A54 The NIJ DNA Property Crimes Demonstration Program: The LAPD Experience

Gregory B. Matheson, BS, Los Angeles Police Department Criminalistics Laboratory, 1800 Paseo Rancho Castilla, Los Angeles, CA 90032*

After attending this presentation, attendees will have a general understanding of the NIJ DNA Property Crimes Demonstration Program and a specific understanding of both the pitfalls and successes experienced by the Los Angeles Police Department, a participant in the Program.

This presentation will impact the forensic community by providing information laboratories can use to evaluate the value of utilizing DNA technology to investigate property crimes within their jurisdiction.

Five sites participated in a demonstration program sponsored by the National Institute of justice. The purpose of the program was to study if it makes economical sense to utilize DNA technology for the investigation of property crimes. The study design required each site to collect biological evidence from five hundred scenes of property crimes. Of the crimes, 250 would utilize DNA technology as an additional investigative tool. The remaining scenes would be processed utilizing standard investigative tools. Following the conclusion of the collection phase of the program, the test group and control group were compared. Major points for evaluation were solve rates, conviction rates, sentencing, and cost for investigative and prosecutorial processes for each solved crime.

This presentation will focus on the experiences of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) as one of the demonstration sites. From grant application, through labor relation issues to analysis and hit rate, the LAPD acquired considerable information and experience that will be used to influence future allocation of existing biological evidence and investigative services and impact requests for future increases in biological analysis resources. With a significant backlog of requests for the analysis of DNA in violent crimes, utilizing limited DNA technology resources on property crimes does not, on the surface, appear prudent. However, participation in the program has shown that in Los Angeles, the hit rate between burglary crime scene evidence and individuals in the CODIS offender database has proven to be higher than in any other crime category. In addition, the criminal histories of the identified offenders were usually significantly more serious than the burglary for which they were arrested.

The presentation is offered to share the more significant finding of the LAPD experience to others considering the value of incorporating the utilization of biological analysis in the investigation of property crimes.

DNA, Burglary, Grant

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