

MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM



Date: March 27, 2018

TO: Captain Johnny Sgrignuoli

FR: P.O. Chris Heidemann

RE: Cell Site Simulator

Sir,

As you requested, it is long, but I don't think I left anything out.

Cell Site Simulator Description

A Cell Site Simulator is a device that mimics, or operates, disguised as a legitimate cellular telephone tower. A cell site simulator will broadcast the same type of signal as a legitimate cellular telephone tower. When the cell site simulator is in operation, it will trick cellular telephones into thinking it, the cell site simulator, is a legitimate cellular tower, due to the signal being broadcast, which mimics a real cellular tower. The cell site simulator is kept inside a vehicle, and is mobile. While the cell site simulator is being operated, whoever is operating the system (operator), is monitoring the activity on a laptop computer screen, which is connected to the cell site simulator. When the operator has a need to use the cell site simulator, it can only be done so with a signed warrant, or in an Exigent situation where there is an immediate threat of death or great bodily harm.

Using the Cell Site Simulator

Once a warrant has been signed by a judge, to use a cell site simulator to track a cellular phone, the warrant is faxed or emailed to the phone company. The warrant will request specific identifiers of the particular device assigned to the phone number to be tracked, which includes the serial number; along with other identifiers. The operator will be provided a certain geographical area by the phone service provider area where the device is. The operator must then drive to the area provided by the phone provider, with the cell site simulator. The operator must then turn on the cell site simulator, and using the information obtained by the phone provider through the warrant, input a target to the laptop computer. The target, is the phone number to be tracked. In order to track the target phone number, the operator inputs the specific identifiers unique to the specific phone number to be tracked, which were provided by the phone company, however no phone is ever tracked by its' telephone number. This is because the device is incapable of detecting phone numbers, only unique identifiers known to the phone company. Once the target information is put into the computer, the operator must then begin driving with the cell site simulator in operation, through the geographical area the phone is in. The range of the area varies from small to very large, and is never known until information is received from the phone company. While driving the area searching for the target phone

number, the cell site simulator is detecting the unique identifiers of devices in that specific area, and is only analyzing phones on the specific carrier for which it is searching (Sprint, Verizon, AT&T, etc.). Once the cell site simulator locates the specific target phone it is searching for, it captures and holds onto that single specific cellular telephone signal. The operator will be alerted to this, because he/she is monitoring the laptop, and an alert will be sent. After the signal is captured, the laptop will display in which direction the specific cellular telephone is, and how strong the signal is. The closer the operator is to the specific target phone, the stronger the signal is.

Things a Cell Site Simulator CANNOT Do

Cannot intercept communications of ANY kind, such as conversation, or text message content.

Cannot intercept data usage, such as websites visited.

Cannot intercept communications such as incoming or outgoing telephone numbers.

When a Cell Site Simulator is Used

There are only two instances where a Cell Site Simulator may be used. The first is with a signed Warrant from a Judge, authorizing it's use. The second, is for an Exigent situation, where there is an immediate threat of great bodily harm, and/or death (Amber Alert; kidnapping)

Respectfully Submitted,

P.O. Chris Heidemann

High Profile Arrests Using a Cell Site Simulator

Corleon Thomas:

Thomas and another accomplice attempted to carjack an Asian female in a grocery store parking lot in the City of Greenfield. Thomas severely beat the female in the face and head while wearing brass knuckles, causing severe injuries (broken teeth, multiple lacerations, broken facial bones). This was a very high profile crime which was featured on all local media outlets. Thomas was already wanted by the Milwaukee Police Dept. and Wauwatosa Police Dept. regarding additional robberies, vehicle thefts, and burglaries where autos were taken, then used in additional crimes. Personnel from all agencies attempted to locate and arrest Thomas for over a week, without success. During this time, a phone number was developed for Thomas. A warrant was drafted by the Fusion Division, to track the phone belonging to Thomas, utilizing a Cell Site Simulator from a law enforcement partner. Thomas was located, through the use of a Cell Site Simulator, and arrested. He was sentenced to more 20 years in prison for his numerous violent felonies.

Stephan Board:

Stephan Board came to the attention of the Milwaukee Police Dept. during a sexual assault investigation. The investigation revealed that Board had been repeatedly sexually assaulting his girlfriend's 11 year old daughter. The repeated sexual assault resulted in the 11 year old becoming pregnant. Due to her age, the 11 year old had to undergo an abortion for her safety. Stephan Board was charged and a warrant was issued for his arrest. The 11 year old and her mother had to be moved away from their residence for their safety until Board was arrested. This was because Board was repeatedly contacting the mother of the 11 year old, and stalking their residence. Board was a fugitive for almost 3 weeks. Officers from the Fugitive Apprehension Unit checked all known addresses, associates, and relatives without success. After 3 weeks, we were able to obtain a phone number, and the use of a Cell Site Simulator. We were able to locate and arrest Stephan Board in less than one hour. This allowed the victim of the sexual assault and her mother to move back home, and not live in fear.