

# Memorandum



**Date:** March 25, 2014

**To:** Honorable Sally A. Heyman, Chair  
and Members Public Safety and Animal Services Committee

**From:** Carlos A. Gimenez  
Mayor 

**Subject:** SmartWater CSI Performance Assessment (Directive #131866)

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At the October 9, 2013 Public Safety and Animal Services Committee, Chairwoman Sally A. Heyman inquired about the SmartWater CSI product and its potential use by the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD). The below information is provided in response to this inquiry.

In September of 2013, SmartWater CSI, a vendor of theft prevention products, requested to conduct a product demonstration to MDPD, to ascertain if the product was a viable crime prevention tool. MDPD's Hammocks District was selected to host a meeting and on September 30, 2013 a meeting was held led by Major Arnold Palmer and other MDPD staff.

During the demonstration, Mr. George Louk presented the product, which provides the user the ability to mark items of value with a latent liquid that is discoverable with the use of an ultraviolet flashlight. Mr. Louk explained that the liquid had a synthetic DNA component. This feature would allow police to collect and send an item to the vendor for identification of the owner. As explained by Mr. Louk, this process would take an estimated 20 business days, and would transfer the item outside the chain-of-custody of the law enforcement agency. At the conclusion of the demonstration, Mr. Louk was informed by Major Palmer that he did not see a readily apparent police centric use for this product, but that it may be a product that is purchased by citizens to protect their valuables. Mr. Louk suggested that we accept a trial kit and attempt to discover a manner in which police could utilize the product. Mr. Louk had a kit delivered to the Hammocks District station in November 2013.

Shortly thereafter, Lieutenant Gonzalez of the Hammocks District's General Investigations Unit, currently working on a long-term organized retail theft case, implemented the use of this product, by covertly marking approximately 50 items of value. The objective of Lieutenant Gonzalez' test was to potentially identify products that are routinely stolen in retail establishments, and transferred through a series of illegal transactions. To this date, none of the MDPD marked items have been recovered. MDPD conducted a controlled investigation with the Broward Sheriff's Office and out of 35 items marked with this product, 20 were recovered.

MDPD considers that police agencies could use the product's staining and marking characteristics to identify potential offenders, similar to red dye devices used by the banking industry. Currently, the Hammocks District's South Regional Agricultural Patrol Section is exploring the potential use of this product in agricultural environments in order to assess its implementation value.

MDPD concludes that further and careful evaluation is required to determine whether the use of this product is feasible for the department and that this product may have merit if used by private citizens and businesses.

If you need additional information, please contact J. D. Patterson, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department, at 305- 471-3272 or me directly.

c: The Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners  
Genaro "Chip" Iglesias, Deputy Mayor  
J. D. Patterson, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department