



**Washington State Patrol
Crime Laboratory Division
Clandestine Laboratory Response Technical
Procedures**

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION

In addition to in-house analysis of suspected clandestine laboratory evidence, there exists a Clandestine Laboratory Response Team (CLRT) which can offer expertise in the area of the clandestine manufacture of illicit substances at the crime scene in a designated safe zone. The purpose of the CLRT section of this manual is to provide CLRT members with procedures and guidance that will:

- Further the Crime Laboratory Division (CLD) commitment to providing the highest quality forensic services, which ultimately enhances public safety for the citizens of Washington
- Promote seamless procedures between CLD work inside and outside the laboratory
- Ensure that the services provided at clandestine laboratory scenes is of the highest quality
- Establish guidelines for service requests that ensure a high level of customer service

The procedures in this section of the manual are designed to complement the information in the Washington State Patrol (WSP) Crime Laboratory Division Operations Manual (CLD OM) and Quality Manual (CLD QM). These documents provide the definitive statements of policies and procedures for all work conducted by CLD employees within the individual laboratories of the Division, or while outside the laboratory, whether at crime scenes, in court, training venues, or anywhere else the assigned duties of CLD personnel might take them. Therefore, procedures in this manual are not intended to supersede the Division manuals.

The purpose of this manual is to assist CLRT members in performing their duties as on-site advisors during the investigation of suspected or known clandestine laboratories. It serves as one source of information on clan lab response procedures commonly used by the WSP CLD. This manual is not intended to include an explicit direction for every situation encountered in the field, and should not be expected to provide all-inclusive procedures for responding to clandestine laboratory activity.

1.1 THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE CLRT WITHIN THE CLD

Clan Lab Response is a service associated with Clandestine Laboratory Analysis, part of the Materials Analysis section within the CLD of the WSP. As such, much of the advice and guidance that can be provided are based on the methods and procedures specific to Clan Lab Response that come out of the Materials Analysis discipline. Additionally, field response issues are typically covered by the Crime Scene Response discipline. For this reason, the Clan Lab Response Procedures Manual will also draw from the (CSRT) manuals in establishing guidelines for field response.

The CLRT provides advice to law enforcement agencies in the investigation of suspected clandestine laboratories. This advice may include: hazard recognition, evidence recognition, evidence collection, what type of material is being manufactured, methods of manufacture, and/or scene documentation. This advisement may take the form of on-site response outside of the established hot zone, secured agency facilities, or remote consultation (e.g. by phone or e-mail). Discretion will be utilized to ensure that any response meets the needs of the customer while maintaining the priorities of the WSP. Denial of service may be necessary in instances where personnel are unavailable, budget constraints prohibit response, or the needs of the customer cannot be fulfilled by WSP CLRT. Any reason for non-response will be communicated fully with the user agency by CLRT personnel and/or the CLRT Coordinator. The CSRT Coordinator will also be notified.

1.2 QUALITY ASSURANCE

All clan lab response scientists will work to continually maintain the highest degree of quality and integrity of laboratory services and to ensure that forensic conclusions are scientifically sound and

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valid. To this end, services performed by the CLRT shall meet generally recognized standards of the forensic community and its accrediting organizations. All analysts are required to familiarize themselves with the appropriate manuals and implement the CLD quality assurance policies and procedures in their work.

2 PRECAUTIONS AND SAFETY

2.1 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

CLD maintains a health and safety program designed to safeguard employees from service-related injuries and health problems. The CLD Safety Manual documents the health and safety program of the CLD.

2.2 GENERAL SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLAN LAB RESPONSE PERSONNEL

The law enforcement agency requesting CLRT assistance is responsible for providing scene security. CLRT personnel shall not respond to a scene until security has been established. All clandestine laboratory scenes are to be approached cautiously with initial attentiveness to safety and continued alertness to potential hazards. CLRT personnel are responsible for following the safety procedures identified in the WSP CLD Safety Manual in addition to any safety precautions merited by the presence of the individual on-scene.

2.3 PRECAUTIONS AGAINST ROUTES OF BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL CONTAMINATION

Standard laboratory safety protocols are to be followed in the field. In addition to hazardous materials CLD personnel may encounter at the crime scene, there are safety precautions particular to the use of chemical agents that may be essential to the crime scene analyst's work. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as gloves, protective eyewear, appropriate respirators, and proper ventilation, shall be employed, when required, to limit contact with biological and chemical reagents.

Other issues to consider when called out to service:

- Awareness of explosives and/or other anti-personnel devices
- Awareness of confined spaces
- Attention to ventilation and inhalation hazards
- Awareness of the potential for toxic gases, explosive or oxygen-deficient atmospheres
- Assessment of materials that could engulf and overwhelm personnel near to the space
- Electrical dangers
- Potential need for atmospheric monitoring
- Respiratory and other PPE appropriate to the environment

Any confined space that contains unique hazards or requires special training will not be available for CLRT advisement until the conditions are made safe or appropriately-trained personnel are present.

2.4 FOLLOW-UP SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Although CLRT members will not be directly handling evidence, the following information is advice that should be communicated to the agency being assisted. All evidence will be packaged by the responding agency to prevent deleterious change such as exposure and contamination. Attention should be paid to potential seepage of liquid evidence into/out of packaging material.

Disposable materials contaminated with a potentially infectious material will be packaged and marked for disposal as a biohazard. The requesting agency is responsible for transportation and disposal of all materials from the scene.

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3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties and responsibilities associated with Clan Lab Response follow the chain of command structure of the CLD and are defined within the WSP CLD OM. The Organizational Charts on the FLSB Portal illustrates the structure of authority along which both responsibilities and communications flow.

3.1 PERSONNEL

CLRT Coordinator

The role of the CLRT Coordinator is to maintain the call-out schedule, serve as back-up point of communication for CLD or other agency contact, coordinate technical reviews of the completed request reports, present reports to management and other stakeholders, coordinate training opportunities for team members and user agencies, and other similar duties. The CLRT coordinator is expected to respond to call outs during their call-out periods. These duties can be delegated to other CLRT personnel at the discretion of the Division Commander.

Clan Lab Response Team Scientist

A CLRT Scientist is a scientist authorized to perform casework in clandestine laboratory analysis who has been given further duties to act as an on-site advisor for law enforcement agencies investigating the clandestine manufacture of an illicit material. They are responsible for any resulting report and any courtroom testimony.

Clan Lab Response Team Trainee

The CLRT Trainee is a scientist who has not had previous direct experience with Clan Lab Response but who (a) has been authorized to perform clandestine laboratory analysis and (b) has completed the other requirements specified in the training manual and (c) who continues to perform casework and other duties at an acceptably high level. The length of time a scientist spends in trainee status depends on opportunities to accompany experienced Clan Lab Responders to service call-outs and successful completion of other requirements dictated by the training manual.

3.2 INITIAL RESPONSE

Initial requests for CLRT assistance generally come from the on-call Crime Scene Response Team (CSRT) personnel. On occasion, if the on-call CSRT coordinator is not reachable, requests may come from WSP-SWAT or other law enforcement agencies dealing directly with clandestine laboratories, and can be handled directly at the discretion of the CLRT member. The on-call CLRT member will evaluate the request to deem the appropriateness of CLRT response, as well as documenting the initial scene information, including the requesting agency and agency representative contact information. The CLRT Coordinator should be notified of the call. The CLRT coordinator will notify the CSRT coordinator that a response has been requested and the status of the response to that request.

CLRT personnel are expected to obtain and document key information immediately upon receipt of the initial request. This includes the date and time of the request, specific information regarding the scene, the source of that information, and may include, but is not limited to, the address, description of the location, time, date, type of call, the parties involved, and specific concerns regarding observations of clan lab activity.

A key element of this service is the creation of 'hot-zone' and 'cold-zone' areas of response. The hot-zone is defined as that part of the crime scene where the laboratory is (or was) actively functioning, generally a structure or vehicle of some kind. The cold-zone is outside of this defined

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area but may still be within the established crime scene boundaries. The cold zone is generally considered an area where it is safe to operate without the use of special PPE. Regardless of the placement of the cold-zone, all CLRT personnel will adhere to crime scene protocols established by the responsible agency.

Additional steps in initial response include obtaining contact information for an investigator at the scene, and providing the requesting agency with an estimated time of arrival.

For responses that may be scheduled at a later date (e.g., viewing evidence at an agency's secure evidence facility), every effort will be made to conduct the response during normal business hours

3.3 PRELIMINARY SCENE APPROACH

Document any initial information provided by the requesting law enforcement agency including obtaining a completed Request for Laboratory Examination (RFLE) form based on information from the requesting agency. This initial documentation should include the name of the investigating agency and case number, if one is available, the contact information including phone number and e-mail address of the lead investigator, the scene location, and suspect/victim information (if known).

3.4 SCENE ASSESSMENT

Initial scene assessment is designed to ensure that the CLRT Responder is being appropriately involved. Consultation with requesting agencies will identify boundaries encompassing all potential areas of interest; clearly establish the hot-zone/cold-zone boundaries, and any major safety concerns regarding the evidence present. Staging areas that are present should be clearly identified as such.

Any biological, chemical, or explosive hazards will be identified upon initial scene assessment. Should additional hazards become apparent after scene processing has begun, CLRT personnel will be aware of the possibility of redefining hot-zone and cold-zone areas, especially if a staging area in a cold-zone becomes a hot-zone.

3.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF RESPONSE

The scope of the CLRT response is defined by the requesting agency and the responding team's capabilities as defined in this manual. Requests for hot-zone participation in scene response cannot be taken.

CLRT Responders can do the following, within the bounds of their education, training and experience:

- Offer verbal advice on a wide range of chemical and clandestine laboratory topics.
- Offer suggestions to investigating personnel on how best to collect, store, and transport evidence for analysis in the laboratory; however, they may not actively participate in the collection, storage, or transport of evidence.
- Carry laptop computers with appropriate library reference materials and books appropriate for response. These materials may be shared with other response personnel as appropriate.
- Assess digital images acquired as part of the investigation. Digital images assessed by the CLRT from the investigating agency while actively processing suspected clandestine laboratories will be treated as working copies by CLD staff for consultation purposes only. Digital images and/or video obtained by the investigating agency may be submitted to the CLD along with collected evidence samples for Clan Lab analysis.

3.6 DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

The following documents should be part of the case file for routine CLRT call-outs.

- A Request for Laboratory Examination (RFLE)
- A document that lists the following information (this may be Form CHEM-CLIGI-5023 or a clean sheet of paper):
 - The name, date, and time of the first contact.
 - Requesting agency, agency case number, and contact personnel information
 - Location of suspected clan lab activity and officer in charge at scene
 - Suspect name and date of birth (if available)
 - WSP CLD Case Number
 - Forensic scientist(s) at scene, date and time of arrival and departure
 - Any known safety issues particular to the scene (odors, equipment, etc.)
- A draft report and a final report that contain the following elements:
 - Standard report heading (see CLD Operations Manual 4.3.2 for details)
 - A statement reflecting that the scientist did respond to a request for clandestine laboratory response at the address at a particular date and time.
 - A brief synopsis of services rendered (e.g., provided guidance on sampling evidence, assessed photographs to provide information, provided guidance on which evidence to submit for clan lab analysis).
 - A statement reflecting what time the scientist left the scene.
- Documentation of other communication: phone notes, e-mails, etc.
- Reports should be completed as soon as practical following attendance at the scene. Ideally, an initial draft report should be ready for review within 24-72 hours following scene activities.

3.7 REVIEW PROCESS

All case reports shall undergo both peer and administrative review, following the elements described in the Operations Manual Section 4.3 and Quality Manual Section 9. Both the peer and administrative review may be performed by the same person. Successful peer review will be indicated by the reviewer's initials on the draft copy of the report and check-off in LIMS. Successful administrative review will be indicated by check-off in LIMS. The goal is to have the peer review completed as soon as practical following receipt of the case for review. Ideally, the peer review will be initiated within 24-72 of receiving the file for review.

3.8 TIME ACCOUNTING

All response activities and review associated with CLRT response activities will be coded as 4411.

3.9 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Occasions may arise where a call for assistance is received, advice is given over the phone, but no on-scene assistance is needed. In this situation, a RFLE will be generated with agency case information, but no request will be opened. Phone notes and any other supporting documentation will be included in the case file. A note will be placed in the Case Info tab in LIMS documenting that a phone consultation was provided, but no on-scene response. Activities can be added at the bottom of the Case Info tab. Select the laboratory (if not preselected); for the department enter Crime Scene, for the service enter Clandestine Drug Lab Investigation, and for the activity enter Clandestine Drug Lab Investigation. For these types of cases, no report will be issued. The

phone notes and supporting documentation will be provided to the CLRT Coordinator who will review. When evidence is received into the laboratory for analysis, as with any submission, the agency case number will be searched in LIMS so as to connect the request for analysis with the original laboratory case number assigned to the phone consultation.

4 OTHER ACTIVITIES

In addition to responding to requests for service, other services may be requested of CLRT Responders. They are expected to take an active leadership role in representing the CLD to agencies who perform clan lab response and interacting with the field agents directly. This does not preclude other clan lab analysts from doing this; rather, it becomes an expectation as part of the CLRT. Activities include (but are not limited to) providing training assistance for user agencies, participating in WSP SWAT and other agency training functions, and conducting research on newly emerging methods.