

18th Military Police Brigade Learns Advanced Crime Scene Techniques

By Specialist Adrienne Killingsworth

Soldiers from the 18th Military Police Brigade, along with U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC) (commonly referred to as “CID”) special agents from throughout Germany, participated in a one-week Advanced Crime Scene Investigative Techniques Course held 13–17 April in Grafenwoehr, Germany. The training, which was organized by the 202d Military Police Group (CID) and 1002d Military Police Battalion (CID), was a mixture of classroom instruction and practical exercises.

Because military police officers and CID agents work together at crime scenes, it is important for each of them to understand the role of the other. This course provided participants with an opportunity to enhance previous training, and it gave military police a chance to explore forensic aspects of crime scene investigations. The role of military police at a crime scene is typically that of an initial responder; their duties traditionally include securing the scene, providing aid to victims, and keeping nonessential personnel away from the scene. Through the Advanced Crime Scene Course, military police gained a better understanding of what takes place at a crime scene upon the arrival of CID personnel.

The course began with instruction in photography because, according to the instructor, so much of the training hinges on a strong understanding of photography in the investigative process. Basic camera techniques were reviewed, and students applied the training to photographing evidence and conducting surveillance photography. Students also received instruction on the principles of forensic photography, presentation of photographs in court, and process of photographing a crime scene.

Next, participants learned the specifics of analyzing blood evidence at a crime scene, including blood pattern analysis, blood evidence collection, and forensic entomology (the relationship between insects and physical human evidence). During practical exercises, students collected blood samples. They also collected forensic entomological “field” evidence at a mock crime scene. The purpose of this portion of the training was for Soldiers to gain an understanding of analysis—not to make them blood evidence experts.

Finally, KrimeSite™ Imager training provided students with the opportunity to use refracted ultraviolet light to locate fingerprints that were invisible to the naked eye. Multiple methods for the collection and identification of fingerprints at a crime scene were introduced in the practical exercises associated with the training.

According to brigade officials, familiarization with the functional areas covered in the Advanced Crime Scene Course increases the forensic awareness of military police as they approach a crime scene. This allows them to better protect and preserve items that CID agents may collect as evidence when they arrive.



18th Military Police Brigade students gather soil and insect samples from a mock crime scene during the Advanced Crime Scene Investigative Techniques Course.

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