



D37 Battlefield Forensics: The Application of Traditional Criminalistics/Forensics on the Battlefield to Support Combat Operations

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have a better understanding about how military personnel are trained to collect forensic material on the battlefield. Attendees will also understand how military personnel are trained to prioritize evidence on an objective, how to protect, document, preserve, collect and transport forensic material, but also how to process items expeditiously at the scene in order to develop and collect latent evidence, such as fingerprints, DNA, shoe impressions, etc.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by discussing the application of traditional forensic/criminalistics techniques on the battlefield for intelligence and operational purposes. Combat actions in Iraq and Afghanistan have identified a need across the Department of Defense to increase the ability to collect and exploit forensic materials for targeting and/or prosecution. The Army must substantially increase the training and ability of soldiers to identify, collect, preserve, and process forensic material with potential evidentiary value. This skill, normally performed by military investigators during garrison law enforcement operations and by specialized crime scene teams in civilian law enforcement, must be done by deployed soldiers in both Iraq and Afghanistan, regardless of Military Occupational Specialty (MOS).

Forensic Material Collection and Exploitation Course will train the collection, processing, and preservation of forensic material on an objective or site. Students will be taught not only the basics, such as how to prioritize evidence on an objective, how to protect, document, preserve, collect and transport forensic material, but also how to process items expeditiously at the scene in order to develop and collect latent evidence, such as fingerprints, DNA, shoe impressions, etc. The course will consist of both classroom training and hands-on practical exercises. This training will be geared towards selected soldiers preparing for deployment who will serve as part of a unit's forensic material collection team. Each team member will be cross-trained in every area, to include photography, sketching, note-taking, latent print processing, and trace evidence collection.

Battlefield, Forensics, Criminalistics