

# Casino and Gaming Resort Investigations

Derk J. Boss and Alan W. Zajic



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*Casino and Gaming Resort Investigations* addresses the continued and growing need for gaming security professionals to properly and successfully investigate the increasing and unique types of crime they will face in their careers. As the gaming industry has grown, so has the need for competent and highly skilled investigators who must be prepared to manage a case of employee theft one day and a sophisticated sports book scam the next.

This book provides the reader with the fundamental knowledge needed to understand how each gaming and non-gaming department functions and interacts within the overall gaming resort, allowing the investigator to determine and focus on the important elements of any investigation in any area. Each chapter delivers a background of a department or type of crime normally seen in the gaming environment, and then discusses what should be considered important or even critical for the investigator to know or determine in the course of the investigation. Likely scenarios, case histories and tips, as well as cautions for investigators to be aware of, are used throughout the book.

This book was written for and directed at gaming security and surveillance professionals, including gaming regulators, and tribal gaming authorities, who are almost daily confronted by the ingenious and the most common scams, theft, and frauds that are perpetrated in the gaming world.

**Derk J. Boss** is a gaming surveillance, security and loss prevention specialist. He has served in executive positions in security, surveillance and compliance capacities for American Casino and Entertainment Properties, Grand Casinos, Bally's, Aztar, Del E. Web, Corp., Palms, Tropicana Entertainment and MGM Resorts.

**Alan W. Zajic** is a Nevada licensed, Board Certified, independent security consultant specializing in gaming and nightclub environments. He has over forty years of practical hands-on experience in security and surveillance operations including Security Director for the Sahara Tahoe and High Sierra resorts in Lake Tahoe as well as corporate security for Del E. Web, Corp. in Nevada.



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Derk J. Boss and Alan W. Zajic

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This book is dedicated to those who make my happiness possible in so many ways,

To my beautiful Jen  
My wife, my life, my love, my sail. You make it all possible! Thank you for coming into my life!

To Jason  
Jason, my wonderful son. You've been a joy to me since the day you were born. I am very proud of you, indeed!

And now there are John Lucas and Micaela to add to that joy.

To my family: Suzanne and Tim, Mike and Lori, and Zane and Benjamin:  
We have all always been there for each other!

To my new family: Katelyn, Kyle and Morgan, and Alynna:  
Thank you for welcoming me into your family and sharing your beautiful mother with me!

To Jacob  
An amazing young man!

Derk J. Boss

I dedicate my portion of this book to my daughter Angie whose natural investigative mind continues to amaze and motivate me.

Alan W. Zajic, CPP, CSP



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## About the Authors

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**Derk** is a gaming surveillance, security and loss prevention specialist. He has served in executive positions in security, surveillance and compliance capacities for American Casino and Entertainment Properties, Grand Casinos, Bally's, Aztar, Del E. Web, Corp., Palms, Tropicana Entertainment and MGM Resorts.

Derk, as a director of security and later as a vice president of security and surveillance, has performed risk assessments and developed emergency response manuals for several different properties, as well as action plans for business recovery. Derk has prepared both security and surveillance teams to respond to emergency events through regular training and drills. He has hands-on experience in the assessment of threats and risks, and the handling of different types of critical events. He has served as a consultant for security and surveillance to Tribal Gaming properties and is a Raving Partner with Raving Consulting.

Derk is Board Certified as a security professional and possesses knowledge and proficiency in security principles and practices, business principles and practices, legal aspects of security, personnel security, physical security, information security, crisis management and investigation. The surveillance teams trained and led by Derk have a proven track record of success in the detection of cheating at gaming, advantage play, and internal and external theft and fraud.

Derk has earned professional certification as a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), as a Certified Protection Professional (CPP) and as a Certified Surveillance Professional (CSP). He is currently the President of the International Association of Certified Surveillance Professionals (IACSP) and is one of its founding members.

He co-authored *Casino Security and Gaming Surveillance* (2010) and is a respected author, instructor and speaker, specializing in the fields of surveillance training and methodology, gaming protection, loss prevention and the detection of internal and external theft and fraud.

He has appeared as an expert on several television networks, including the Travel Channel, and his technical articles have appeared in dozens of professional journals, including *Security Management* magazine, which is published by ASIS International. ASIS International is the largest organization for security professionals with more than 36,000 members worldwide. As a speaker, he has been featured at several international conferences, including the Global Gaming Exposition (G2E), World Gaming Protection Conference and ASIS International seminars and programs.

Derk is currently Director of Surveillance for the Angel of the Winds Casino Resort in Marysville, WA where he resides with his beautiful wife, Jen.



**Alan W. Zajic** is a Nevada licensed, Board Certified, independent security consultant specializing in gaming and nightclub environments. He has over forty years of practical hands-on experience in security and surveillance operations including Security Director for the Sahara Tahoe and High Sierra resorts in Lake Tahoe as well as corporate security for Del E. Web, Corp. in Nevada.

Alan is a member of ASIS International where he holds the certification of Certified Protection Professional (CPP) and is a long-standing member of the Gaming and Wagering Protection Council including past chairman. He is also a past chairman of the Hospitality Entertainment and Tourism Security Council and is a past Council Vice President for ASIS International. He is actively involved in the Northern Nevada and Las Vegas Chapters as well as the international security community. He was awarded the ASIS International "Outstanding Council Chairman of the Year" for 2010.

He is a member of the International Association of Certified Surveillance Professionals (IACSP) where he holds the designation of Certified Surveillance Professional (CSP) and is a member of the International Association of Professional Security Consultants (IAPSC). Additionally he is a member of the International Society of Crime Prevention Practitioners (ISCPP) and holds their designation of International Crime Prevention Specialist (ICPS).

Alan is an instructor for the University of Nevada at Reno in the Gaming Management Program and for the International Gaming Institute at UNLV as an instructor in casino security and surveillance applications. He is frequently requested to present sessions at international security conferences and for various organizations throughout the country including ASIS International, IAPSC, International Security Conferences (ISC), World Game Protection Conference, National Indian Gaming Association Conference, Southern California Surveillance Symposium, Minnesota Casino Intelligence Unit, Table Games Conference, Nightclub and Bar Conference, and others.

He is co-author of the book *Casino Security and Gaming Surveillance* (2010), has written numerous professional articles and has been media interviewed internationally on various security and surveillance topics. In addition he is frequently requested to perform the services of a forensic security consultant (expert witness) in gaming, hospitality, retail, bars, nightclubs and multi-unit housing environments and has testified in various jurisdictions nationally.

His practice areas include forensic consulting, management consulting, major incident management, and policy and procedure development, and he conducts tailored training programs for gaming operations.

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# Foreword

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It was a Wednesday afternoon and the casino was quiet. The weekend crowds were still a few days away.

The surveillance room was quiet too. Two of the three on-duty surveillance agents were patrolling the pit and the slot departments looking for suspicious activity or bad guys.

The third agent, Jerry, was assigned to an audit. He was observing pit floor persons as they rated players, often a point for fraud. The more time a player was shown playing large wagers the more comps or cash back he could obtain. If a player was tight with a floor person, he could easily obtain more than he deserved. People knew this and ratings were frequently inflated. Thus, the reason for the audit.

Jerry, growing tired of watching the on-duty floor personnel, moved his camera into the center of the pit and looked over the shoulder of the pit clerk as she entered information into her terminal. Suddenly, Jerry sat straight up and hollered for David, his supervisor. "David, can you come over and look at this, it's weird." David, a surveillance veteran of fifteen years, sprang over. "What'd you got, Jer?"

"Carrie is doing weird things with these accounts, check it out." David took one look at what Carrie was doing and knew immediately something was wrong. He picked up the phone and called me. "Boss, you need to check this out!"

When I walked out to the room and looked at the monitors displaying the cameras focused on Carrie and her computer, I didn't know that I was looking at a case that would ultimately result in the identification of over \$100,000 of loss to our property and the arrest of Carrie (and her fiancé and their roommate) for embezzlement and computer fraud, or that this case would expose a fatal weakness in slot clubs, one that continues to this day.

This case is among the many I've been involved with over my thirty years in surveillance. It's funny to me, looking back over the years, the way my gaming career has changed and how surveillance has changed in that time span also. When I began my casino career I never thought I would end

up in surveillance or that I would spend much of my time investigating casino crime, especially employee crime.

When I started in surveillance I was trained to look for card counters. That was our major effort at the time. We didn't spend much time looking at much else. Craps, slots, keno, or race and sports were rarely looked at. Employees in those areas, almost never. It was always the twenty-one pit and those notorious card counters.

As I got better at my job I began realizing that there was more out there. I started not only looking at other areas, I also began small investigations of my own, looking at reasons for employee cash variances, watching for credit claimers and monitoring bartenders, to name a few. I also realized that I had no training in investigations and really didn't know much about handling a case. What I did have on my side was that I was unafraid to ask questions of others, and ask I did. I was fortunate at that time to know two individuals who provided their wisdom and guidance. The first, Greg Spendlove, was a Nevada gaming enforcement agent assigned to the Laughlin, Nevada area where I worked at the time. He gave me many tips on how criminals operate. The second is my co-author Al Zajic. He has, over the years, given generously of his time, wisdom and vast casino experience. Without either of these two gentlemen I would never have been able to perform successful investigations.

This case is just one of the hundreds of cases I've dealt with over the years. During that time I was taught, or learned the hard way, investigative techniques that I could apply to my work in surveillance and in the casino world. I believe that these techniques can be learned by anyone and when used properly are usually successful. In today's gaming environment, a surveillance director must be able to investigate anything and everything, from a bartender stealing from his drawer, to collusion between players and table games staff.

Gaming crime is not going away. You would think with all of the new technology being developed that our ability to detect crime would get better. It has, but it is also apparent that the bad guys are benefiting from technology too. As I write this, three properties in Las Vegas were hit by a sophisticated gang of Asians who used a hidden camera on baccarat to cheat each of these properties of a considerable amount of money!

Besides the outside threat, there is always the internal threat. It has always been my contention that we (gaming properties) lose more to our own employees than we do to cheats and advantage players. That may surprise some of you but I believe it sincerely. I say this not to take away from the criticality of the outside threat but to stress that the insider is just as, if not more, dangerous.

My gaming career started in the early 1980s in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. My first job was as a change person in the slot department on the graveyard shift at the Sahara Tahoe. I had moved from the San Francisco Bay Area because

I loved the snow and the mountains. It was going to be a temporary thing; have some fun, make some money, meet new people. Little did I know then that my life would be changed forever by gaming and that I would never return home to the Bay Area.

Working in a casino was and still is fun. Even though I worked graveyard, things were always happening. The lounges were open with great acts! I saw lots of performers and bands starting out, hypnotists, comedians. It was fantastic and exciting! There were lots of people my age, girls everywhere and everyone was partying and having a good time. For a twenty-two year old it was heaven.

The casino got into my blood. I was always a hard worker and I loved a great time: perfect for the casino world. I worked hard, had a good attitude and did what I was told. I began to move up. First as a booth cashier (I wish I had pictures of those old slot booths; they were huge!), then a slot floor person. When a position for an assistant slot shift supervisor opened up I applied even though I didn't have as much experience as the other applicants. Well, they saw something in me I didn't know I had and gave me the job.

I worked hard. I was all over the floor, helping everyone I could and learning my new job. I loved it! Eventually, I was promoted to a slot shift supervisor and began honing my leadership skills. I think that because of my positive attitude and willingness to work as hard as everyone else, my shift always got more done than the other shifts and had more fun doing it!

As I progressed through my slot career, one thing became very apparent; I was good at spotting things or people out of place or acting unusually. These were the days of slugs in slot machines, handle popping and mechanical progressive slot machines that were, at that time, being hit by slot cheat teams.

It was their behavior that caught my eye. These kinds of people acted differently than the players I saw every day. Looking around (rubbernecking); one or more people standing around while another played a single slot machine; I've even been approached by some of these people with questions (to get me away from the area).

Rather than divert my attention, their behavior made me even more suspicious. I usually wasted no time in reporting my suspicions to the surveillance department. We made a number of good busts that way.

Eventually, my ability got noticed by the surveillance director and he asked me if I was interested in taking a job as a surveillance agent in Laughlin, Nevada. I agreed and the rest, as they say, is history.

This book is about my career in surveillance, as a trainee and as I progressed through the ranks. But, more importantly, it is about what I learned about surveillance operations and investigations, and how to protect a casino hotel resort. I know when I started in surveillance the training was virtually nonexistent. It is not much better today. Surveillance directors can't afford to learn the hard way anymore (by getting cheated or taken



advantage of), it is too costly! Nowadays, we'd all be out of a job before we learned everything we need to know.

So, contained herein are the short cuts and techniques I learned and used over a still continuing career (into its third decade) to investigate casino and hotel crime.

I hope these thoughts and techniques help you in your career and guide you in the protection of your property.

Derk J. Boss, CFE, CPP, CSP  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
December 24, 2018

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# Foreword

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This book was written to assist all of the security and surveillance professionals that enter, work in and help solve the mysteries surrounding internal theft, undesirable behavior and criminal actions in the gaming environments. Most investigators in our industry must start with little guidance outside of the management oversight and with sometimes only a curious mind and a sincere desire to solve mysteries. This book is designed to help those willing to learn and grow.

This book can be used as a basic guide to conducting professional investigations within the walls of a casino resort, riverboat, racino or other establishment that houses gaming. In every environment where there is constant exchange and handling of cash or chips, there is the potential for theft regardless whether it is a tribal casino or mega resort. In every environment where people are charged with dealing with patrons, employees or cash, there is potential for regulatory infractions, violations of protocol and procedure, or criminal activity.

We have inserted many instances of career success involving investigations but have not always included those failures every investigator faces during their career. We made mistakes during our investigations and learned from them every time, which may be hidden as lessons learned within each chapter throughout this book.

This book is designed to be a desk reference for the investigator to stimulate their minds, give them ideas for solving those mysteries and increase their professionalism as an investigator. This book is for those who want to learn and grow and not for those who believe they know everything about investigating. We ask that you always continue to learn and improve your investigation skills with an open mind, with professionalism and in an ethical manner.

Alan W. Zajic, CPP, CSP



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## Part I

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# The Process of Investigation

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# The Art of Investigations

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The true investigator continuously learns and improves as each investigation is worked on, solved or closed, and hopefully brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Alan W. Zajic

There is an art to conducting investigations that requires knowledge, skill, expertise and experience. To be successful the investigator must also have a strong fundamental understanding of the industry he/she works within and the issue being investigated. The gaming industry poses a unique challenge to investigators due to the scope of potential issues and types of losses that may occur. In gaming, the investigator may investigate a case of retail theft one day, a case of cheating at gambling the next, and at the end of the week be involved in the review of a potential conflict of interest involving an executive. In this chapter we discuss the components of a properly conducted investigation.

An important part of any professional security, surveillance or compliance entity is conducting investigations. The necessity of having a competent, professional investigator who can communicate in writing cannot be over-emphasized when dealing in gaming environments with complex regulatory conditions and a diversified employee population. Conducting comprehensive investigations is an art that every investigator learns as they work on a particular case and subsequent cases throughout their career. Although certain training is valuable for the investigator most security professionals believe that trial and error, through experience, is the best teacher. Fundamental investigative practices can be improved for areas such as interviewing through professional courses or study, yet experience is considered the most important tool for the investigator in gaming environments.

Part of any security and surveillance officer's job function is to conduct investigations. These investigations will vary widely in scope and type from the initial field investigation by a uniformed security officer or incident observation by a surveillance employee to the more formal and structured one conducted by a full-time investigator.

The true investigator continuously learns and improves as each investigation is worked on, solved or closed, and hopefully brought to a satisfactory conclusion. There is no magic cookie-cutter list of tasks or items an investigator uses that will solve a particular inquiry where assets, reputation, intellectual property or criminal acts are the focus. There are however consistent items and processes that will guide the investigation process to ensure it is conducted in a thorough and fair manner.

A routine process in all gaming environments is the daunting task of ensuring that compliance to rules, regulations and those self-imposed standards (policies and procedures) designed to protect people and assets within a gaming facility are accomplished and enforced. Compliance investigations are important to casinos to ensure that appropriate follow-up and follow-through occur when a breakdown of the established safeguards creates an opportunity for internal theft.

Any experienced gaming investigator or manager knows that with a loss there is typically a breach of policy or procedure that created an opportunity for that loss. Those breaches are typically an evolved process as a result of inadequate management and oversight of the employees performing various functions. Over time, employees become aware of those failures of supervisors in making sure that proper procedure is followed, which creates the motivation and more importantly the opportunity for internal theft.

Internal theft investigations are consistently presented to be solved in gaming environments. Anything from a company tool, to large amounts of cash, to steaks and lobster for a personal BBQ will be the focus of investigation. Internal theft will be the most emphasized investigation by executive-level management due to principle issues and retention of profits to a property. Internal theft will affect operations in every department of a gaming facility and no entity or department is immune from internal and external theft.

As in any business environment, when profits and company assets are preserved it has a direct impact on the bottom line of the enterprise. We can use the following basic formula: if the process of investigation results in the recovery of \$100,000 over a period of one year, the enterprise must make \$1 million to compensate for that loss (if you utilize a basic 10 percent profit margin). In other words, if employees steal the equivalent of \$100,000, business volumes must be increased by \$1 million to re-make that profit. The same goes for when expenses are made in any department. Creating a mechanism to reduce internal theft will positively impact profits or the bottom line of an organization.

There will also be management investigations that will involve many different types of incidents from sexual harassment to embezzlement, collusion to theft, or receiving favors from vendors in return for substantial contracts for goods or services. These investigations require careful analysis and implementation in that the risk of litigation is higher from management-level employees and the potential of the future employment or future financial

implications of the intended suspect can be affected. There may also be employment contractual limitations for executive-level employees that must be considered.

Team member or employee investigations also can be sensitive and can affect morale and operations if not handled in the proper fashion. There could be an array of incidents that require some form of investigation including altercations, narcotics, discrimination or other social issues. Internal theft is the most significant risk for loss to an enterprise, which ultimately comes down to employees stealing services, time, inventory, cash or any other thing of value whether obviously negotiable or not.

The simple process that creates revenue itself is compromised routinely by employees. A food server who does not charge for drinks or desserts is essentially stealing from the company, especially if they are doing it to increase gratuities in a restaurant. A dealer can make “mistakes” to the benefit of the customer for the same reason. Ghost employees or punching someone in who is not at work are also theft and should be investigated and prosecuted if proven.

Gaming environments are unique in that they include numerous working parts that must be considered by the investigator. The first consideration should be the specific regulatory environment that governs the gaming operation and whether it is applicable to the target environment. The regulatory environment is a critical part of any gaming facility and a clear understanding of the regulatory authority, processes and history will assist in the process of determining what occurred in any loss. In many environments the regulators will actually conduct internal theft investigations and request (or sometimes require) assistance from operational security or surveillance including staff investigators.

Gaming facilities’ many parts include departments and operations that may be part of the primary casino management or may be an amenity or a leased operation of the facility. The details in the individual lease or management agreements may dictate the process of investigating within the four-wall agreement. There are circumstances where a regulator may be involved in a leased operation as part of an investigation even though they may not have a direct management oversight or regulatory oversight authority.

A good example of this would be in the state of Nevada where the Nevada Gaming Control Board has authority anywhere within the four walls of a licensed establishment even when they are within a leased premises. A nightclub, for example, could create criminal activity and cause the licensee to be fined or even lose their gaming license as a result of drugs, prostitution, underage drinking or other criminal acts. In recent years, several nightclubs in Nevada have caused the gaming operator to be the subject of an intense investigation and subsequent fines up to \$1 million for not controlling activity inside the venues even though they have no direct control over the activities within the venue. Scrutiny of the regulations is essential to understand that



most regulations include language that identifies certain conduct as that which negatively affects the integrity of gaming within the state. The state of Nevada imposed actual regulations involving nightclubs in 2016 even if the casino did not own or operate the leased spaces.

Gaming investigations can become more complex than in isolated environments such as a financial institution. A gaming facility, for example, has an internal department that is much the same as a financial institution, which includes the cashier's cage, sometimes credit operations and the supporting subcomponents, which may include soft and hard count departments, contracted services such as ATM management, accounting departments and others. These will often intersect with other departments or entities within a casino resort, which can include employee interpersonal relationships such as roommates or romantic relationships, friendship or social acquaintances. These relationships may involve illegal drug connections or other undesirable activities that may, and often do, intersect within an investigation. It is quite common for the same name to appear in a link chart as a witness or victim in different investigations.

As gaming facilities evolve in any jurisdiction, many revenue streams are created through operations that do not include gaming tables, machines, keno or bingo lounges, and sportsbooks. Food and beverage operations, retail operations and even movie theaters and bowling alleys are more and more a part of the typical casino complex with direct oversight. Wherever there is cash or credit cards, there is exposure to internal and external theft and therefore the need to monitor, investigate and retain those assets. The more revenue streams that are in place, the more potential for internal theft is present.

There has been a dramatic change in casino operations over the last twenty-five years that includes player incentive programs and additional cost centers. These were "given away" in prior times as an amenity rather than a revenue source, based on the older theories in casino marketing that subscribed to the theory that if you give away the buffet or other teaser, the customers would stay and gamble. This paradigm shift was in part a result of economic conditions in 2007 and 2008 when casinos had to do more with less and creative executives found sources of revenue that were taboo in earlier decades. It also created a reduction in oversight through reduced payrolls and operational changes to adjust to the economic trends in gaming environments.

The investigator's job is to retain the assets of the enterprise in an efficient and productive manner with minimal risk for litigation, negative morale or negative management perceptions. Their job is also to develop and recommend procedures and processes to reduce the risk of future internal theft and incidents based on their experience and details collected during investigations.

The investigation function must also demonstrate that the expense of investigation is a worthwhile investment. This is accomplished in proving that the end results can be easily quantified in dollars to the enterprise in

deterrence, savings, recovery and proactive management. Many investigators fail to calculate the numbers, which rule operations in gaming environments, and justify the process.

Understanding where you have made a mistake and how it was made is always a learning tool that also should not be underestimated. There are many great books and publications on investigations and techniques for obtaining positive results in an investigation. This book is not designed to teach basic investigation skills but to enhance those that are already being done in a facility with gaming.

## **Key Takeaways**

- Conducting investigations is a critical component of any professional security, surveillance or compliance entity.
- Having a professional and competent investigator is a necessity.
- Losses typically occur due to a breach or violation of controls, policies or procedures.
- Investigators who work in a gaming environment may investigate losses, issues or complaints arising from gaming and non-gaming areas, as well as regulatory compliance violations.
- In recent years player incentive programs such as “free play” issued by player’s club has only added to the assets exposed to loss on a gaming property.

## **Best Practices**

- Develop and maintain a robust investigative program that can be used in all areas and facets of the modern gaming facility.
- Ensure each of your investigators is prepared to investigate the issues that may arise.

# Field Investigations

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One of the critical functions of any investigation is the initial discovery and what is commonly referred to as the field investigation.

Alan W. Zajic

Many investigations begin in the field with the first responders, who are typically security officers. It is this initial response that often determines the success of the investigation. The identification of witnesses and obtaining their statements, securing the crime scene, gathering and securing of evidence, and review of available video must happen to ensure the incident at hand can be investigated. It is at this point that investigations may begin to fail and never recover if the field investigation isn't performed properly. On the other hand, a thorough and well-documented field investigation immediately puts the investigation on track and normally contains the elements needed to solve crime or resolve the issue.

One of the critical functions of any investigation is the initial discovery and what is commonly referred to as the field investigation. In gaming environments, the vast majority of investigations will start with the field investigation by security personnel, surveillance officers, compliance officers or operational supervisors and managers. This will be the basis and primary understanding of the loss or incident, how it was discovered and by whom, employees with access, and the collection of evidence that may or oftentimes may not be critical in solving the loss.

In incident investigations it will start with the employee or customer reporting to an employee or manager. The importance of collecting all potential evidence immediately cannot be underestimated in that failure to retain simple documents, witness information or enough video data may decrease the solvability of the loss and could potentially cause liability and spoliation of evidence. All contacts should start with the collection of primary information, identity and contact information.

In surveillance investigations it is prudent to save large amounts of video data during this phase to ensure that there is sufficient video to conduct an

investigation. A simple example may be a cashier cage robbery of an employee where video from a previous shift or day may show important facts such as the employee speaking to the robber, or the perpetrator conducting intelligence gathering prior to committing the robbery. This collection of many hours of digital media is a simple process that, if not completed, will be gone forever once the video is rewritten by the surveillance system. These many hours of video may also provide other valuable information such as bad cash habits, violations of internal controls or just inattention or sloppy work habits.

Many investigators will require notification when an event or loss occurs in order to start the direction of the investigation at hand. Certain triggers or *trip wires* will prompt the on-site management to notify the investigator who may choose to come in after normal working hours and take over the investigation from the staff member conducting the field investigation. This is a common practice and can be beneficial in most serious investigations. A dollar amount is identified regarding a loss or shortage with a mandate for notification of the investigator and certain protocols are implemented immediately to prevent a potential suspect from destroying or changing evidence.

As a simple example in a hypothetical cage drawer shortage, important items to retain during the field investigation are the trash cans in the work area, which may yield many important clues and evidence. Multiple adding machine tapes used when attempting to balance a drawer, balance worksheets, currency straps, personal notes, and contraband such as evidence of alcohol or drugs are just a very few items that may prove productive in the course of the investigation. The trash will also yield a chronology of information that may prove beneficial to retrace and compare to the video evidence collected. People throw away things they no longer need and believe psychologically that if they throw it away it is gone forever.

Any private investigator knows that if you collect the trash from a targeted person under investigation it will always yield details of the person who disposed of it. Our trash contains many clues of our lifestyle, eating habits, bad habits and even criminal activity. It is much easier to collect and bag the trash and throw it away later than to try and recover something from it when it is long gone.

Another perishable item is the exact condition of the immediate environment when the loss or incident occurred. This is typically taken as still shots from video and actual photographs by the field investigator to document conditions, placement of items and condition of the area overall. A good practice is to also slowly pan, in detail, the area of the loss as soon after as possible, which will also document the changes in the environment post-loss for comparison to the review coverage. A purse or backpack located close to the loss location may prove beneficial if it is there before the loss and is removed shortly after the loss.

Still photography from the video should be taken on all investigations from all angles of coverage. These still pictures will become a great resource and reference during the course of the investigation. Pictures taken from video can aid during interviews and even assist the investigator in completing the report by inserting a digital photo into the report to help illustrate with drawn symbols, arrows or text boxes.

Additional items that should not be perishable such as access control records by the employee, meal punch times and other tracking may be automatically purged after a short period of time. These perishable evidentiary items are critical to retain during the field investigation. If the investigator gets in a habit of collecting all of the potential evidence the process will become automatic and much easier over time.

In some environments there are personnel assigned to work a shift with the sole purpose of conducting preliminary investigations as losses or incidents are discovered or as they occur on the casino floor. For example, many tribal gaming operations have compliance officers who perform these tasks on a routine basis during their work shift. Some of these officers often lack a fundamental understanding of how to conduct an investigation and how to document it for further follow-up for satisfactory conclusion. Although most investigators will have a desire and believe that they are competently conducting an investigation, they often lack the training and experience to obtain critical information and evidence when it is fresh and most valuable. Much of the evidence in gaming investigations is perishable in that over time it loses its value or it may even disappear. These same inexperienced investigators will tend to offer opinions and conclusions counterproductive to the investigation in their written reports.

It would be productive to supply these compliance investigators or any other security or surveillance employee who performs the initial field investigation with written guidelines or bullet points for the most common types of investigations they will come across in daily activities. A written checklist of items the field investigator or initiator should be looking for and collecting is always helpful in the evolved on-the-job training of the operational or compliance staff.

In the hypothetical cage loss, the following example checklist may be provided to the field investigator:

- Retain trash cans marked, sealed and identified by location.
- Retain all shift paperwork, coordinate with accounting for entire shift and all employees.
- Pull adding machine tapes not located in trash, marked by location.
- Request full video retention for review of all cameras inside and outside of the cage that may view employees or customers.
- Retain a copy of the work schedule for the day and any break schedules.