

6.12
CRAIG POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of Chief of Police
General Order

Date Issued: February 16, 2001
Subject: Digital Evidence
To: All Employees

Revision Date: April 27, 2009
Reference:

I. POLICY:

With the advent and utilization of digital technology, it is important that every measure be taken to preserve the integrity of images, digital voice recordings, digital video and the chain of evidence. It shall be the policy of the Craig Police Department to insure that images utilized to document a crime scene are preserved to maintain their integrity as evidence.

II. PROCEDURE:

The purpose of this procedure is to establish standards for the use and control of digital evidence by department personnel.

III. DEFINITIONS:

A. IMAGE – An imitation or representation of a person or thing, drawn, painted, photographed, etc.

B. DIGITAL IMAGE – An image that is stored in numerical form.

C. COPY IMAGE – A reproduction of information contained in a primary or original image.

D. DUPLICATE IMAGE – An accurate and complete replica of an original image, irrespective of media.

E. PRIMARY IMAGE – Refers to the first instance in which an image is recorded onto any image that is a separate, identifiable object or objects.

F. PROCESSED IMAGE – An output image (See Image Processing).

G. WORKING IMAGE – Any image subjected to processing.

H. ARCHIVING – Long-term storage of an image.

I. CAPTURE – The process of recording digital information.

J. CAPTURE DEVICE – A device used in the recording of digital information to include flash cards and thumb drives.

- K. FILE FORMAT** – The structure by which data is organized in a file.
- L. IMAGE ANALYSIS** – The extraction of information from an image.
- M. IMAGE ENHANCEMENT** – Any process intended to improve the visual appearance of an image.
- N. IMAGE OUTPUT** – The means by which an image is presented for examination or observation.
- O. IMAGE PROCESSING** – Any activity, which transforms any input image into an output image.
- P. IMAGE TRANSMISSION** – The act of moving images from one location to another.
- Q. IMAGE PROCESSING LOG** – A record of steps used in the processing of an image.
- R. IMAGE VERIFICATION** – A process by which personnel identify an image as being an accurate representation.
- S. INTERMEDIATE STORAGE** – Any media or device on which an image is temporarily stored for transfer to permanent or archival storage.
- T. NATIVE FILE FORMAT** – The file format of the primary image.
- U. STORAGE** – The act of preserving an image.
- V. DISK** – A disk used to save stored computerized data.
- W. MEMORY CARD** – A unique data information storage card in some digital cameras utilized to record and save digital images.
- X. CD** – Compact Disk utilized for the storing of digital information.
- Y. WRITE ONLY CD-ROM SYSTEM** – A computerized write/save system of storing digital information in a permanent manner.
- Z. DVR**- Digital Voice Recording
- AA. THUMB DRIVE**- Device used to store or capture digital information
- BB. DOWNLOAD** – moving digital information from a capture device, flashcard or thumb drive to another capture device, flashcard or thumb drive

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Taking of Pictures

1. The first digital image or photograph taken should document the date, time, case report number, and officer number. To do this, legibly fill out the description sheet.
2. Subject matter should range from the general to specific.
 - a. Take overall photographs of the entire scene to show its relationship to the surrounding areas.
 - b. Take mid-range photographs to show the relationship of the evidence in the scene.
 - c. Take close-up photographs that show the detail of the evidence item.
 - d. Take close-up photographs with a photo evidence scale present to document relative size of the evidence.
 - e. Fill the frame with the evidence and scale when taking the close-up
3. When photographing persons, take:
 - a. Overall photographs of person front and back.
 - b. Mid-range photographs to show injuries and other body parts.
 - c. Close-up photography (with and without scale) in regards to scars, marks, tattoos and injuries.

B. Submission and documentation of flash cards.

1. Remove flash cards with the primary image(s) from the camera.
2. Place the flash cards inside a small envelope and mark the envelope with the following information:
 - a. Case report number.
 - b. Dates the photographs/images were taken.
 - c. Name and identification number of the person who took the photographs/images.
3. Place the envelope in the drop slot in the evidence room. ~~disk.~~

4. The flash card will be removed by the Evidence Technician and archived to a master DVD and a copy of the images will be placed in the shared drive.

5. Only the Evidence Technician will archive all the primary digital images in their original, unaltered format, from the flash card to a master DVD with a DVD writer under a directory/file folder utilizing the original case report number as the name for the directory/file folder. A copy of the same shall be placed on the shared drive as a working copy for the officer's use.

C. Printing and distribution of images.

1. Images will be printed on an as needed basis for trial and on-going investigations. Emphasis will be placed on electronic transfer/digital image transmission of duplicate images whenever possible. All duplicate images will be copied in an unaltered native file format as that of the original.

2. Other manners of appropriate distribution of duplicate images will be copying the duplicate images from the DVD to another DVD, or other media.

3. All requests for printed or duplicate images for the District Attorney's office, private attorneys, insurance companies, private citizens and others will be determined on a case-by-case basis and handled through the Craig Police Department's Evidence Technician. Emphasis will be placed on electronic transfer/digital image transmission or duplication of images via DVD whenever possible.

D. Working with images.

1. Primary image files from digital cameras or other digital image files will be archived to a write only DVD or permanent storage and indexed under the original case report number.

2. Primary images must be stored/archived on compact disk in their native file format from the camera and/or disk.

3. No alterations or obliterations of primary images will be allowed

4. Only duplicate images of the primary images will be transmitted. Processing to improve the image quality will be limited to those used with traditional negative based processing:

a. Correct contrast/ sharpen focus

b. Brightness

- c. Correct color balance
- d. Enlarge the image or part of it.
- e. Crop.
- f. Red Eye.

5. Manipulation, actually altering properties of the image, will only be performed on a copy of the original. This may involve, but is not limited to:

- a. Sharpness enhancement
- b. Removal/addition of objects/features
- c. Use of images in court displays.

6. Under no circumstances will a corrected or manipulated image be substituted for the original/primary image. All processed images will be saved as a separate file. They may be permanently stored on a CD with the original images, but will be specified as a copy and will not be saved in the native camera format.

7. If any manipulations are made on a copy of a photograph, a supplemental report must be written documenting the procedures utilized.

8. The supplemental report will detail the following:

- a. What program was utilized to publish the pictures.
- b. The date and time the pictures were published.
- c. What digital processing procedures were used to publish the photographs/images.
- d. Any enhancements or other alterations to the photograph/images made during the publishing should be recorded in the report along with an explanation of why an enhancement was conducted.
- e. Name of employee who enhanced the photographs.

E. Protocols for Flash Cards and DVR

In an effort to cut down on the number of Compact Discs and DVD's, Envelopes and Storage Bags being used by officers and to decrease the number of items being submitted and stored in the evidence room, the following protocol will be

observed when submitting DVR recordings and Flashcards from the in-car camera's;

Digital Voice Recorders

1. Create a **New Folder** on your desk top and **Name** it the same as the case you are working on.
2. Download the information from the **DVR** into the **Folder** you have just created and named.
3. When all of the information has been downloaded into the folder, copy that folder from the desk top onto your **Thumb Drive** via a **USB Port**.
4. Once the Folder and its contents are on the thumb drive, place the thumb drive into a small manila envelope and write **Your Name** on the outside of the envelope, then place it through the drop slot in the evidence prep room.
5. The Folder from the thumb drive will be downloaded to a secure file that is on the network, by the Investigative Technician and will be stored as evidence.
6. The thumb drive will be returned to the officer's box and it will be the **officer's responsibility to delete** information from the thumb drive.

In-Car Camera Digital Flash Cards

1. Remove the **Flash Card** from the in-car camera.
2. Place the flash card in a **small manila envelope**, with **your name** on the outside of the envelope.
3. Send the **Investigative Technician** (Blake Abdella) an **e-mail** with the **case number** for the case you are working on and the **numbers associated with the file** you want saved as evidence.
4. When the Investigative Tech receives your **flash card and e-mail**, said Tech will create a folder, download the file the officer is requesting and then place the folder in a secure file that is on the network, where it will be stored as evidence.
5. The flash card will be returned to the officer's box and it will be the **officer's responsibility to delete** the information from the flash card.

Authorized By:



Walter K. Vanatta
Chief of Police