

# Looking into CIA

Far from a glamorous Hollywood fiction, CIA is a valuable policing tool

**Criminal investigative analysis (CIA) or profiling as it's termed in the US, far from being glamorous Hollywood fiction, is a valuable, everyday tool available in-house to ACT Policing and AFP investigators. As well as providing often crucial assessments of the criminal character through crime-scene analysis, profiler expertise can be used in a variety of cases – even before a crime has been committed.**

Criminal investigative analysis is a process of reviewing and assessing the facts of a criminal act and interpreting offender behaviour and interaction with the victim as exhibited through evidence at the crime scene. It reviews all the information available including observations of the crime scene, analysis of victim history (known as victimology), forensic information, investigative reports, relevant statements and medical reports.

In 1997, Sergeant Caroline Kerr (then with Western Australia Police) was offered an understudy position in the International Criminal Investigative Analysis Fellowship sponsored by Detective Inspector Bronwyn Killmier of the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence.

As part of the training, Inspector Killmier arranged for two agents from the FBI's Behavioural Science Unit to come to Canberra and provide training to five Australian understudies.

During the next six weeks, this group underwent extensive theoretical training and a major alteration of perspective on how to view crime in general and violent crime in particular.

At the completion of the initial course in Canberra, the five participants were given specific objectives and further training courses to undertake in their own time. As part of her further development, Sergeant Kerr went on call to attend all suspicious deaths, and spent four months understudying with the Western Australia Forensic Pathology unit observing autopsies and post-mortem procedures.

During this time, the whole concept of CIA, although interesting in theory, hadn't really sunk in for Sergeant Kerr until one Friday in November 1997 when she was called to attend a suspicious death in East Perth.

"In this case the victim had not been seen by neighbours since the previous Sunday," she said.

"Police attending the call located unopened newspapers near the front door and the front sitting room window was missing glass."

When police entered the house, all lights were off and the door to the dining area was closed. The victim's body was behind this door in a sleep-out area and was in an advanced state of decomposition, lying face up. The deceased's head was surrounded by a pool of drying blood.

A kitchen window was open and a strong smell of gas was apparent throughout the house; the gas stove was turned on, but was unlit. A carton of milk was standing on the kitchen floor.

On discovering the body, attending police called for investigators and forensic support.

“I attended with the forensic pathologist and a lengthy wait ensued as the scene was processed”, Sergeant Kerr said.

“I realised then how important statements were in determining what police had touched, moved or otherwise disturbed during their initial entry, impacting on the crime scene. Forensic evidence had to be clarified to identify and eliminate accidental contamination by the police.”

Were doors open or closed; lights on or off; did they move, touch or otherwise disturb furniture? All this was essential to identify and separate offender behaviour from others.

Later, victimology established that the milk carton on the floor of the kitchen was not in keeping with the victim’s habits and was therefore possibly connected with the activity of an offender. Forensic evidence not belonging to the victim was located on the milk carton.

Crime-scene examination in this case eventually spread to the whole house and yard, with forensic evidence located throughout.

The victim was a 66-year-old male described by neighbours as reclusive and quiet. He was retired and lived off a small, fortnightly superannuation payment. Very little was uncovered about the victim’s habits as he had few friends or regular contacts.

Police eventually reconstructed the victim’s last few days from discussions with neighbours, ATM receipts, purchase receipts and neighbourhood questionnaires.

Time of death was narrowed down from entomology (the study of insects) results, post-mortem changes to the body and incidental evidence

such as the unopened newspapers and expiry dates on food matched with food receipt purchases.

Post-mortem examination of the body revealed multiple injuries to the victim, including lacerations and fractures. The pathologist reconstructed the timing of each injury relative to death (some injuries occurring after death), the victim’s position and offender’s position. Size, and shape of the weapons used was also analysed.

All evidence indicated significant behavioural interaction between the offender and the victim and provided great insight into the offender’s personality type.

Evidence suggested that the offender had also searched through cupboards and drawers, closed a door to conceal the body, attempted to light a fire on the body, placed items on and around the body and left the milk out on the floor. They had turned on the gas stove in the kitchen, possibly to contribute to the fire on the body.

There was some indication that the offender had also returned to the scene and tried to clean up. This suggested that the offender felt some level of comfort at the scene and was not concerned about being disturbed, suggesting further that the offender may have had some knowledge of the victim and of his living arrangements.

A number of different weapons had been used on the victim, some of which had been left at the scene while others had been removed or concealed. Extensive forensic evidence including fingerprints, DNA and shoe impressions were eventually found. This, along with other behaviours exhibited at the scene suggested a disorganised offender, one likely to have been affected by drugs and/or alcohol and/or mentally ill. Youth is also a common factor in these types of crimes and it was assessed that all three traits were probably present in this offender.

A lack of victimology made it difficult to discern if items were missing from the house, but it appeared the victim’s house keys were missing as well as packets



of cigarettes the victim had purchased recently, and possibly some money - suggesting an offender who was comfortable breaking into houses taking only items that were easy to carry. This further suggested the offender was likely to be on foot and therefore likely to be living in the vicinity.

The taking of cigarettes and small amounts of cash from a scene are often associated with offenders who are very young, on low income, unemployed or on welfare. Socio-economic status could help to determine the type of accommodation he or she would live in. The demographics of this neighbourhood suggested it was probably a hostel or backpacker-type residence.

Other behaviours suggested the offender was probably 17-25 years of age; a regular drug and/or alcohol abuser with a high probability they may have come to police attention immediately before or after the event. They were likely to have a criminal history including property offences, drug offences and assaults. Fingerprints would be on record somewhere and their behaviour would have attracted the attention of others, including neighbours of the victim.

Criminal investigative analysis is a powerful tool which, in this case, aided investigators in focusing their resources on the immediate neighbourhood. Thanks to the profile generated by the criminal investigative analyst, investigators on this case significantly reduced the number of persons of interest and quickly honed in on the offender. It is, however, not a replacement for hard work and a thorough investigation.

Sergeant Kerr said the investigation allowed her to see the theory of CIA in practice and she was very fortunate to be guided through the process by former Victorian police officer and International Criminal Investigative Analysis Fellow Claude Minisini of FBIS International.

## CIA can aid investigators in focusing their resources

“Mr Minisini was on contract to WA Police at the time for the Macro serial murder investigation and through him I was exposed to a number of different techniques and concepts,” she said.

“When I returned to Canberra in 1998 I was much better prepared for the eight-week training we underwent with two more FBI agents and two recently qualified profilers from the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.”

In 1999, as part of her fellowship, Sergeant Kerr was sent to the USA where she understudied with Captain David Caldwell from the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and Lieutenant Mike Prodan, attended the 198th FBI National Academy where she undertook general training focusing on behavioural science and travelled to the Ontario Provincial Police’s Behavioural Science Section and trained with Sergeant Jim Van Allen.

In 2000 Sergeant Kerr returned to the USA, again for a period of understudy with Special Agent Leslie D’Ambrosia of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, based in Miami.

In every instance, these periods involved working real cases, writing reports, consulting on cases and liaising with investigators, forensic officers, pathologists and other experts.

Training in CIA is an ongoing process and predominantly involves working cases and getting exposure to as many different types as possible. All this is done under the supervision of a sponsor.

Since commencing in the field, Sergeant Kerr has had a number of enquiries from others wanting to get into the area.

“I like to be candid about their prospects in this field because I have seen lots of money and time invested resulting in a great deal of disappointment,” she said.

“There are a number of pre-requisites for entry into the ICIAF including being a sworn, serving police officer with seven to 10 years investigative experience (a violent- or sexual-crime background preferred) and sponsorship into the program by an ICIAF full fellow.

“I love what I do and hope to continue in this field while I still have that enjoyment. As the DNA/Behavioural Team Leader, the AFP is allowing me to use this unique skill set in preparing unknown offender profiles for cases involving DNA evidence and providing an investigative tool in prioritising the DNA samples for processing.

“This is of particular value in situations of mass screenings like those that occurred in the NSW towns of Wee Waa in 2000 and Gerroa in 2003. I have also used my skills extensively in missing persons cases and a review of ACT missing persons will be one of my team’s priorities.”

Sergeant Kerr says that while she remains with the AFP she will endeavour to supply a CIA service to all who could benefit from its application and invites interested members to contact her at [caroline.kerr@afp.gov.au](mailto:caroline.kerr@afp.gov.au)

# I love what I do and hope to continue in the field while I still have that enjoyment

Criminal investigative analysis is not limited to homicides and may be of assistance in the following areas:

- Profile of the Unknown Offender – designed to assist the investigative group in identifying and prioritising potential suspects. Investigators typically receive a written report detailing a variety of analytical opinions and the reasons for those opinions. Also included is a personality description of the type of person who most likely committed the crime. Investigative suggestions are offered to assist investigators in applying the analysis operationally. This product requires an in-depth analysis of the crime(s) involved.
- Indirect Personality Assessment – involves the analysis and interpretation of the personality, habits and behaviour of a known individual, based on information furnished by people other than the suspect. Interview/interrogation strategies, undercover approaches/scenarios and/or intervention strategies (in the case of threats, stalkers) can flow from this product.
- Threat Assessment – involves the analysis of threats made against an individual or corporation. A written report is provided outlining an assessment of the potential for violence based on the information known at the time. The reasons for that assessment are provided, along with investigative and intervention suggestions. Threat assessments have been provided in cases of domestic violence, threats against members, threats of school violence, threats against judges and politicians.
- Statement Analysis (SCAN) – involves the analysis of “pure-version” statements to identify deception and/or areas of sensitivity for the author. This technique can be used on letters and/or statements provided by individuals that have not been questioned or otherwise “contaminated” by investigators. SCAN can also be used in analysing media releases and/or other open statements. It also provides a number of questionnaires which can be used as an initial screening tool when dealing with groups of suspects, for example, theft where employees are suspected.
- Equivocal Death Analysis – this product provides a written opinion as to the most likely manner of death (accident, suicide or homicide) based on a thorough analysis of all the information known about the victim and the circumstances of the death.

## Not all cases are easy or successful

- Training/Education/Information/Case Consultation – the unit provides training to all police personnel. One-on-one, small-group explanations of various types of offenders (sex offenders, child molesters, psychopaths and so on) can be provided in conjunction with specific cases.
- Early-Stage Investigative Consultation – on-site or telephone consultation, in the early stages of an investigation provides a behavioral interpretation of the facts. This process is less than a full profile or personality assessment, and changes as more information is uncovered. This service can be useful in generating early leads, identifying the significance of existing information or interpreting the crime scene.
- Search Warrant Assistance – Criminal investigative analysis research has shown that specific types of offenders commonly possess certain behaviour and personality traits. This information can be particularly beneficial in support of affidavits for search warrants.

In the East Perth investigation, it turned out the 21-year-old male eventually arrested and charged was living in a hostel a few blocks from the victim's home. He had been subject to a number of intelligence

reports in the months and weeks before the murder due to erratic and unusual behaviour.

Police had coincidentally arrested and charged him with burglary offences two days after the murder and he was in prison when police interviewed him about this case.

During a neighbourhood canvas, neighbours described a strange young man seen around the area - at one time in the victim's yard. These descriptions were later matched with that of the offender. Fingerprints confirmed his presence in the house along with DNA evidence located on the milk carton.

He was newly arrived in Western Australia from South Australia, Victoria and Queensland, having served terms of imprisonment in each state for violent assaults and drug-related offences. He had an extensive prison and mental health history, which provided an interesting background in the lead up to this offence.

There was a great deal more involved with this investigation including behaviours and evidence that cannot be revealed here, however, in this instance, the personality profile of the offender proved to be accurate.

Unfortunately not all cases are this easy, nor the results so successful, but in criminal investigative analysis, investigators have an additional powerful and valuable tool at their disposal.