
Overview

This unit is about managing property secured during the course of operational activity. It is aimed at anyone who has primary responsibility as an exhibits officer during the course of an investigation. Throughout this unit you must liaise and communicate effectively with others involved in the operation.

You will work in accordance with legislation and policy, offering advice as to the appropriate legislation to be used to undertake the search, and identify the necessary resources required to undertake securing of property.

When a search or multiple searches are conducted you will be responsible for co-ordinating such activity ensuring that all property is secured and recorded in a manner that ensures operational security and integrity.

You will need to verify items to ensure that they are packaged and labelled correctly in order that their integrity and continuity are maintained. You should not accept items that do not meet the required standard; you should either return these to the owner or fully record the inaccuracies that are apparent at the time of receipt.

You will ensure that all property secured during an operation is accurately recorded and that necessary documentation is produced for the investigation process.

You will be responsible for ensuring appropriate storage of secured property, production of exhibits at court and the disposal of such items in accordance with relevant legislation and policy.

There is one element

- 1 Manage property secured during operational activity

Target Group

This unit is aimed at anyone who has specific responsibility for the management of property secured during the course of operational activity.

SFJCI302

Manage property secured during operational activity

Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
- P1 ensure you are briefed on the **terms of reference** of the investigation, your role and responsibilities and the nature and volume of property likely to be secured
 - P2 provide advice to the Lead Officer (Lead Officer/Senior Investigating Officer) on legal and organisational requirements for dealing with secured property and contribute to the development of appropriate forensic strategies
 - P3 contribute to continuous operational risk assessments and recommend appropriate action to mitigate risks, with a particular regard to property likely to be secured
 - P4 identify the **resources** required to secure property for evidential purposes likely to be found at single or multiple search locations
 - P5 brief and liaise with search staff to ensure that all items of **secured property** are handled, packaged, transported and stored in ways which take into account any need for forensic and evidential examination and preserve the continuity of evidence
 - P6 co-ordinate the securing of property during searches, ensuring that staff are appropriately deployed and that sufficient **resources** are available for the transport and storage of **secured property**
 - P7 ensure that all items of **secured property** are uniquely numbered, labelled and recorded in line with legal and organisational requirements
 - P8 co-ordinate the handling, removal, transport and storage of the secured **property** in ways which preserve the continuity of evidence
 - P9 discuss and agree with the Lead Officer (LO/SIO) and the forensic co-ordinator the nature and timescales of any forensic examinations to be carried out on exhibits
 - P10 supply exhibits to the forensic co-ordinator at the agreed time and with the documentation required by organisational policy and procedures
 - P11 ensure exhibits are returned in good order and report any problems to the forensic co-ordinator and the Lead Officer (LO/SIO)
 - P12 provide regular updates on **secured property** and the progress of forensic examinations to the Lead Officer (LO/SIO) and other members of the investigation team who need to know
 - P13 review **secured property** and differentiate between property required for evidential exhibits and property to be identified as unused material, consulting with the Disclosure Officer, the Lead Officer (LO/SIO) and the case lawyer where necessary
 - P14 prepare necessary documentation required for **legal proceedings** in accordance with legislation and policy
 - P15 ensure availability and production of exhibits and any equipment needed to access the exhibits at relevant **legal proceedings**

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Manage property secured during operational activity

- P16 co-ordinate the disposal, storage and return of **secured property** during the course of the investigation and at conclusion of the **legal proceedings**
- P17 act as the central and continuous point of contact for all **individuals with a legitimate interest in secured property**
- P18 fully record your decisions, rationale and actions in accordance with current legislation and policy

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Manage property secured during operational activity

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Legal and organisational requirements

- K1 current, relevant legislation, policies, procedures, codes of practice and guidelines for managing property seized during a criminal investigation
- K2 current, relevant legislation and organisational requirements in relation to the management of information
- K3 current, relevant legislation and organisational requirements in relation to race, diversity and human rights
- K4 current, relevant legislation and organisational requirements in relation to health and safety
- K5 organisational and legal requirements for numbering, labelling and recording secured property
- K6 necessary documentation to accompany exhibits at legal proceedings

Operational risk management

You need to know and understand:

- K7 the importance of conducting operational risk assessments on a continuing basis, and how to carry them out
- K8 actions you can take to reduce risks to the security of the investigation to an acceptable level

Management of exhibits to be used in operational proceedings

You need to know and understand:

- K9 the range of resources that may be required to secure property, depending on the nature and volume of the premises to be searched and the property to be secured
- K10 how secured property should be handled, packaged, transported and stored to preserve the security and continuity of evidence and allow forensic examinations to be performed effectively
- K11 the importance of packaging secured property correctly and in what environment they should be stored, to ensure best practice and evidential retrieval
- K12 cross-contamination issues, in respect of officers at scenes of crime, vehicles, persons, premises and submissions to forensic science units ensuring integrity and continuity
- K13 working practices of the Forensic Science Service and other agencies in the forensic field
- K14 disclosure issues relating to unused material, both sensitive and non-sensitive

Criminal investigations

You need to know and

- K15 the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Officer (LO/SIO), Exhibits

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Manage property secured during operational activity

understand:

Officer, Disclosure Officer and other roles within the investigation team
K16 the importance of regular and effective liaison with other members of the
investigation team and the case lawyer on a need to know basis

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Additional Information

Scope/range related to performance criteria

1. **terms of reference**
 - 1.1 fit with strategic objectives and priorities
 - 1.2 objectives and outcomes
 - 1.3 scope
 - 1.4 timing
 - 1.5 resources
 - 1.6 responsibilities
 - 1.7 constraints

2. **resources**
 - 2.1 your organisation's personnel
 - 2.2 partner organisations' personnel
 - 2.3 your organisation's equipment, transport and storage locations
 - 2.4 external agencies providing specialist equipment, transport and storage locations

3. **secured property**
 - 3.1 exhibits to be produced as evidence in court
 - 3.2 any other property secured during the course of operational activity

4. **legal proceedings**
 - 4.1 prosecutions within the criminal court arena
 - 4.2 prosecutions within the civil court arena
 - 4.3 hearings to resolve property ownership
 - 4.4 hearings to resolve retention, forfeiture and disposal of secured property

5. **individuals with a legitimate interest in secured property**
 - 5.1 investigation staff
 - 5.2 personnel from storage locations
 - 5.3 prosecution team
 - 5.4 persons with a legal claim to the property
 - 5.5 persons from whom the property was secured
 - 5.6 solicitors representing d and e

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Manage property secured during operational activity

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