



BCA Fact Sheet

Drew Evans, Superintendent

Background

The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) was created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1927 to assist peace officers throughout the state in solving crimes and apprehending criminals. The Division of Statistics, now the Minnesota Justice Information Services (MNJIS) division, was added in 1935. Also at this time, the addition of personnel and full police power for the Bureau's agents made establishing field offices throughout Minnesota possible. The BCA laboratory became operational in 1947. And in 1969, the BCA, along with several other state agencies, became members of the newly-created Department of Public Safety.

The BCA established one of the first DNA laboratories in the country in 1990. Shortly thereafter, the BCA laboratory became the first in the country to identify a suspect based solely on DNA using the FBI's new Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). The BCA was also the first state agency in the country to implement an Automated Fingerprint Identification System.

The BCA serves as a national model with its Missing and Unidentified Persons Clearinghouse, the Minnesota Crime Alert Network, the AMBER Alert program, and its efforts to integrate criminal justice information. Today, the Minnesota BCA is headquartered in St. Paul, has a regional office in Bemidji and 12 investigative field offices around the state. Laboratories are located in St. Paul, Bemidji and St. Cloud.



Mission Statement

The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension protects Minnesotans and all who visit our state by providing services to prevent and solve crimes in partnership with law enforcement, public safety and other criminal justice agencies.

Vision

Delivering exceptional law enforcement services for a safer Minnesota.

Values

Integrity – Excellence – Ingenuity - Partnerships

Budget

With an annual budget of over \$62 million and a staff of 450, the BCA's three major divisions are funded through a mix of General Fund appropriations, Special Revenue Funds and Federal Funds.

Forensic Science Services Division

The BCA Forensic Science Services is the only full-service, accredited crime laboratory in Minnesota. It provides forensic science testing, crime scene response, breath alcohol instrument calibration, specialized training and expert court testimony to all 87 counties.

Accreditation - The BCA Testing Laboratories in St. Paul, Bemidji and St. Cloud and the Calibration Laboratory in St. Paul are ISO/IEC 17025 accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board under the forensic program. This distinguished accreditation demonstrates that management, personnel, operational and technical procedures, equipment and physical facilities meet national standards. Accreditation is one part of a robust quality assurance program to ensure the delivery of the best services possible.

Biology/DNA Laboratory - Scientists examine and identify blood, semen, saliva and other body fluids. Nuclear DNA testing can be a powerful tool to include/exclude individuals as being a source of a body fluid. The BCA also offers mitochondrial DNA testing; one of only a few labs in the country to do so.

Combined DNA Indexing System (CODIS) - A DNA offender database is used to search DNA profiles obtained from evidence in cases where there are no suspects. A separate database is maintained to help identify missing persons. The state databases are connected to the National DNA Index System.

Crime Scene Program - Scientists identify and collect physical evidence from violent crime scenes throughout the state. Additional tests include scene reconstruction and documentation. Teams from both St. Paul and Bemidji are available 24/7.

Digital and Multimedia Evidence Section - Analysts in the Investigations Division preserve and retrieve digital evidence related to criminal cases. Items of digital evidence may include but are not limited to computers, cellular phones, tablets, cameras, hard drives, flash drives, SD cards, digital discs, digital video recorders, gaming systems, etc. This discipline is included in the BCA FSS accreditation scope.

Drug Chemistry Laboratory - Scientists analyze and identify controlled substances. These identifications can assist in proving controlled substance crimes. Other examinations determine the presence of accelerants in fire debris.

Evidence Intake and Processing - The laboratory accepts evidence from law enforcement partners throughout Minnesota. Evidence intake specialists catalog the items, begin the tracking procedure, and distribute the evidence to the appropriate sections of the laboratory for testing. Evidence control is just one area strictly monitored under the laboratory's rigorous and comprehensive quality assurance system. Technicians in this area also assist with crime scene documentation, evidence processing, and triaging.

Firearms and Toolmarks Laboratory - Scientists conduct examinations related to firearms, tool mark comparisons and serial number restorations.

Latent Fingerprint Laboratory - Scientists develop and compare unknown fingerprints recovered from crime scenes with elimination and suspect prints for identification.

Toxicology Laboratory - Scientists analyze blood, urine and other biological samples for alcohol and other drugs. This analysis is essential in proving DWI offenses and drug-facilitated sexual assaults. It can also assist medical examiners and coroners in determining a cause of death in cases where circumstances surrounding the death may be unknown or unclear.

Trace Evidence Laboratory - Scientists compare known and unknown samples of glass, paint, fibers, wood, soil and other materials. Other examinations include comparisons of shoe prints and tire tracks, and physical matches of separated objects.

Breath Alcohol Calibration Laboratory - Scientists train law enforcement personnel in breath alcohol testing procedures, evaluate, maintain, calibrate and annually certify evidential breath alcohol testing instruments used by law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Expert testimony for Implied Consent and DWI cases is provided along with specialized training in the area of breath testing to judges and attorneys. This program is a key element in the timely detection of DWI offenders.

Investigative Services Division

BCA Special Agents and Analysts - Employees are strategically positioned in 12 field offices and two regional offices around the state. Investigative assistance is provided 24/7 to 87 sheriff's departments and over 400 police departments. Services include immediate investigative, analytical, crime scene and special operations responses, and long term assistance with complex investigations. These are essential services that many law enforcement agencies throughout the state cannot support locally.

Death Investigations/Cold Case Assistance - Agents and analysts work with local law enforcement to investigate deaths throughout the state. These investigations range from homicides, suicides, officer involved shootings, unidentified remains, and more. Special agents also assist local law enforcement in the investigation of old homicide cases, oftentimes utilizing new forensic advancements to help solve these cases.

Predatory and Technical Crimes - The BCA Predatory Crimes Section consists of special agents assigned to work with other

state, local and federal agencies on cases involving internet crimes against children, human trafficking, and locating and apprehending non-compliant predatory offenders. During fiscal years 2018 and 2019, the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Unit managed 2,308 cases, 651 of which were disseminated to ICAC affiliate agencies for follow-up investigation. The BCA opened 186 criminal investigations of which seven were submitted to the U. S. Attorney's Office for federal charges.

Technical Support - This unit provides expertise in the use of a wide range of covert investigative techniques, including undercover operatives, a variety of surveillance techniques, and the design and installation of covertly-deployed surveillance equipment. In 2018 this unit was responsible for the safe recovery of missing persons as well as the apprehension of violent fugitives and non-compliant predatory offenders.

Digital Evidence - This unit examines and analyzes digital evidence such as computers and cellular phones seized during criminal investigations. In fiscal year 2019, the BCA Multimedia Digital Evidence Unit examined more than 1,317 digital media devices (e.g. hard drives, cell phones, CDs) for over 154 criminal investigations. Digital information examined by the unit exceeded 170,000 terabytes.

Predatory Offender Registration (POR) Program - This unit maintains records on over 18,500 registered predatory offenders. That information is available to law enforcement and corrections agencies via a secure website. Agents assist local law enforcement with tracking and prosecuting non-compliant offenders and investigating sexual assaults. The POR Unit maintains a public website which containing information on non-compliant registrants and accepts public tips regarding their possible locations (www.por.state.mn.us).

Minnesota Fusion Center - Minnesota's designated fusion center collects, evaluates, analyzes and disseminates information regarding organized criminal, terrorist and all-hazards activity. The Fusion Center provides a state-based point of contact to coordinate information sharing between federal, state and local agencies (www.icefishx.org).

Missing and Unidentified Persons Clearinghouse - This unit assists local law enforcement agencies and medical examiners

on missing and unidentified person cases to locate and identify individuals. This unit coordinates DNA collection for entry into a national database and maintains a statewide missing and unidentified persons database.

Minnesota Duty Officer Program - Duty officers are on call 24/7 to assist local, state and federal agencies in cases of emergency, disaster or major events.

Operations Center - Provides resources and assistance to agents in the field, monitors and sends law enforcement messages, oversees the state's deconfliction program and provides building security.

AMBER Alert - This BCA-run system is instantly available to local law enforcement agencies when a child has been abducted. Once activated, the AMBER network transmits alerts to media outlets, law enforcement agencies, the Department of Transportation, thousands of businesses, cell phones and secondary distributors to help locate an abducted child in serious danger.

Blue Alert - This system is activated to help notify the public and locate suspects when a local, state or federal officer is killed or seriously wounded in the line of duty.

Minnesota Crime Alert Network - Local law enforcement agencies throughout the state use this network to send crime alerts via fax and email to thousands of businesses, media and community members containing information about crimes or criminals and seeking assistance in solving cases.

Narcotics Investigations - BCA undercover narcotics investigators work to disrupt the flow of illicit drugs into and within Minnesota, targeting large-scale enterprises and "hot spots" of drug activity. The BCA participates in the Drug Monitoring Initiative to help practitioners identify and prevent overdose deaths, and the Anti-Drug Investigators Task Force to target narcotics trafficking in Indian Country.

Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force - BCA agents work to support task force work on large scale financial crimes cases with a focus on those cases that involve identity theft related crimes.

Minnesota Justice Information Services (MNJIS) Division

Criminal Justice Data and Applications - The BCA's MNJIS Division provides statewide access to criminal justice data through more than 30 applications and systems to authorized users such as law enforcement, judicial branch, corrections, prosecution and public defense. Data is accessed through the BCA's secure network which complies with FBI security requirements. The goal of MNJIS is to maintain and disseminate accurate, timely and complete information for better decision-making. MNJIS provides authorized users who enter a name and password with a single portal for access to most information. MNJIS also focuses on integrating Minnesota criminal justice information systems by fostering collaboration among state, local, federal and other states' criminal justice systems for critical information sharing at key decision points throughout the criminal

justice process. MNJIS adheres to business and technical standards and industry best practices in maintaining data systems and architecture. Data accessible through the BCA include the following:

- Criminal History (Arrests, Convictions, Court Dispositions)
- Predatory Offenders
- Law Enforcement Incidents
- Crime Statistics
- Driver & Vehicle Data (MN and Other States)
- Fingerprints
- Wanted/Missing Persons
- Orders for Protection and Domestic Abuse Orders

- Prison, Jail & Detention
- Arrest/Booking Photos
- Stolen Property
- Charging Data (Complaints, Citations, Incidents, DWIs)
- Probation & Supervision
- Gun Background Checks and Permits to Carry

Criminal History Background Checks and Fingerprinting

Services - MNJIS processes criminal history background checks for both criminal justice and non-criminal justice (civil) purposes. Criminal justice background checks are performed for accurate identification, investigations, charging decisions, sentencing decisions, gun prohibitions, etc. Civil background checks are statutorily authorized and performed for teachers, school bus drivers, volunteers, adoption/foster care, healthcare and nursing home workers, private industry licenses, public housing, etc. Background checks are done by name/date-of-birth or by fingerprints, depending on what is statutorily required. Fingerprint technicians review all fingerprint submissions to confirm accurate identification and also compare against a latent file that contains finger or palm prints captured at crime scenes. Criminal fingerprints are submitted through electronic fingerprint devices (Livescans) and civil fingerprints are submitted through Livescans or on paper cards that are ink-and-rolled.

Service Desk Technical Support - The BCA Service Desk provides technical support to users in the field who are accessing BCA systems. Service Desk staff are available 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. On-call support is also available when critical systems are down or have major performance issues that impact BCA customers' ability to do their jobs 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. The Service Desk

offers support in gaining access, trouble-shooting, questions about functionality and appropriate use and other technical assistance to criminal justice practitioners statewide.

Minnesota Crime Reporting and Statistics - All Minnesota law enforcement agencies are statutorily required to submit their crime statistics to the BCA. This includes data on incidents and arrests as well as police officers killed or assaulted, firearms discharged/officer use-of-force, law enforcement pursuits, human trafficking, and bias-motivated hate crimes. The BCA publishes an annual Crime Book each July for the previous calendar year. Data is also submitted to the FBI for inclusion in national crime statistics. The FBI is mandating transition to a more detailed crime reporting methodology, the National Incident Based Crimes Reporting System (NIBRS), by 2021. MNJIS provides assistance to law enforcement agencies as they transition to the new system which allows law enforcement agencies, other criminal justice agencies, government entities, the media, and research and educational organizations to analyze and assess crime trends in Minnesota for more proactive planning and education.

Information Security Program - The BCA's information security office is responsible for ensuring that the BCA, its customers and its vendors that access criminal justice information are compliant with FBI and BCA security requirements. Each agency with access to BCA data is required to have its own Local Agency Security Officer (LASO). BCA security officers work closely with LASOs and audit agencies once every three years. MNJIS Security officers offer training throughout the state on compliance requirements and provide technical assistance to agencies on an individual basis as needed.

BCA Training and Auditing Section

Auditing Criminal Justice Information Systems -

Approximately 250 criminal justice agency audits are conducted each year to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and procedures and provide assistance regarding access, use and dissemination of criminal justice information.

Criminal Justice Training - More than 250 courses are provided to educate more than 8,000 criminal justice professionals on advanced investigative techniques; use, access and dissemination of criminal justice information; and physical evidence collection from crime scenes, latent fingerprinting,

arson investigation, forensic DNA analysis and drug investigation, along with training and certification on the operation of Minnesota's fleet of breath alcohol testing instruments.

Management Programs - These programs provide challenging and informative courses for criminal justice personnel who hold or aspire to hold management, supervisory or leadership roles in their organizations, and focus on the many strategies and skills needed to handle the challenges of managing their departments and accomplishing their organization's mission.

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