Chapter 20 - IFPO - CPO

Report Writing and Field Notes

Purpose

- Report writing is one of the essential functions of a security professional; thus, they must have the ability to write a good report.

- The report can make or break the investigation.

- Report writing is of the utmost importance in the security industry.

Importance of Report Writing

One of the most important issues of report writing deals with **liability**. Proper report writing can reduce the potential liability faced by the protection officer or his/her organization.

- Essential function for the security officer.

- Documents potential losses or hazards.

- Identifies weaknesses within the security program.

- Helps determine liability.

- Documents accountability.

- Details successes or failures of the security countermeasures.

Field Notes

▶ Field Notes are written records made by security at the scene or shortly thereafter.

▶ The note pad, watch and writing tool, should always be one your person while working.

▶ Field notes help to ensure the accuracy of your written report.

▶ Information to include in field notes include:

1. Description of suspect(s)
2. Names and contact information of witnesses and victims
3. Notes from any interviews of witnesses and victims
4. Description of vehicle(s)
5. List of item(s) stolen, damaged, lost, etc.
6. Time of the incident
7. Location of incident
8. Arrival/departure times of you and any other responders
9. Security hazards, safety hazards

Reports

- Reports should always be written.
- Written reports are more reliable and dependable than verbal.
  - Verbal can become "he said /she said"
- Written reports are a way to recall at a later date and time.
  - Should be objective and impartial
- Document as soon as possible after the incident.
- Reports should be written for any unusual or uncommon event.
- If you are in doubt as to whether or not a report should be written, write a report.

Qualities of Good Reports

- The good qualities of a well-written report are:

1. The report must be clear.

2. The report must be concise

3. The report must be complete

- **Clear:**

  - Refers to the readability and understandability of the report.

  - A report should be written legibly or typed to ensure that others can read it, as it has little value if not understood.

- **Concise:**

  - A good acronym to remember when it comes to writing reports is K.I.S.S. (Keep It Short and Simple).

  - Conciseness has to do with the brevity of the report.

  - NEVER add your opinions or assumptions to a report. Opinions have no place in a written report.

- **Complete:**

  - Ensure that all of the details are included in the report.

  - One method to accomplish this is to consider the "5 W's and 1 H of Report Writing," which is a guide to ensuring that a report is complete.

  - It requires that you answer the following questions as they relate to the incident: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How

Reports

- Reports are a reflection of the author and their competency at performing their job.

- Reports may be used for:

  - Legal matters

  - Recalling the details of incidents

  - Determining which security or safety issues must be addressed more thoroughly

- Get in the habit of saving copies of your reports.