with the knowledge and skills to identify evidence and document what they see in a manner that is useful and maintains its evidentiary value.

Contents:

- Crime scene investigation
- Challenges facing crime scene investigators

Outcomes: Participants will understand the principles behind the documentation of crime scenes and will be able to produce reliable documentation of their observations. They will also understand the nature of challenges to the process of documenting a crime scene and how to meet those challenges.

2. Photographic skills and techniques

Objectives: To understand how digital cameras function, their capabilities and how to adjust features to obtain the best images in a variety of situations.

Contents:

- Images, photography, resolution, digital images as evidence.
- Camera instruction, settings, features.
- Photographic techniques
- Practical instruction and field exercise

Outcomes: The participant will know how to operate a camera effectively, using the various camera features and techniques available to ensure that they capture the best possible evidential images, in the prevailing conditions

3. THREATS IN POST CONFLICT AREAS

Objectives: To understand the inherent dangers in conflict and post conflict environments, to assess those dangers and take mitigating action.

Contents:

- Systematic threat assessment procedures
- Recognising Unexploded Ordnance, Improvised Explosive Devices and munitions

Outcomes: Participants will be able to determine whether they can operate in a particular environment without putting themselves or others at undue risk.

4. TYPES OF EVIDENCE FOUND IN POST CONFLICT ENVIRONMENTS

Objectives: To develop an understanding of the different types of evidence found in conflict areas, how to document such evidence and the use of expert interpretation.

Contents:

An overview and examples of:

- Military ammunition
- Military weapons and weapon systems
- Tool marks and craters caused by projectiles and the analyses thereof
- Mass graves and execution sites
- Detention and torture

Outcomes: Participants will know what and how to photograph and document evidence of ordnance, projectiles and other objects found at crime scenes, in a manner that will allow subsequent analysis by experts and that will form the basis of expert opinion.

5. EFFECTIVE CAMERA USE

Objectives: To use camera effectively to produce images that can be used to interpret and reconstruct crime scenes.

Contents:

- Photographing 3-dimensional spaces
- Overall, medium range, and close-up photography
- Use of scales and markers

Outcomes: Through theory and practical sessions participants will be able to capture images that are capable of interpretation by experts and non-experts.

6. PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PROCESING CRIME SCENES AND EVIDENCE

Objectives: To demonstrate and instil a systematic approach to processing scenes of crime and how to utilise sketches to supplement notes and photographs in documenting scenes.

Contents:

- Process of searching & evidence identification
- Sketching
- Documenting
 - o Indoor scenes
 - o Outdoor scenes

Outcomes: Participants will be able to effectively search crime scenes, identify evidence and utilise the three main tools in documenting scenes of crime – photographs, notes and sketches.

7. USE OF GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS (GPS)

Objectives: To understand the principles of plotting coordinates of locations using GPS and the use of GPS in documenting crime scenes.

Contents:

- Basic map reading skills
- Principles of GPS Navigation

- Using GPS to obtain coordinates at a crime scene

Outcomes: Participants will gain a basic understanding of GPS navigation and the advantages of incorporating GPS and maps in the documentation of crime scenes.

8. PRACTICAL EXERCISES, MOCK CRIME SCENES

Objectives: To ensure that participants can put into practice the various theoretical principals taught.

Contents:

Coupled with various practical exercises on safety, camera use, notes, sketches, and GPS navigation throughout the course, participants will conduct examinations and documentation of three different scenes:

- Outdoor scene – simulated scene of a checkpoint shooting incident
- Outdoor scene – simulated execution site and mass grave
- Indoor scene – simulated torture room

Outcomes: Through practice participants will develop the skills necessary to document a variety of crime scenes.

9. REPORT WRITING AND EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT

Objective: To compile an effective report in relation to crime scenes, and manage the evidence collected.

Contents:

- Report writing
- Contemporary notes
- Photographic Logs
- Evaluation and management of evidence

Outcomes: Participants will be able to prepare an effective report, based on their documentation of a crime scene that can be used for advocacy or in judicial proceedings. Furthermore, they will be able to manage the evidence collected for effective and efficient reference during ongoing or future investigations and judicial proceedings.

COURSE PRESENTERS

Bruce Bursik, a former Detective Captain from the South African Police, is an international war crimes investigator, having served as an investigator in the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the Bosnian State Court's Department for War Crimes. He also conducted serious criminal investigations, on behalf of the United Nations in East Timor, Afghanistan, Kosovo and Albania.

He then joined the fight against international maritime piracy off the coast of East Africa as a police advisor and trainer for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). He continued his work in the East African Region by serving as a Superintendent of Police in the Seychelles Police Force in the capacity of National Head of Detectives and went on to become the Director of the National Crimes Services Directorate.

Bruce has 29 years' experience in serious criminal investigations.

He is now consultant investigator, based in South Africa, and a faculty member of the International Institute for Criminal Investigations (IICI).

Ray Cooper - Ray Cooper is a former homicide detective having spent 30 years in London's Metropolitan Police. Since then he has pursued an international career in War Crimes and Genocide investigations in Kosovo, Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has also worked as a security consultant in Gaza and a homicide detective on an anti-gang unit in Trinidad and Tobago. He has recently finished a three-year contract with the European Union Monitoring Mission as a monitor in the Republic of Georgia.

Ray is a professional photographer and is an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society. His landscape, documentary and wildlife images have featured in a variety of worldwide publications.