



Fact Sheet

Public Affairs Division - Washington DC



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Criminal Profiling Program

Since 1986, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has had special agent criminal profilers assigned to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) in Quantico, Va. The NCAVC is a law enforcement oriented behavioral science and resource center that offers investigative support, research and training to law enforcement agencies throughout the world. Currently, ATF has two behavioral profilers assigned to the NCAVC's Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU).

The primary mission of the behavioral profilers is to support arson and bombing investigations in the identification, arrest and prosecution of the offender by analyzing the behavior of the offender. The profilers offer the following services to the field:

- **Crime Analysis:** Linking serial crimes and accurately identifying crime scene behavior through analysis and interpretation.
- **Profiling:** Developing the behavioral, personality, and biographical characteristics of an unknown offender.
- **Investigative Strategy:** Using behavioral science principles to suggest investigative techniques in unsolved investigations.
- **Interviewing Techniques:** Developing interview strategies to motivate a specific individual to cooperate or confess.
- **Search Warrant Assistance:** Offering language for the probable cause section of an affidavit.
- **Prosecution and Trial Strategies:** Assisting the prosecution team with the order and examination of witnesses to maximize prosecutorial impact, case presentation, defendant cross-examination, and jury selection.
- **Expert Witness Testimony:** Educating the court and jury on their interpretation of crime scene behavior and evidence.
- **Statement Analysis:** Analyzing a subject's language to identify possible areas of deception, hidden meanings and motivations and to develop interview themes.

- Media Strategies: Crafting language for release to media outlets to motivate an offender to communicate with authorities or elicit the cooperation of unknown witnesses or co-conspirators.
- Threat Assessment: Assessing the actual potential of an individual to act violently in a particular situation.

ATF profilers undergo an intensive two-year training program in behavioral science principles, crime scene analysis and interpretation, forensic science and pathology. Upon completing their training, the profilers are certified in Criminal Behavioral Analysis.

The profilers continue to enhance their own skills and specialties through a continuing education program consisting of presentations from visiting lecturers, attendance at advanced seminars and programs, and maintaining contact with the arson, explosives, and profiling community through membership in professional organizations.

ATF profilers provide training and presentations to hundreds of police and fire personnel each year on behavioral profiling techniques. They routinely lecture at the ATF and FBI National Academies, the International Association of Arson Investigators, the International Association of Bomb Technicians and Investigators, and various regional training schools.

ATF profilers offer their services to any law enforcement or fire service agency in the United States and worldwide. The profilers also work on research projects at the NCAVC to publish articles designed to educate law enforcement. ATF profilers have contributed articles and studies on bombing and arson profiling and threat assessment in various publications.

In addition to ATF's resources, the profilers have access to the NCAVC's expertise and research on violent crime. While at the NCAVC, the profilers have participated in studies involving serial arsonists, bombers, rapists, school shooters, workplace and domestic violent offenders, serial murderers, and persons who engage in threatening communications.

Because of the cooperative nature of this program, ATF profilers have become recognized experts and specialists of international repute in the areas of arson and bombing profiling, statement analysis, and threat assessment. Some notable cases in which their skills have been used include the bombing of a power plant during the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah; the Washington, D.C. sniper attacks; the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks; and the Washington, D.C. serial arsons; and the 2013 bombings during the Boston Marathon.

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