



# **CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE ONTARIO**

## **MOBILE SURVEILLANCE TRAINING PROGRAM**

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Lesson Plan

NOTE TAKING

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February 2003

## **ADMINISTRATIVE STATEMENT**

Information directly related to specific investigative procedures is contained within this document. Therefore, due to current and ongoing operational field investigative considerations, and the Occupational Health and Safety legislation for the Province of Ontario, the contents of this document is considered “**Classified**” and may only be released to those individuals and/or agencies upon appropriate justification being submitted to and on the authority of the Director, C.I.S.O. - Provincial Bureau. The general release of this information is prohibited as such release would unduly jeopardize current investigative projects, and, place peace officers, agents and/or informants at unacceptable personal risk.

For accurate references to the Criminal Code and any other related federal and/or provincial statutes, including related case decisions, recourse must be made to the official volumes.

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**TOPIC:                   NOTES AND NOTE TAKING****OBJECTIVE:**

At the conclusion of this presentation and the training course, the student will be able to:

- (1) Describe the appropriate method of recording surveillance information;
- (2) Describe the types of notes;
- (3) State how to compare notes;
- (4) Discuss debriefing methods through use of notes;
- (5) Discuss the impact of notes;
- (6) State issues to avoid when making notes;
- (7) Compare various recording methods - individual notes, central note taker, electronic recording media;
- (8) Validate variances in recorded information (differences in individual recorded data);
- (9) Demonstrate how to testify from notes;

through the use of question & answer technique, guided discussion, individual/syndicate and practical exercises, as assessed by Course Staff.

**STUDENT LEVEL:**           Experienced Law Enforcement Investigator

**METHODOLOGY:**           Lecture/Developmental, Guided Discussion and Debriefing  
Individual and Syndicate Assignments

**TIME ALLOWED:**           Classroom Session: 1.5 hours.

**VENUES:**                   Classroom, external environment as selected.

**REQUIREMENTS:**       Student Notes/binder, Operational Notebook & related forms  
As determined by Course Staff

**STAFFING:**                Course Staff as assigned.  
Experienced Mobile Surveillance Officer

**EQUIPMENT:**\_\_\_\_\_   Classroom:   OH projector, flip charts, markers, VCR & TV  
External:    radios, cell phones

**HANDOUTS:**              Classroom:   Point Form - Student Notes.

**REFERENCES:**

C.I.S.O. Physical Surveillance Manual  
C.I.S.O. Surveillance Video  
Criminal Code of Canada (R.S.C.)

Canada Evidence Act (R.S.C.)  
Police Services Act (R.S.O.)

**DIRECTIONS TO INSTRUCTOR:**

**Pre-session:** Secure a variety of notes set up in digital format for screen display.

From the C.I.S.O. Surveillance Video prepare at least 3 scenarios which can be read aloud to the class as an exercise in taking notes while a surveillance is ongoing. Make correct digital notes on each of your scenarios so that during exercise debriefing the students can see and compare their notes with the approved version.

**Session:** This training session should use a practical (in-classroom) approach, utilizing the students themselves and course staff to engage in applying the desired approach. Be prepared to inject a scenario into the session at those times which present the best opportunity to enhance student activity and discussion. The students must provide the answers through their own creativity and ingenuity, both individually and in syndicate format. This will provide the necessary motivation to use that same creativity and ingenuity when engaged in a mobile surveillance operation. You will demonstrate your motivation through your enthusiasm and commitment in mentoring the students both in the classroom and in the practical exercise sessions.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

You may raise the question that you have received instruction in how to make good notes. You may further raise the question that your notes have sustained you in court already and even established you as a good note taker. Good. Then this session will positively reinforce your activities. Your notes are the record of the surveillance operation. Clear, concise and accurate notes are the mark of a professional at work. Correct notes provide the benchmark by which others - the courts, your team, other officers, the public - will judge your performance, integrity and capability. It follows that you must follow correct note taking activities.

## **PRESENTATION:**

Q.T.C.: What is the correct way to record information?

*(Instructor: avoid providing answers to students - use prompts, cues, etc. to have students think and provide you with the answers through you leading them and through classroom discussion.)*

A.R.:

- use pen
- notes must be continuous, no blanks and in chronological order
- identify the assignment
- weather
- who did you work with
- who was note taker
- briefing
- individuals observation recorded
- debrief information
- reminder to yourself to prompt followup
- each observation/entry should include enough detail that it can be extracted and stand on its own in court

Q.T.C.: What are the types of notes?

*(Instructor: avoid providing answers to students - use prompts, cues, etc. to have students think and provide you with the answers through you leading them and through classroom discussion.)*

A.R.:

- central notes
- individual notes
- central and individual notes

INSTRUCTOR: Describe notes. Must not recommend one method over another unless we state “..... is the recommended best practice where an operating procedure currently doesn’t exist within my agency”.

Q.T.C.: How do you ensure the activity has been recorded correctly and methods by which to amend?

*(Instructor: avoid providing answers to students - use prompts, cues, etc. to have students think and provide you with the answers through you leading them and through classroom discussion.)*

A.R.:

- use copies of notes and notebooks as a comparator

Q.T.C.: Why and what is the appropriate method of checking your notes against the operation?

*(Instructor: avoid providing answers to students - use prompts, cues, etc. to have students think and provide you with the answers through you leading them and through classroom discussion.)*

A.R.:

- check your notes against the actions reported during the surveillance debriefing to ensure accuracy in the report to the investigator
- verbally ask the officer making the observation at the first opportunity

Q.T.C.: What is the impact of notes?

*(Instructor: avoid providing answers to students - use prompts, cues, etc. to have students think and provide you with the answers through you leading them and through classroom discussion.)*

A.R.:

- evidence/testimony
- an up-to-the-minute account of the investigation

- a record of how the surveillance operation worked
- your “permanent” memory of the events
- you might get confused over time but the written record does not

Q.T.C.: What are the issues to avoid when making notes?

*(Instructor: avoid providing answers to students - use prompts, cues, etc. to have students think and provide you with the answers through you leading them and through classroom discussion.)*

A.R.:

- opinion, except when germane to the investigation
- codes and buzz words and phrases (short forms are acceptable)
- trendy talk except when being reported as actually said
- specific location of officers making observation or techniques used

### **PRACTICAL SCENARIO OPPORTUNITY:**

INSTRUCTOR: Insert selected scenario. Present scenario to students. Use pictures and oral or written instructions. Can be used for syndicates, if required. Suggest limiting to individual activity given lesson content and time allotted. Ensure sufficient time for student responses to exercise requirements.

MANDATORY - all students must be participating. Carefully evaluate the individual and the response.

### **SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:**

Clear, concise and accurate notes are the hallmark of a professional law enforcement officer. Actually, nothing less is acceptable. You are only a professional when you act like a professional. Only when this is your consistent behaviour, will your written word be granted the level of integrity you are seeking.