HOMICIDE UNIT

Lieutenant Detective Darrin P. Greeley, Commander
Superintendent Gregory Long, Chief, Bureau of Investigative Services
HOMICIDE UNIT MISSION STATEMENT

The Boston Police Homicide Unit is committed to providing a comprehensive and timely investigation of all homicides and suspicious deaths in the City of Boston. All of our investigations will conform to the laws and constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States of America. We pledge uncompromising diligence and integrity will be adhered to in the quest to bring justice to those individuals responsible for murdering persons in the jurisdiction of the City of Boston. The Homicide Unit with the assistance of the Victim Witness Advocate will provide physical and emotional support to family survivors of homicide victims.

2015 REVIEW

The purpose of this document is to provide an annual review of the Boston Police Homicide Unit’s incidents and responses in 2015. This document will provide an overview of the Unit and its responsibilities as well the Unit’s accomplishments and activities for 2015.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## ABOUT THE HOMICIDE UNIT

About The Homicide Unit ................................................................. 3  
Unit Breakdown ............................................................................. 3  
Personnel Breakdown .................................................................... 4  
Homicide Victim Advocacy ............................................................... 4  
Unsolved Squad ............................................................................. 4  
Fugitive Unit ................................................................................ 5  
Firearm Discharge Investigations Team .......................................... 5  
Fatal Collision Incident Team ........................................................... 5  

## 2015

Year-end Statistics ........................................................................... 6  
Homicide Clearances ..................................................................... 6-7  
Additional Investigations ................................................................. 7  
Specials .......................................................................................... 7  
Firearm Discharge Investigations .................................................... 7  
Fatal Crash Investigations ................................................................. 7  
Fugitive Unit Investigations ............................................................... 7  
Unsolved Squad .............................................................................. 7-8  
2015 Accomplishments .................................................................. 8  
Homicide Victim Advocacy ............................................................... 8  
Homicide Unit Website .................................................................... 9  
Forensic Reviews ............................................................................. 9  
Training ......................................................................................... 9-10  

## LOOKING FORWARD

Looking Forward ............................................................................ 10
ABOUT THE HOMICIDE UNIT

The Boston Police Homicide Unit serves as the lead investigative group for homicides, suspicious deaths, fatal collisions, cases in which the victim may die as the result of a criminal act, as well as the investigation of the sudden death of infants and those apparently stillborn. The Boston Police Department (BPD) is committed to providing Boston residents with professional and effective investigations.

The Homicide Unit works with the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office, who by statute is in charge of all death investigations conducted in Suffolk County. The Homicide Unit is comprised of eight squads that are assigned on a rotating schedule to investigate a homicide. One squad comprised of a sergeant detective and 2-3 detectives are assigned as the lead investigative squad for each homicide. Additional personnel are assigned to assist as needed.

HOMICIDE UNIT BREAKDOWN:

[Diagram showing the breakdown of the Homicide Unit with names of personnel assigned to each squad]
PERSONNEL BREAKDOWN:

Total Number of Persons in Unit
- 44 Total
- 41 Sworn Personnel
- 2 Civilian
- 1 Analyst

Male/Female Breakdown
- 36 Male Sworn
- 4 Female Sworn
- 2 Female Civilians

Rank/Ethnic Background for Sworn & Civilian in Descending Order
- 1 Male Caucasian Lieutenant Detective
- 10 Male Caucasian Sergeant Detectives
- 1 Male African American Sergeant Detective
- 8 Male African American Detectives
- 1 Female African American Detective
- 1 Male Hispanic Detective
- 1 Female Hispanic Detective
- 16 Male Caucasian Detectives
- 1 Female Caucasian Detective
- 1 Female Hispanic Witness Victim Advocate

Homicide Victim Advocacy:
The Victim-Witness Service component of the BPD Homicide Unit advocates for family members of the victim during the stages of grief and recovery. It is staffed by Victim-Witness Resource Officers. The purpose of Victim-Witness Resource Officers is to maintain positive communication between detectives and these survivors through meetings, forums, initiatives, and other community events. Advocates work with investigators to help grieving families by connecting families to funeral and burial resources and making referrals to public and non-profit counseling and trauma services.

Unsolved Squad:
The Unsolved Squad is comprised of one Sergeant Detective and 3 detectives. The Squad is responsible for cases that have been worked on by the original assigned detective(s) for a period of up to (10) ten years and all leads have been exhausted and no additional lead(s) are known the case. The Unsolved Squad of the Boston Police Homicide Unit is also responsible for providing any additional investigative services and primary oversight required by the Boston Police Department in the cases of any Chapter 278A motion/appeals. These motions/appeals are usually generated through the Defense Bar’s “Innocence Program” or the Office of the District Attorney’s “Conviction Integrity Program.” The Squad is also responsible for providing case review and summary report services prior to any parole hearings for persons convicted of, or having pleaded guilty to Murder in the 2nd Degree.
Fugitive Unit:
Reporting directly to the Homicide Unit Commander, responsible for tracking and prosecuting persons wanted as Fugitives from Justice including surveillance and apprehension of all murder suspects. The unit is comprised of the Investigations/Rendition Squad and the Apprehension/HIDT Squad.

Firearm Discharge Investigation Team
The Firearm Discharge Investigation Team (FDIT) has sole responsibility for investigating firearm discharges involving a member of the Department. The FDIT is a team of highly skilled investigators and technicians that respond at two different levels depending on the seriousness of the firearm discharge, Blue and Red. The Blue Response is for all firearm discharges that result in the killing of a dangerous or injured animal; all discharges not resulting in death, injury or significant property damage; all Rule 303A less-lethal force (“bean bag”) discharges. The Red Response is for all firearm discharges resulting in death or injury and discharges where a violation of criminal law cannot be eliminated.

Fatal Collision Incident Team
The Fatal Collision Incident Team (FCIT) is comprised of one sergeant and two detectives. The Team responds to motor vehicle accidents that result in life threatening injuries or death and investigates the incident to ensure parties are held responsible if criminal. The team utilizes resources specific to motor vehicles crashes and forensic units, as appropriate.
The City of Boston experienced 38 homicides in 2015, down from a total of 54 homicides in 2014.

These homicides occurred in all areas of the city (except for the Charlestown neighborhood), with the greatest percentage occurring in the B-2, Roxbury neighborhood. The highest percentage (87%) of these homicides was committed with a firearm.

**Homicide Clearances:**
In the calendar year 2015 the BPD reported a Uniform Crime Report statistic (UCR) of 40 homicides. Of the 40 homicides, 38 occurred in 2015. The remaining two homicides occurred in 2014, but were not ruled a homicide by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) until 2015. Per the standards of the UCR, these two cases are carried as 2015 homicides.

In the calendar year 2015 the BPD Homicide Unit cleared 29 homicide cases through arrest or exceptional clearance. One 2014 case was deemed a justifiable homicide and therefore unfounded. Taking this case into account, the unofficial total number of homicides for 2015 should be 39 homicides and 28 cleared. This results in a UCR Clearance rate of 71.79%.
Additional Investigations:
In addition to investigating the 38 2015 Homicides, the Boston Police Homicide Unit responded to many additional calls for service. The Unit responded to 118 “Specials”. Specials are incidents in which Homicide is requested to respond and initially investigate the case with the assistance of district units and forensic groups. If circumstances, such as victim survival or the case is deemed an unsuspicious death, district detectives then resume as lead investigators of the case.

The Firearm Discharge Team responded and investigated 8 Officer Involved Shootings in 2015 – three of which were Code Red. These investigations utilize many resources to fully investigate cause and actions of all individuals involved.

The Fugitive Unit executed 324 Arrests in 2015. These arrests included 28 Murder Arrests, and 18 Sexual Assault / Rape Arrests.

The FCIT Team responded to 41 Motor Vehicle Crashes, 23 of which resulted in a fatality. The team continues to investigate these cases and 6 of these cases have led to, or are likely, to lead to an indictment.

The Homicide Unit’s Unsolved Squad worked on multiple, previously unsolved homicide cases. Of particular note is the 1992 Murder of a recent Tufts University graduate, Lena Bruce. Further investigation, including the use of DNA evidence, allowed the Unsolved Squad to move this case forward in 2015 through the indictment process, resulting in a
suspect being charged in Suffolk Superior Court with her Murder. Also in 2015, the Unsolved Squad began presenting evidence in two other, unrelated homicide cases from the 1980’s to the Grand Jury. One of these unsolved homicide cases took place in 1987 while the other case occurred in 1988. The Unsolved Squad continues to work to develop additional evidence in these cases to better secure an indictment and eventually convictions.

In 2015, the Unsolved Squad has provided additional investigative activities and/or oversight on no less than twelve separate cases for Chapter 278 A motion/appeals and reviewed/generated summary reports for twenty-six applications for parole.

2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Homicide Victim Advocacy:
In 2015 the Homicide Victim Advocate Officers continued to facilitate and coordinate family private meetings between investigators and surviving families (and the District Attorney’s office if necessary) regarding case status upon request by either the investigators/squads and/or surviving families.

The advocates also provided educational and therapeutic workshops with a comprehensive review of the investigative process and criminal proceedings process.

The Homicide Victim Advocacy program also hosts events for Homicide Victim Survivors as an opportunity to continue the ongoing efforts on bridging the gap between the BPD, Survivors, Community Organizations and Support Services. In 2015, the BPD Homicide Unit’s Victim Witness Advocate Officers and Homicide Unit Detectives hosted the annual “Survivors of Homicide Victims & Resource Providers Network Barbeque. Approximately 200 adult surviving family members and an estimated 50 children/siblings of homicide victims attended the event. The Police Commissioner, Mayor & the DA’s Office Victim Advocates and Prosecutors also attended the event along with 50 plus resource providers representing community trauma & clinical support, non-profit organizations, government agencies, Community Service Officers citywide representing each police district, and command staff personnel.

In December, the Unit collaborated with a surviving family who lost their son in 2012. The family hosted a “toy drive” at the Dudley Street branch library and the Unit assisted in reaching out to invite families with children/siblings who lost loved ones in 2012. The family, Office of the Police Commissioner and BPD Homicide Investigators collected hundreds of toys for children impacted by homicide. BPD also invited a professional violinist Shaw Pong Liu to provided musical art therapy via Christmas carols and healing sounds to this survivor of homicide holiday event.
Homicide Unit Website:
The Homicide Unit has been working diligently to increase its transparency and improve communication with the community. In order to assist in this communication, the Unit has created a Homicide Unit Website to assist the public in navigating the Unit and its resources. The website can be found on BPD’s Website (BPDnews.com) and includes contact information, support services, process information and case information for solved and unsolved homicides.

Forensic Reviews:
In the most recent years, the Boston Homicide Unit has focused many efforts to improve the standardization and business model of investigations. The standardization includes improving systems of communication and investigation.

In the last year, Forensic Reviews have become a standard procedure to occur within the first 30 days of each case, and routinely after. Forensic Reviews consist of a Homicide Detective assigned to the case and representative from each unit of the Forensic Group (as they are related to the case). These meetings are held to discuss evidence submitted for examination, prioritization, and results of evidence collected.

Training:
As technology and police – community relationships continue to change, the BPD Homicide Unit remains committed to proper training and utilization of resources to properly respond to these incidents. This year, training opportunities were availed to the unit through department training funds and funding provided through the Bureau of Justice’s SMART Policing Program. Trainings in 2015 included:

- **QVerity** two day Interrogation training on the Detection of Deception, Critical Interviewing, Red Envelope Live Exercises and Non-Coercive Interrogation.

- **Force Science** two day training for Firearm Discharge Investigation Units to read and understand the application of unbiased scientific principles and processes regarding suspect provocation and officer response.

- **FARO 3-D Training** to better equip the Crime Scene Response Unit and Homicide detectives in the use of the FARO 3-D Shooting Reconstruction Training. The FARO 3-D scanner allows for the instant capture of all crime scene details. Scene analysis and documentation are streamlined into one easy-to-operate solution, assisting in faster scene assessments, thus allowing you to clear the investigation scene faster, reducing possible contamination and the impact on surrounding services.

- **The New York State Police Department’s Colonel Henry F. Williams Homicide Seminar.** This training provides the opportunity to gain insight and feedback from international organizations on our current procedures, as well as learn formal practices in critical areas of investigation such as forensic pathology, odontology, anthropology, psychology and behavior analysis, crime scene reconstruction, domestic violence, and advances in forensic technology.
• **Haag Shooting Reconstruction Training**, a practical, hands on training in trajectory measurement techniques, and a comparison of known impact angles to measured angles in walls, cars, other objects and materials. This training provides instruction on the correct usage of trajectory analysis equipment (rods, lasers, protractors, and more); a thorough review of small arms ammunition and projectile design characteristics critical to shooting reconstruction and an examination of shooting reconstruction.

• **Department-led Firearm Discharge Investigation Training** provides formal training on Officer Involved Shooting Investigations. The training consisted of rule review, procedures and responsibilities, the use of Forensics Groups, evidence and equipment training.

---

**HOMICIDE UNIT 2016 GOALS**

The Homicide Unit will continue to improve upon our transparency and relationships with the public, as information from the community is critical to the solving of homicides. We have started 2016 with many cases to be brought forward to Grand Jury to seek indictments. Additionally, we have identified three to five unsolved cases to be investigated and indicted within the year.

The goal of the Homicide Unit in 2016 will be to aggressively and professionally investigate all homicides and other deaths as mandated by the Boston Police Department, the Medical Examiner’s Office and the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office. The ultimate goal of these investigations is the successful prosecution of those charged with murder. The Boston Police Homicide Unit is committed to seek justice for all victims.