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# **Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes Keeping Trace Viable: The Future of Trace**

# Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes

- The LAPD created a Field Investigation Unit in June 2007
- 5- Step Process
  - Establish the right philosophy
  - Get the right people and set a schedule
  - Define tasks-analyze scene, don't just bag & tag
  - Implement- make adjustments
  - Evaluate- pros and cons

# Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes

Historically, in LAPD:

- All criminalists were required to participate in crime scene activities regardless of their interest or skill level
- Participation was based on a rotational on-call system resulting in inconsistent maintenance of skill levels
- Crime scene processing was “part-time” activity, secondary to primary unit assignment.



# Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes

- To correct this we expanded our Field Unit so...

The analysis of crime scenes is a specialty and is handled in a focused, scientific manner just like the scientific processes used in the analysis of evidence in other laboratory units



# Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes

- The Right Philosophy
  - Provide consistent high quality field service to Department detectives
  - Increase crime scene analysis experience
  - Provide case management services
  - Improve productivity in other Crime Lab units by removing the “distraction” of field work.
  - Increase supervisory accountability for the activity of their unit
  - Improve laboratory morale



# Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes

What do we want in a Crime Scene Analyst?

- The Right People
  - A professionally involved and interested scientist with sufficient experience to have a broad understanding of the capabilities and limitations of forensic science
- A Flexible Schedule
  - Plan A quickly moved to plans B and C and...



# Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes

- Implementation

- Training established baseline and uniformity
- Competency and proficiency testing
- Procedure manuals  $\frac{3}{4}$  complete
- Feedback from inside and outside Unit
- Expansion of support services & added personnel
- Backlog of cases for Admin and Tech review



# Success of the Generalist at Crime Scenes

- Evaluation –
  - Customer feedback is overwhelmingly good
    - Exceeding expectations
  - Was this program an effective use of staff time?
    - The Crime Lab was reorganized away from Support Services and into the Detective Bureau in 2008
    - New managers understood value without explanation
  - Other Crime Lab units were in command of their own staff and resources and no longer depleted by unscheduled interruptions of field work



Excellent



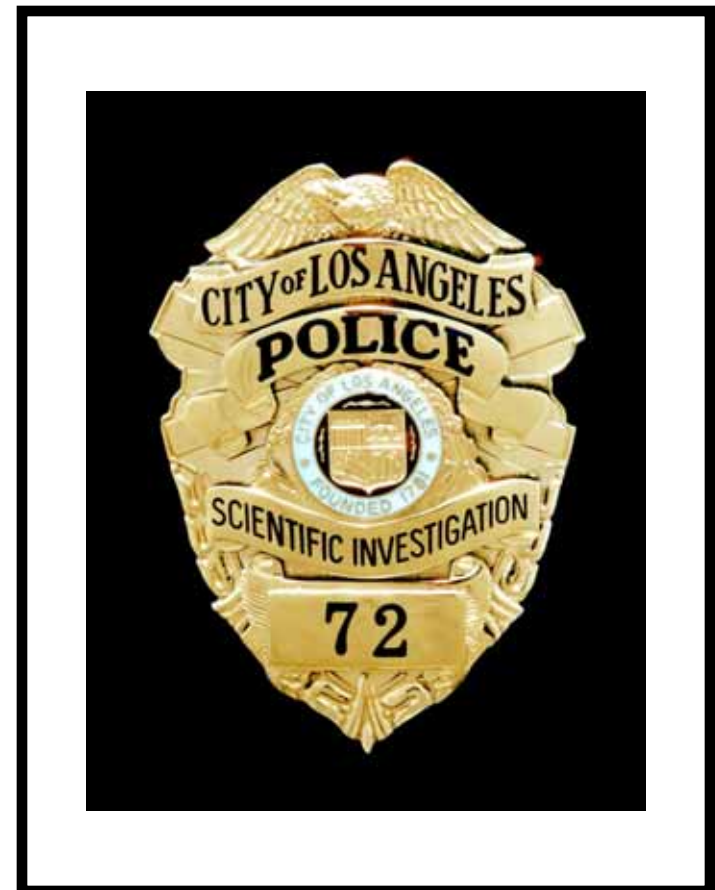
# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- Sharing – A modern concept or a survival strategy?
  - Ride-sharing
  - Time-sharing
  - File-sharing
  - Job-sharing
  - Photo-sharing
  - Resource-sharing – Is this the future of Trace?



# Keeping Trace Viable: Staffing Levels

- The Los Angeles Police Department Crime Lab
  - DNA- 60
  - Firearms-42
  - Narcotics- 20
  - Toxicology- 12
  - Crime Scene- 10
  - Trace- 8
  - Admin- 6
  - Documents- 6
  - Quality Assurance- 4



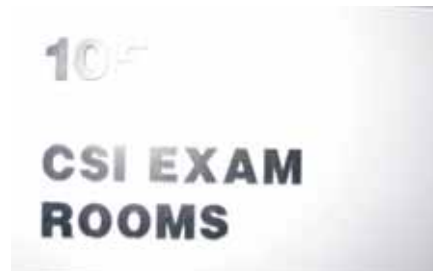
# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- September 2007
  - LAPD Crime Lab and LASD Major Case Units were co-located in one facility at CSULA
  - After years of planning, discussion and grassroots input, the Trace Units elected to share some specific work areas and instruments



# The Shared Experience: Generalized Work Areas

- Trace Units of LAPD and LASD share
  - Exam areas
  - Common supply areas
  - CSI Rooms



# The Shared Experience: Specialized Work Areas

- Trace Units of LAPD and LASD share
  - Impression laboratory

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IMPRESSION  
LAB



# The Shared Experience: High-End Instruments

- Trace Units of LAPD and LASD share
  - Instrument room
  - High cost, lower usage instruments
    - X-ray Fluorescence
    - Pyrolysis GC/MS
    - LC/MS/MS
  - New instrument training





# The Shared Experience: References and Meeting Space

- Trace Units of LAPD and LASD share
  - Reference Library & Conference Room



# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- LASD uses LAPD's SICAR resource





# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- Independence and autonomy still exists
  - Instruments in frequent use like the FTIR are not shared



# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- Routine, high volume casework is independent
  - GC/MS on Fire Debris cases (LAPD ~100/yr LASD 133/yr)



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# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- Trace Units of LAPD and LASD share
  - SEM Room
    - Three SEMs
      - 2 LASD and 1 LAPD (LAPD ~ 70, LASD ~ 96 GSR cases/yr)
    - One XRF (old) and One XRD (new)





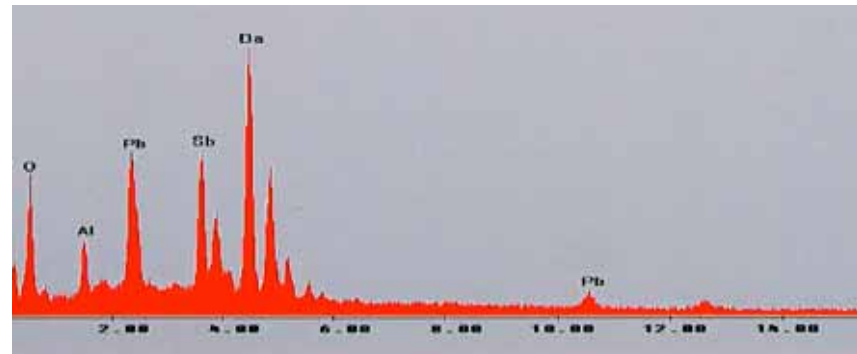
# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- Specialized equipment can be shared
  - Each lab has individual expertise or equipment understood between them to be available



# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- LAPD Trace Unit shares resources with CSULA
  - Criminalistics Master's student is validating our new Microspectrophotometer
  - CSULA invited lab staff to participate in:
    - Digital Microscopy Seminar
    - Discussion Forum on NAS Report – Paul Gianelli guest speaker
    - DNA Awareness



# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- LAPD Trace Unit shares resources with the California Criminalistics Institute (CCI)
  - CCI has invited lab staff to participate in new instrument training for their recently acquired:
    - Bank Dye Pack Analysis
    - GC/MS Software
    - Mass Spec Interpretation



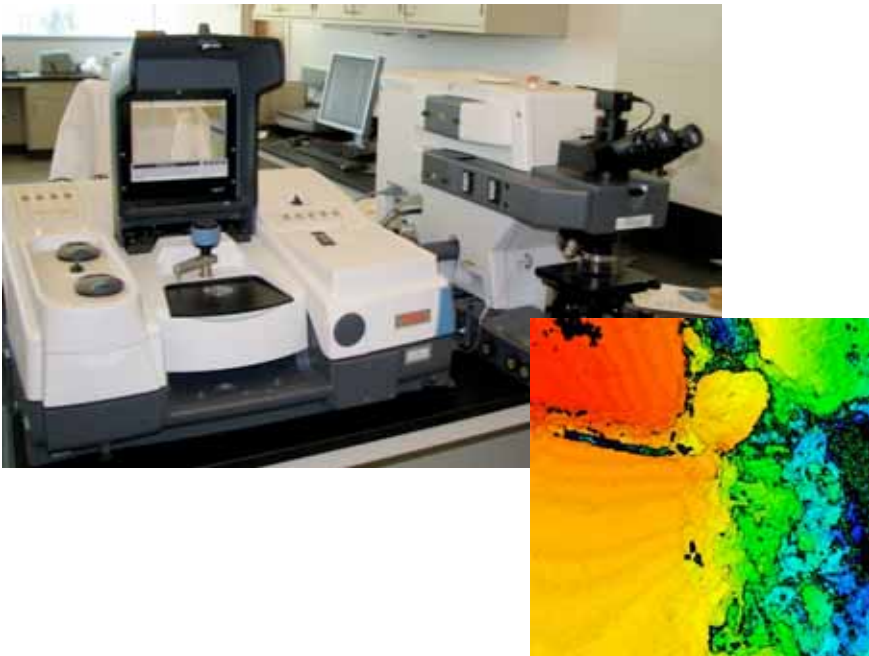
# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- Trace Units of LAPD and LASD do not share
  - Casework
  - Agency specific, secure examination areas
  - Evidence storage
  - Equipment used frequently by each agency
    - Microscopes
    - GC/MS
    - FTIR
    - SEM



# The Shared Experience

- Case by case interface
  - LAPD has assisted LASD with SICAR twice
  - LASD performed a paint case for LAPD





# Keeping Trace Viable: The Shared Experience

- Success due to years of planning
  - Employee input from both sides
  - Planning meetings involving stakeholders
  - Mutual respect and desire to make it work



# The Shared Experience

