

Forensic Notes Overview – Oct. 2019

Forensic Notes is revolutionizing how police officers document and manage investigations. With Forensic Notes, patrol officers and detectives alike can create investigative notes, track exhibits, document requests for digital forensic or cyber assistance, and obtain digital evidence from witnesses.

Documentation

Well documented investigations are critical, because these days, even a police officer's sworn testimony is not enough. More than ever, officer actions are questioned and debated, so the courts are increasingly expecting detailed contemporaneous notes to document and justify police actions.

On top of this, failure to keep detailed notes can be viewed as neglect of duty.

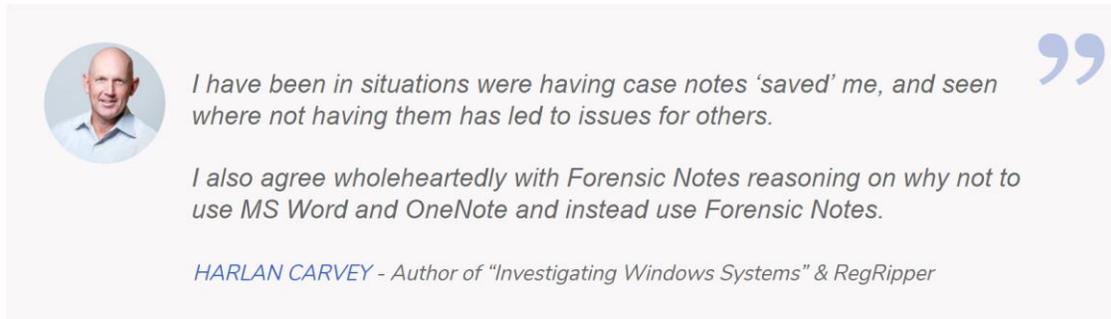
But even when notes are diligently taken, questions around their authenticity and when they were written can be put forward by defense lawyers. If defense lawyers can cast doubt on whether notes were contemporaneously written, the officer's credibility can be diminished.

Forensics Notes was specifically designed to address the issues now facing officers, and the issues arising around the use of electronic documentation. Forensic Notes simplifies the process of keeping detailed notes, while at the same time, ensuring the electronic notes remain admissible and reliable in the court room.

Forensic Notes are different from regular electronic documentation, as they are encrypted, immutable,¹ and timestamped² notes, whose integrity can be verified at any time. The process of verifying notes is incredibly simple, and can be completed by the officer, the prosecution or by defense.

Forensic Notes also allows digital files created with other systems to receive the same immutability and timestamping features. Add any type of electronic file, including images, videos, audio recordings or documents to your Forensic Notes, and you can show those files were never altered or changed since the time they were added.

Forensic Notes Overview (video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtU6f4xKuT8>



A quote from Harlan Carvey, author of "Investigating Windows Systems" and RegRipper. The quote is presented in a light blue box with a circular profile picture of Harlan Carvey on the left and a large quotation mark on the right. The text of the quote is in a serif font, and the author's name and credentials are in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below the quote.

I have been in situations were having case notes 'saved' me, and seen where not having them has led to issues for others.

I also agree wholeheartedly with Forensic Notes reasoning on why not to use MS Word and OneNote and instead use Forensic Notes.

HARLAN CARVEY - Author of "Investigating Windows Systems" & RegRipper

Exhibit Management and Speciality Unit Software

Documentation and notetaking are only part of the solution of course. Forensic Notes also has an Enterprise component planned that includes speciality software like our Cybercrime Investigations Management application and Exhibit Management software for Digital & Video Forensics Units. These specialized investigative units require customized applications to accurately document and manage the submission, assignment and processing of requests for service.

For these applications, documentation is critical to ensure exhibit continuity and proper disclosure. The creators of Forensic Notes have over 21 years of combined experience in digital forensics and cybercrime that is being leveraged in the design of these specialized Enterprise applications.

Witness Evidence

The first contact during any investigation is often with a witness who may hold valuable digital evidence on their mobile device. It is critical that officers have the ability to quickly acquire this information and make it available to supervisors and lead investigators so that critical and time-sensitive decisions can be made. Forensic Witness was developed to obtain this critical evidence at the scene without needing to take possession of the device from the witness.

¹ Immutable: "not capable of or susceptible to change" - merriam-webster.com

² Timestamped: A digital hash "fingerprint" of each note is encrypted with the current date/time obtained from an independent timestamping authority.

Forensic Witness

Modern police departments are struggling to find an effective way to obtain videos and images recorded by witnesses at a scene.

Witnesses are often reluctant to give up their cellphone to police, out of fear that their phone will be out of their possession for a long time, and out of concern that the entire contents of their phone will be acquired and viewed by police. As a result, many witnesses will downplay or deny that they have obtained evidence with their phone. This can result in police missing crucial evidence, increasing the cost of the investigation, or worse, resulting in insufficient evidence to proceed with charges.

Additionally, Digital Forensics Units are overworked and generally off-shift during incidents that occur in the evenings and during the night. As a result, some departments have implemented mobile kiosks so that patrol members can download files from witness devices. However, this still means that the witness has to give up possession of their cellphone and requires officers to be trained on sophisticated forensic software.

Forensic Witness was designed to solve these issues.

Forensic Witness allows the witness to keep possession of their cellphone at all times and choose to share only relevant files with the police. On the officer's smartphone or MDT running Forensic Witness, the officer enters basic witness information, including a cellphone number or email address, and then sends the request to the witness.

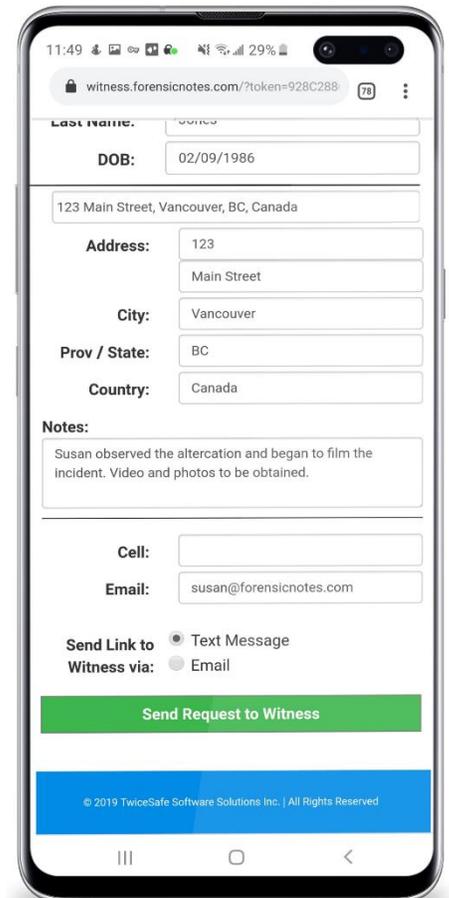
The witness then receives a text message or email with a link that allows them to upload the media files in a forensically sound manner.

Once files are uploaded, Forensic Witness creates a report for Crown and a separate report for Defense with all Private Identifiable Information (PII) removed. This saves time and resources while ensuring proper and efficient disclosure.

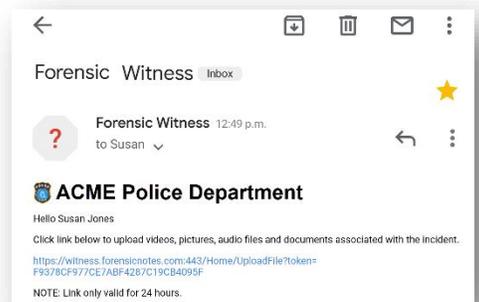
Forensic Witness is available as part of a Forensic Notes subscription or separately to departments.

Future Development:

- Self-generated Witness submissions for significant incidents (e.g. riot)
- Witness statement submission (Word, PDF, online editor, video, audio)
- Audio to Text and translation of foreign languages



The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for 'Forensic Witness'. At the top, the status bar shows the time 11:49 and battery level at 29%. The browser address bar displays 'witness.forensicnotes.com/?token=928C288'. The form includes fields for 'Last Name' (with a dropdown arrow), 'DOB' (02/09/1986), and a full address (123 Main Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada). Below these are individual input fields for 'Address' (123 Main Street), 'City' (Vancouver), 'Prov / State' (BC), and 'Country' (Canada). A 'Notes' section contains the text: 'Susan observed the altercation and began to film the incident. Video and photos to be obtained.' There are input fields for 'Cell:' and 'Email:' (susan@forensicnotes.com). At the bottom, there are radio buttons for 'Send Link to Witness via:' with 'Text Message' selected and 'Email' unselected. A prominent green button labeled 'Send Request to Witness' is located below the radio buttons. The footer of the app displays '© 2019 TwiceSafe Software Solutions Inc. | All Rights Reserved'.



Witness Application:

- **Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ng3p8gjXYUY>
- **Information:** <https://www.forensicnotes.com/forensic-witness/>
- **Demo:** <https://witness.forensicnotes.com/Home/Demo>

Police & Crown Version

 **ACME Police Department**

FORENSIC WITNESS INFORMATION Forensic Note ID:
43d3c791-19e7-4172-93d5-2146683f171

Incident Number: 19-123456

Witness Name: Susan Jones
DOB: 02/09/1986
ID Provided: BCDL 98301045
Address: 123 Main Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Phone Number:
Email: susan@forensicnotes.com

Officer's Comments: Susan observed the altercation and began to film the incident. Video and photos to be obtained.

Investigator: Detective Smith
Organization: ACME Police Department
Info Obtained: 2019-02-06 @ 19:50 (UTC -8)

File Upload Link Sent By: Email
Files Uploaded: 2019-02-06 @ 19:53 (UTC -8)

Witness Uploads

#	Filename	MD5 Hash	SHA-512 Hash
1	20190206_203623.jpg File Size: 3.59 MB	9b27f866d214d8ee 2b07794ef090831f	8909aa6e64aa3466756b45e7c4c1a9b27ac7e9e8b0 20414c9065dda0056eac0cce907b39706774609afd3 7e05da245334bc511fc66724e1564db7b76e67136be
2	video-2019-02-06-08-36-17.mp4 File Size: 114.79 MB	c77a818bac725850 f0ed737fbc016499	d53cc2620f2b643e7c22c0321188763e4fb6d3ea7f5ff 4219ce4547ee87e67eedbb81c351e292aaa4f20854 eaca280be5e7e86512123a398c52bd9b846f6858f

Defense Version (PII redacted)

 **ACME Police Department**

FORENSIC WITNESS INFORMATION Forensic Note ID:
43d3c791-19e7-4172-93d5-2146683f171

Incident Number: 19-123456

Witness Name: Susan Jones
DOB: redacted
ID Provided: redacted
Address: redacted
Phone Number: redacted
Email: redacted

Officer's Comments: Susan observed the altercation and began to film the incident. Video and photos to be obtained.

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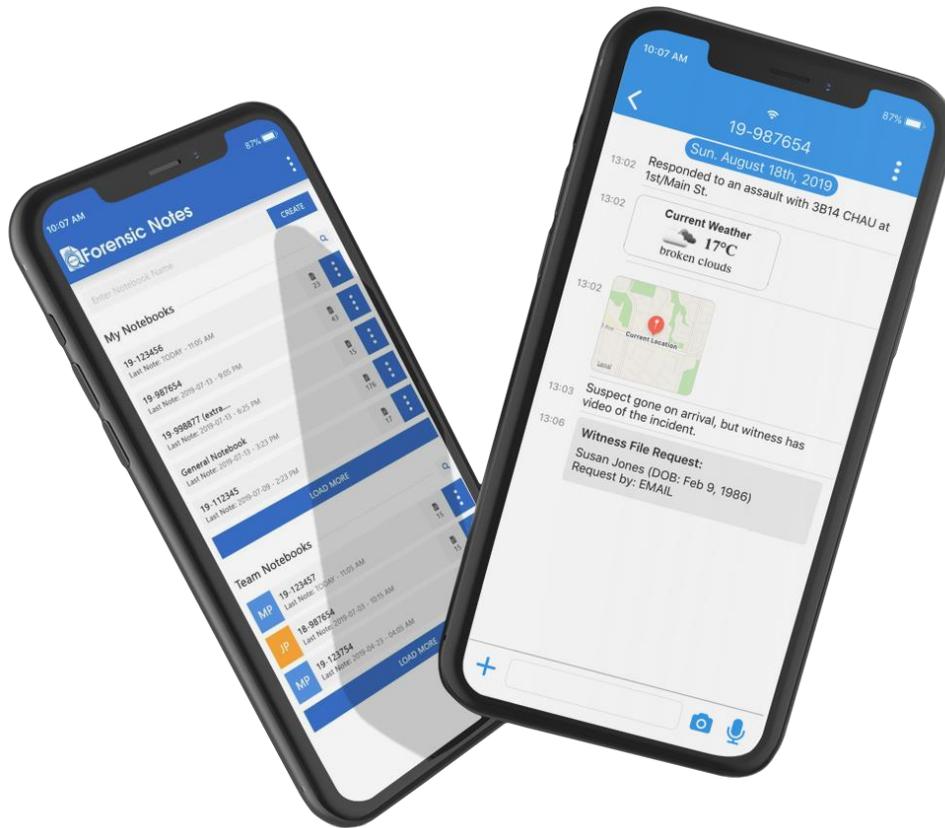
Witness Uploads

#	Filename	MD5 Hash	SHA-512 Hash
1	20190206_203623.jpg File Size: 3.59 MB	9b27f866d214d8ee 2b07794ef090831f	8909aa6e64aa3466756b45e7c4c1a9b27ac7e9e8b0 20414c9065dda0056eac0cce907b39706774609afd3 7e05da245334bc511fc66724e1564db7b76e67136be
2	video-2019-02-06-08-36-17.mp4 File Size: 114.79 MB	c77a818bac725850 f0ed737fbc016499	d53cc2620f2b643e7c22c0321188763e4fb6d3ea7f5ff 4219ce4547ee87e67eedbb81c351e292aaa4f20854 eaca280be5e7e86512123a398c52bd9b846f6858f

Mobile-First Design

Forensic Notes V2 is currently in development with a Mobile-First Design strategy. Forensic Notes V2 will be intuitive and render seamlessly on any mobile device.

Both the Web and Mobile applications were designed to replicate chatting applications, like WhatsApp, which are commonly used by police officers. By replicating the user interface of a chat application, it will reduce training time and costs to organizations.



Unlike almost all of the software programs we currently use this was created by/for law enforcement

~ NAME WITHHELD - Police Officer / Investigator



Estimated Release Date: November, 2019 (Android, Web App) – iOS available

Mobile Application (video): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJ7v7i1_kxE

Mobile Devices – Non-Department Issued

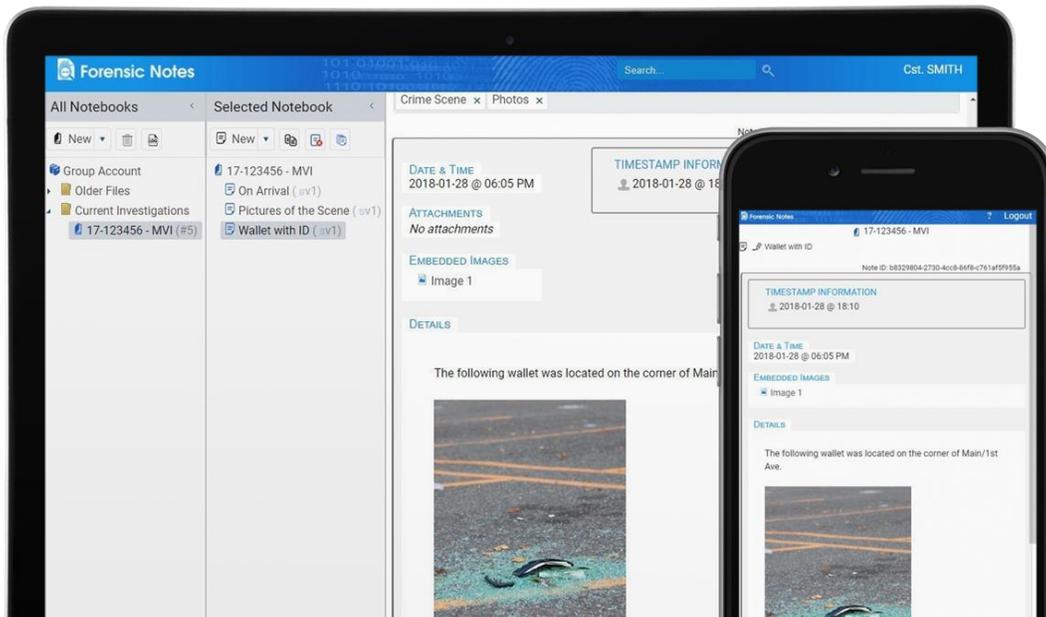
A hindrance to many agencies moving towards the adoption of electronic notes is the need to supply department-issued mobile devices for members. Although department-issued devices are preferred, Forensic Notes believes that personal devices can be utilized with Forensic Notes iOS and Android applications and not cause any issues during the investigation.

No matter how often a department asks its members to stop using personal cellphones for taking photos or sending notes via email during an investigation, the practice continues. The majority of patrol members are young and accustomed to using their cellphone for every aspect of their life.

Currently, members are advised to avoid using their personal device as defense may request that it be seized and searched. Defense may argue that this is to find evidence not disclosed, either deliberately or by accident, that could exonerate their client.

With Forensic Notes, all data collected is encrypted and compartmentalized and all notes, images, video, and audio files are automatically synced to a central server. Also, evidence recorded in Forensic Notes, including images and video, will never be visible in other phone applications.

With proper encryption and security in place, we believe any objections to personal cellphone use can be overcome.³



~ Forensic Notes interface for Advanced users.

³ Each department should seek their own legal opinion before allowing use of Forensic Notes on personal devices. This is not a legal opinion.

Forensic Labs

In the UK, all Forensic Labs, including Digital Forensic Labs, must be ISO 17025 accredited. There is a strong belief among industry experts that ISO 17025 or similar will be required in North America. Forensic Notes helps meet ISO 17025, a standard that requires immutable contemporaneous notes.

- Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrWzUgVprbw>



I wish I had a tool like this years ago . . . from a best practices standpoint, it compels examiners to carefully and contemporaneously document their efforts.

I like the feature where we can add attachments to our notes as well.

ALAN NELSON - Founder & Managing Director - Nelson Forensic & Advisory Services

Open-Source Investigations (OSINT)

As a result of [R v Hamdan](#) (Terrorism case : Supreme Court of British Columbia) criticizing police practices for how they gathered online digital evidence, many police organizations are now using Hunchly (web-capturing software) for all OSINT investigations to ensure proper court-ready captures of on-line information. Forensic Notes works side-by-side with Hunchly, allowing officers and analysts to ensure they properly document all aspects of the investigation to the same standard as they capture online evidence.

- Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVDmfQ8ApYI>
- Article: <https://www.forensicnotes.com/osint-tools/>



From intake to investigation, Forensic Notes solves a critical problem in OSINT investigations: having bulletproof notes.

Save yourself the headache and embarrassment, and start taking Forensic Notes.

JUSTIN SEITZ - Founder of Hunchly OSINT Software