

Forensic and Technical

Solving cases and convicting criminals frequently depend on the unique support of scientific and technical personnel assigned to the Forensic and Technical Services Division. Forensic Analysts at the Postal Inspection Service's National Forensic Laboratory in Dulles, Virginia, and three field laboratories provide expert examinations and testimony on evidence submitted by Postal Inspectors for document, fingerprint, chemical, and physical evidence analysis. Lab personnel respond to the most

critical and complex crime investigations and assist in processing and evaluating evidence. Postal Inspection Service chemists are on hand to provide scientific analyses of suspected controlled substances transported through the U.S. Mail.

During FY 2003, forensic staff assisted on-site with a homicide in Pittsburgh, a burglary in Phoenix, and

evidence collection in numerous other crime scene investigations. Forensic laboratory experts from the Postal Inspection Service conducted 2,679 forensic examinations during FY 2003 and identified 1,155 violators of postal statutes. Forensic Analysts made 71 court appearances to provide expert testimony. The lab's continued use of Automated Fingerprint Identification

System (AFIS) technology has proven to be an extremely valuable tool in identifying suspects in the Postal Inspection Service's criminal investigations.

The Digital Evidence Unit (DEU) of the Forensic and Technical Services Division supports criminal investigations by assisting Postal Inspectors with the collection, preservation, recovery, and analysis of computer-based evidence. Using state-of-the-art hardware and forensic software, Inspectors and Analysts from the unit work with Postal Inspectors to execute search warrants and conduct forensic analyses of seized computers and related equipment.

Digital evidence contributes to the successful resolution of investigations ranging from child exploitation to financial fraud and identity takeovers

The Postal Inspection Service's National Forensic Laboratory in Dulles, Virginia.



Services

via the mail. During FY 2003, Postal Inspectors submitted 822 requests to DEU staff for the examination of evidence.

The Forensic and Technical Services Division also supports Postal Inspectors in complex surveillance and security endeavors. Forensic staff provide support for security, mail screening, communications, and other technical equipment needed for special events, including those designated by the Department for Homeland Security as National Security events.

The division provides equipment, training, and field responses to ensure the safety of personnel and to assist case Inspectors in proper evidence-gathering techniques. Specially trained Inspectors and technicians have used their expertise to help resolve almost every high-profile case discussed in this report.

Postal Inspection Service Polygraph Examiners provided significant investigative assistance to Inspectors at field divisions and National Headquarters during FY 2003. F&TSD staff members oversee the selection, training, and qualification of Postal Inspectors assigned to conduct polygraph examinations. Postal Inspector-Examiners scheduled 1,140 polygraph exams for 240 cases during FY 2003 and contributed to the solution of approximately 121 cases as a result of pre- and post-test interviews conducted incident to the examinations.



Analysts from the Forensic and Technical Services Division responded to a crime scene on October 17, 2003, at 8:30 a.m. after a postal driver reported he was the victim of an armed robbery. Analysts dusted the LLV (long-life vehicle) for fingerprints and recovered a latent, partial palm print. The investigation is continuing.

Polygraph Examiners provided assistance in several major cases, including the Amerithrax investigation of anthrax in the mail. Examiners also assisted with two postal homicide investigations. Examiners administered seven exams related to the shooting death of a letter carrier, and 10 exams related to the investigation of the stabbing death of a contract station clerk. Finally, examiners played a vital role in the investigation of a missing registered remittance when they identified an employee at the Orlando, Florida, Processing and Distribution Center as responsible for stealing remittances totaling \$500,000.