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News Release

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Durham Police Department's Digital Forensics Unit Receives Accreditation

The Durham Police Department's Digital Forensics Unit has become the first digital forensics unit in the country to be accredited under specific ISO/IEC 17020 standards. These standards are specific to inspection units and are used to certify crime scene units and some crime lab sections for forensic testing.

The department's two digital forensics specialists - William McFadyen and Preston Ford - retrieve digital data from electronic devices including computers, cell phones, GPS, MP3 players, and tablets. The digital forensics specialists also retrieve surveillance video from the digital video recorders at incident locations to help identify possible suspects.

During 2014, the digital forensics experts completed 566 exams, took 6,897 photographs, retrieved 220 videos and analyzed 137 videos, 322 cell phones, 30 computers and 111 other types of media. They also handled 47 field responses.

All of the Durham Police Department's forensic disciplines are now accredited under ISO/IEC 17020. In 2013, the Forensic Services Division was accredited in crime scene investigations, latent print processing and examinations, and firearms examinations. Those units recently passed a surveillance inspection, which showed that they continue to meet the accreditation standards from ANSI-ASQ/FQS (Forensic Quality Services), an international forensics accreditation agency.