

THE FORENSIC UNLAWFUL ENTRY EXPERIMENT



ANZSEBP Conference
AIPM Manly NSW
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What is the Problem?

- Burglaries of dwellings are a volume crime
 - >90 dwellings in Brisbane Region per week
- One of the crimes of greatest concern to the public
- *Question:* How can forensic police improve their response to this volume crime?



What do we know?

- Research tells us that when police act in a procedurally just way:
 - Citizens see police as more legitimate
 - Citizens are more likely to cooperate and assist police
- *Hypothesis*: If forensic officers focus on treating clients in a procedurally just manner, clients will be more satisfied with their encounter and be more willing to assist officers in the investigative process

What do we know?

- We also know there are a variety of factors that can improve forensic suspect identifications such as:

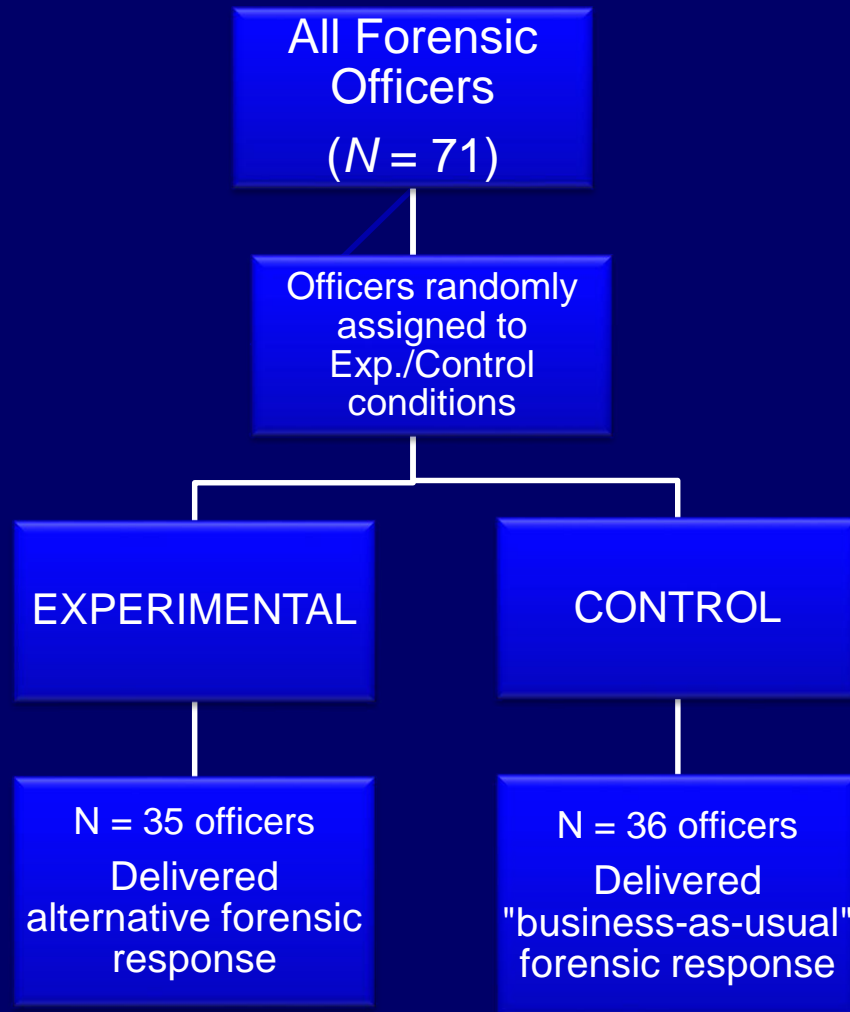
- Officer skills
- Time at scene
- Equipment and processes



- *Hypothesis:* If forensic officers use best practice techniques and equipment, are given realistic timeframes to undertake tasks and are highly motivated they will contribute more to solving crime

Study Design

- For burglaries of dwellings:



Trial Conditions

■ *Experimental Condition*

- Procedural justice interaction with clients:
- Upskilling workshops
- Removal of time pressure
- Additional resources & options

■ *Control Condition*

- Business-as-usual



Experiment in Action

- **Conducted at the 7 forensic sites in Brisbane, Qld**
- **Conducted between 31/5/14 – 25/7/14**
- **Involved 978 home burglary crime scenes**
 - 106 scenes with non attendance
 - 872 scenes attended by either a control and experimental officer



Evaluation Components

■ QPS Crime Data

- Qprime and Forensic register data on forensic evidence and solves

■ Client perceptions

- Survey sent to all clients whose house break was attended by a control or experimental officer

■ Officer checklists

- Experimental officers asked to complete after all house breaks

■ Officer surveys/interviews

- All officers in Brisbane forensic sites invited to complete a survey and/or an interview at end of trial

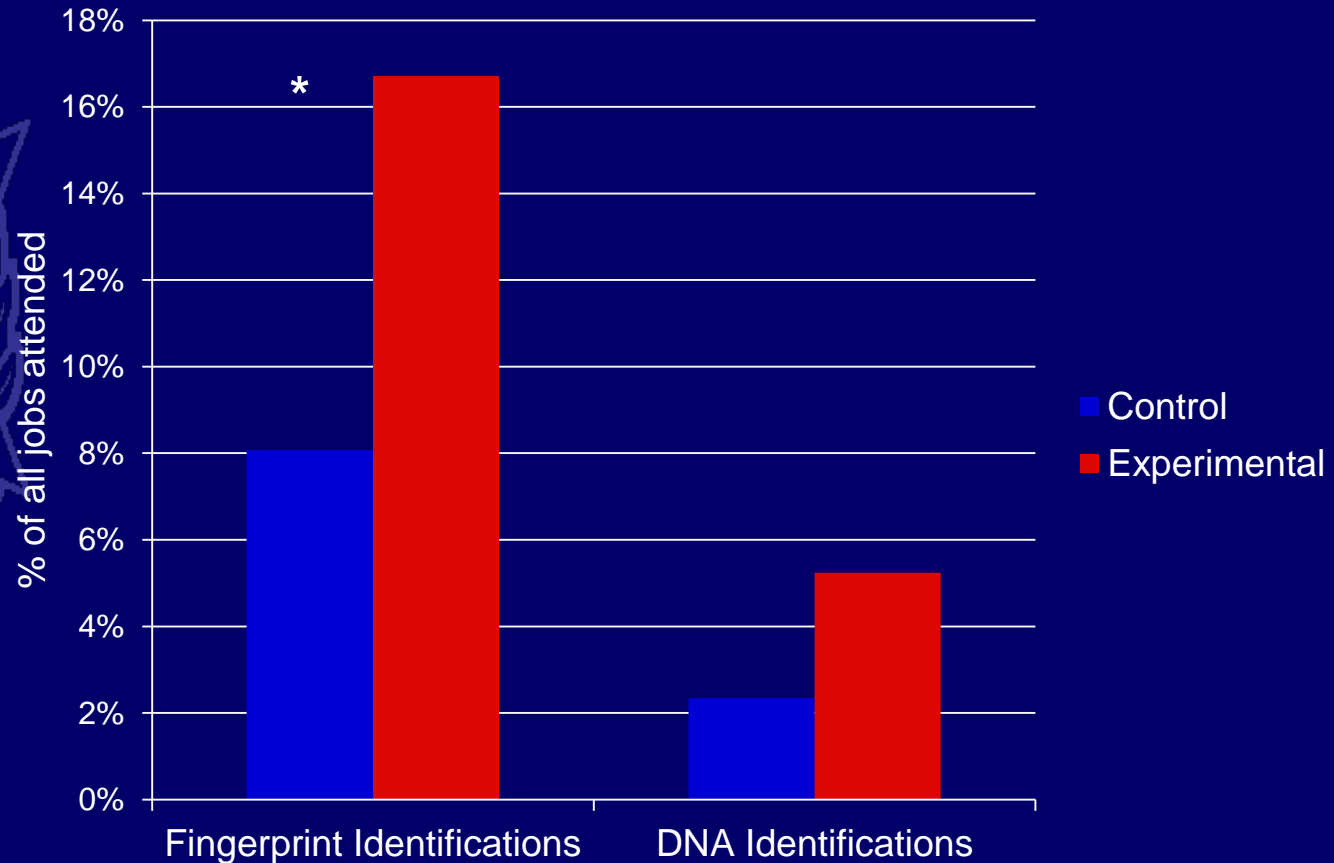


Results - General

EXPERIMENT	CONTROL
Assigned 429 jobs	Assigned 549 jobs
Attended 401 jobs	Attended 471 jobs
Average time = 82min per job	Average time = 48min per job
Fingerprint collection (60%)	Fingerprint collection (46%)
DNA collection (53%)	DNA collection (16%)

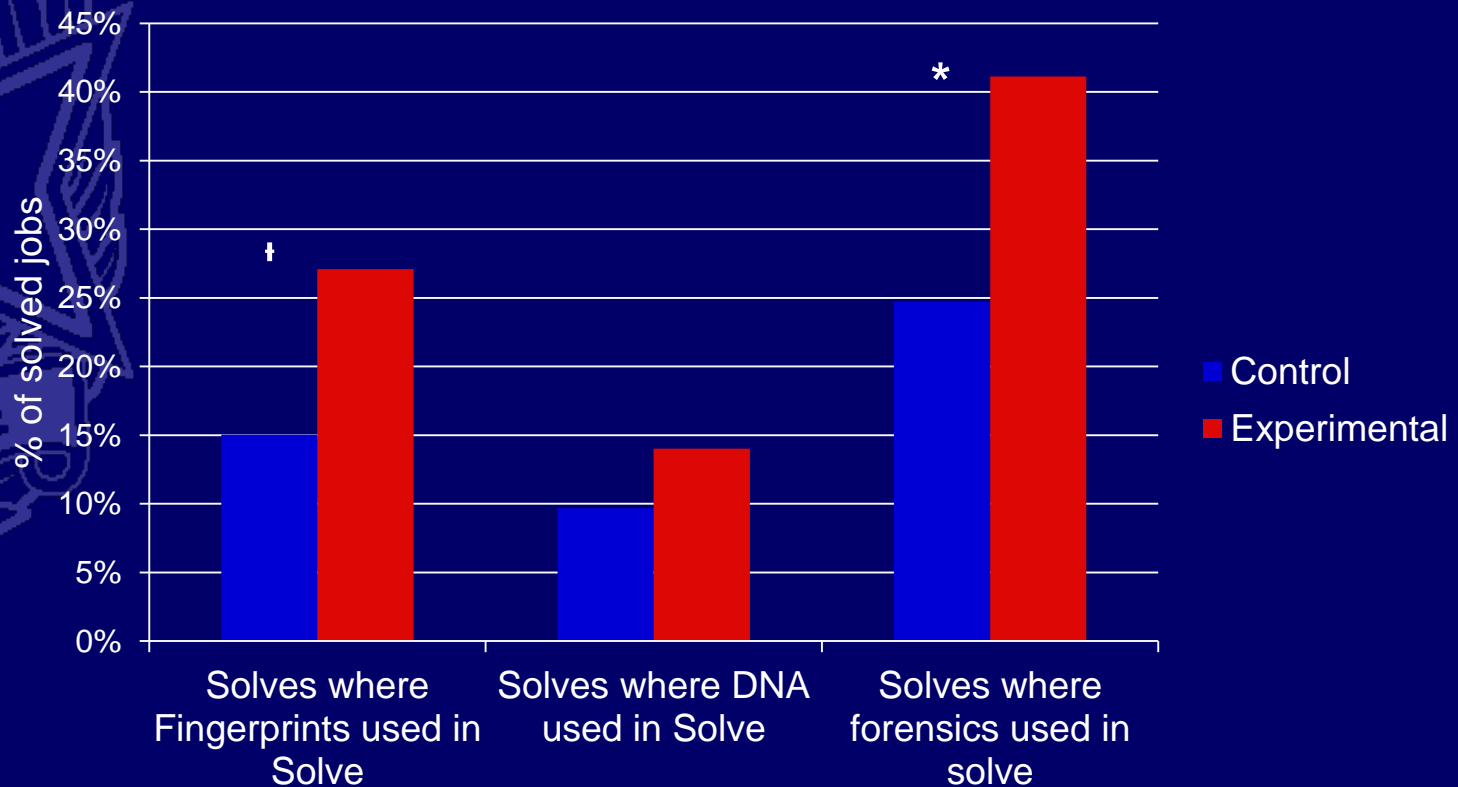
Results – Forensic Data

■ Identifications



Results – Crime Data

- Solved – Total = 213 (21.8%)
 - Experimental = 25.9%
 - Control = 18.6%



Results - Clients

- Surveys were sent to all victims during trial period
- 172 surveys returned (Response rate = 20%)
 - Control = 82 surveys
 - Experimental = 90 surveys
- Clients had more positive views about Experimental officers (compared to Control)



Results - Clients

The Scenes of Crime Officer...

...gave me the opportunity to express my views *

...clearly explained what action they would take *

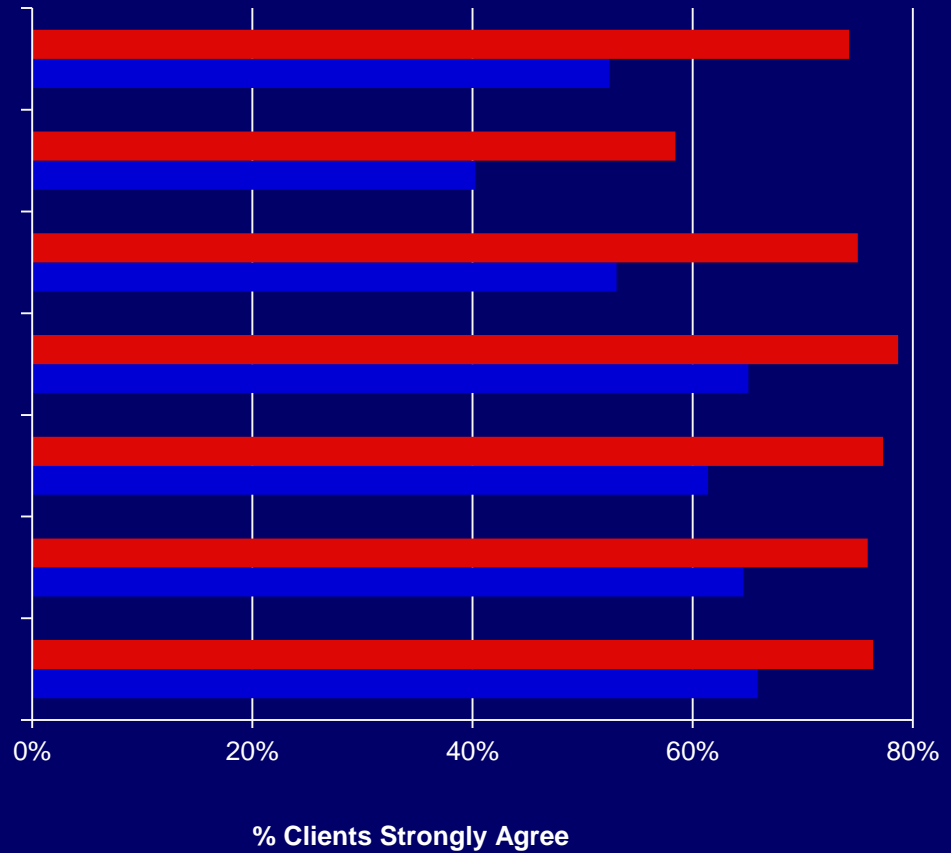
...was honest *

...was polite *

...listened to what I had to say *

...treated me fairly

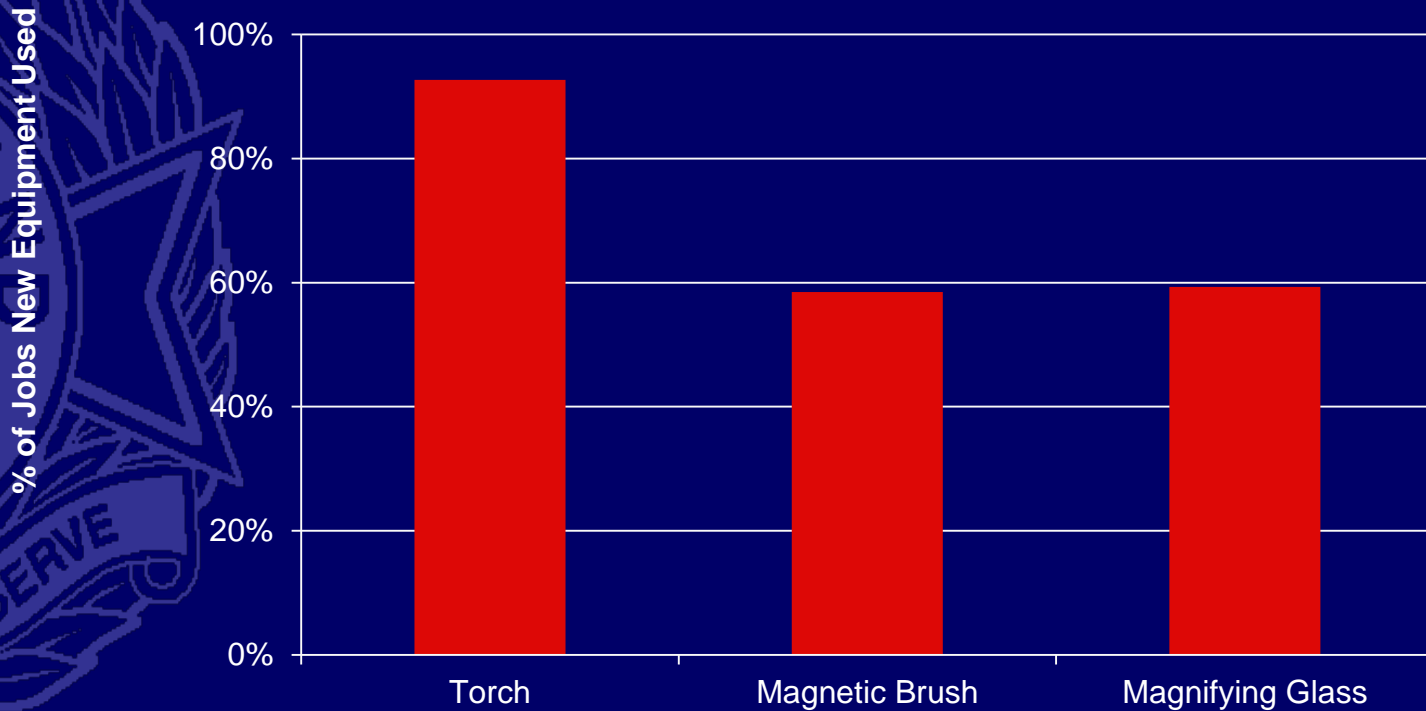
...treated me with dignity and respect



* Indicates statistically significant difference

Results - Officer Checklists

- Experimental officer uptake of additional resources



What can we learn from this?

- Being more focused on procedurally just interactions with clients:

- Leads to better client perceptions of police
- Can assist in solving volume crime/focussing staff

Fingerprint collection can be improved through various upskilling strategies

- DNA – Big effort, lesser gains





QUESTIONS

