# United States Army
## Criminal Investigation Command

Media contact: Mr. Chris Grey, 703.806.0372
christopher.grey@us.army.mil

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***The Road Less Traveled***

# The World of a US Army Special Agent

By Colby Hauser
CID Public Affairs

**FORT BELVOIR, VA,** December 9, 2008 – There are many reasons why people consider a career in the military, but for the professionals of the United States Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC), serving as a Special Agent is much more than a career decision, it's a way of life.

"It needs to be a calling, because you don't get to flip a switch off at the end of the day," said Special Agent David Eller, a chief warrant officer with Investigative Operations, Headquarters, USACIDC. "It's an opportunity to be a part of something significantly larger than oneself."

Unlike conventional military occupational specialties, the amount of responsibility placed on an agent is immense. Agents often work independently and with little to no supervision or they may be assigned a mission that can have a significant impact on not just the local command, but the Army at large.

"You are often placed in a position that has much higher expectations, whether it's protecting a dignitary at a foreign summit, to working a murder case, you have to be on your 'A' game every day," Eller said. "The flash to bang time on failure is very, very short."

When considering a rewarding career as a Special Agent, many CID investigators recommend that prospective applicants really think about the decision to become a Special Agent and to not take it lightly.

"It's a tough job, especially investigations," said Special Agent John Spann, a senior special agent for the CID Standards of Conduct office. "If you are going to do it as a career you have to be willing to change your lifestyle, but it's worth it."

Due to the nature of the work, little information is released concerning ongoing CID investigations and techniques and much like the quiet professionals of other highly sensitive jobs, outside encouragement and recognition for a job well done is often slow-coming or even missing.

"There are a lot of times where the success of a case is announced by its silence," Eller stated.

However for agents, it's their commitment and dedication to the mission that sets them apart.

"Joe Public isn't going to come up and congratulate you every day," Spann said. "It's doing the right thing at the right time on your own…that's what it's all about."

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The USACIDC is responsible for investigating felony-level crime of Army interest worldwide. Special Agents are some of the most highly-trained criminal investigators in law enforcement and are recognized Federal law enforcement officials. During a career at CID, agents have the opportunity to attend advanced training at some of the most prestigious law enforcement programs in the world such as the FBI National Academy, Metropolitan Police Academy at Scotland Yard, DoD Polygraph Institute and the Canadian Police Academy.

"The advanced school and career opportunities are outstanding," said Special Agent Jennifer Bryan, chief of economic crime and logistical security with CID. "From the FBI academy, to Scotland Yard to the master's program in forensic science at George Washington, the potential is always there to go somewhere to develop your career."

Unlike many other major law enforcement organizations, special agents with CID do not always specialize in any singular discipline, so an agent could find themselves working a murder investigation one week and an arson investigation the next.

Eller said this "Jack of all trades" approach makes for a very well rounded agent, coupled with the diverse assignments and advanced training opportunities; allow agents the opportunity to develop a unique skill set that is in very high demand in the civilian sector.

Professional career opportunities are just one reason special agents serving in the Army make the transition to CID. For some it is the obvious next step in their military law enforcement career, for others it is an opportunity not to be missed.

"Moving to CID for me was just a natural progression within my military career," said Special Agent Harold Van Dusen, an agent assigned to CIDC operations. "I started out working on a PSD (personnel security detail) as an MP and the transition seemed like a good opportunity."

Serving a global community of more than one million Soldiers, civilians and family members CIDC is always on the lookout for prospective agents and is seeking individuals who not only meet the basic requirements to become a special agent but posses certain characteristics that most successful agents demonstrate.

"We need agents who'll take ownership of their investigations, but the most important thing were looking for is integrity," Eller said. "When you commit yourself to this profession, the satisfaction often is internal."

"We're looking for a person of character, somebody who is loyal, balanced, professional and organized," Spann said. He added that agents deal with a lot of the negative aspects of life and with a worldwide mission and an extremely high operational tempo, the ability to balance ones personal and professional life is a must.

Persons who are interested in seeking a career as a CID Special Agent should contact their local CID office or go to www.cid.army.mil for additional information.

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***SIDEBAR***

**USACIDC Seeking Special Agent Applicants**

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC) is actively seeking qualified Soldiers to serve as CID Special Agents. Agents receive training at the U.S. Army Military Police School, located at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

To qualify, applicants must:

: Be a U.S. Citizen.
: At least 21-years-old.
: Be an E-5, SGT (non-promotable), with at least two years but no more than ten years time in service.
: They must have an ST score of 107 or higher (ST of 110 if tested prior to January 2, 2002).
: Have at least 60 hours college credit from an accredited institution (a waiver of up to half of this prerequisite may be considered if favorably endorsed by the local CID office).
: Have a physical profile of 222221 or higher, with normal color vision.
: No record of mental or emotional disorders.
: A minimum of one year police experience or two years of civilian police experience (a waiver of this prerequisite may be considered if favorably endorsed by the local CID office).
: Must be able to speak and write clearly.
: Have suitable character established by a Single Scope Background Investigation leading to a Top Secret clearance.
: No record of unsatisfactory credit.
: No civil court or court-martial convictions.
: Applicants must also be able to complete a 60 month service obligation upon completion of the Apprentice Special Agent Course.

For more information or to apply, contact your nearest CID field office or visit www.cid.army.mil.

Photos

A CID Special Agent dusts for fingerprints during a larceny investigation. CID has one of the highest solve rates of any law enforcement agency in the nation. (U.S. Army photo.)

The U.S Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory in Atlanta, GA is one of only two such crime labs in the Federal Government. As part of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, the lab processes evidence from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force. (Photo by Jeffrey Castro)

CID Special Agents collect blood as evidence from a crime scene. CID conducts approximately 10,000 felony crime investigations annually. (U.S. Army photo)

CID Special Agents are highly trained in Protective Services. CID Special Agents protect Army and DOD leadership on a daily basis around the world. (DoD photo)

Special Agents from CID receive some of the most sophisticated and state-of-the-art training in law enforcement. Here, a CID agent conducts an examination of a weapon during a training session. (Photo by Jeffrey Castro)

For high resolution images, contact jeffrey.castro@us.army.mil