

2. *Aurora's Case Prioritization System*

Aurora's system for establishing priorities among cases is an excellent management tool, especially useful in circumstances where the number of arson cases continues to be high while budget cuts and attrition threaten to reduce manpower. Following is a synopsis of Aurora's system.

CASE PRIORITIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Identification of Solvability Factors

Establishing case priorities requires an analysis of solvability factors. Solvability factors are defined as information about a crime that can provide the basis for determining the person(s) responsible for committing the crime. Not all incendiary fire cases can be solved, no matter how much investigative effort is put forth. Fire investigation resources are limited, therefore, it makes sense that the effectiveness of investigations will be increased only if resources are allocated to those incidents which have a chance of being solved. Following the determination of an incendiary act, solvability factors can provide a valuable guide to the allocation of limited investigation.

Solvability Factors include:

1. Witness(es) to the crime
2. Suspect name and location
3. Suspect description
4. Suspect opportunity
5. Existence of significant modus operandi, i.e., pattern, arsonist, or bomber
6. Presence of physical evidence

- 7. Identification of a suspect vehicle
- 8. Belief that a crime may be solved with public information and/or support

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator must feel secure that all solvability factors have been identified.

Case Prioritization

The following is a scale utilizing solvability factors, and the department's priorities for a criminal case:

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Solvability Factors and Departmental Priorities</i>
<i>A-I</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Arrest made, suspect in custody for crime, case filing within 48 hours II. Danger to community by known arsonist/bomber
<i>A</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Known suspects observed committing the crime II. Physical evidence linking suspects (5 day follow-up of factors identified) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. License plates of suspect vehicle B. Full name of suspect and suspect seen, i.e., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suspect with gas can 2. Suspect in building/structure within 30 minutes of incendiary fire 3. Statements of suspect observing fire III. High priority fire/explosions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Large dollar loss B. Deaths C. Public outcry - media inquiries, impact on community D. Discretionary privilege - Investigations Lieutenant assigns

- B**
- I. Suspect(s) identified by partial I.D., i.e., First name only, last name only, etc.
 - II. Low dollar loss - under \$200 to *unoccupied* structure or vehicle
- C**
- Fire/Explosion
- I. No suspect information
 - II. No leads
 - III. Does not meet A or B criteria
 - IV. Low dollar loss
 - V. Bomb threats - without witnesses
Singular call to victim