



# AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIME LABORATORY DIRECTORS, INC.

65 Glen Road, Suite 123, Garner, NC 27529

August 7, 2017

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## ASCLD Position Statement

The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD) responded today in support of the announcements made by U.S. Deputy Attorney General Rodney Rosenstein at the International Association for Identification Educational Conference that are designed to strengthen forensic analyses and accurate reporting and encourage collaboration between the Department of Justice (DOJ) and federal, state, local and tribal forensic science providers.

Continuing the development of Uniform Language for Testimony and Reports (ULTRs) will ensure further efforts to provide consistent and accurate communication by forensic examiners to the justice system. Strengthening the Department of Justice's testimony-monitoring program, which is a required component of accreditation, will ensure ULTRs are appropriately implemented and utilized. ASCLD is in full support of accreditation for all forensic science service providers. ASCLD members have been actively engaged in the development process of Uniform Language for Testimony and Reports (ULTRs). ASCLD strongly supports implementation and continuous improvement of the highest standards of forensic testimony, which provides critical guidance to the administration of justice.

ASCLD is committed to collaborating with the newly appointed Senior Advisor on Forensic Science, Mr. Ted Hunt. ASCLD strongly supports the establishment of a central independent body within the DOJ and is looking forward to working cooperatively with Mr. Hunt to constructively continue the improvement of forensic science.

The vast majority of forensic analyses are provided by state and local crime laboratories. Therefore, in order to advance forensic science, the voices of all forensic experts; state, local and federal; are required. ASCLD is committed to providing this input both through its representation as leaders of forensic service providers throughout the U.S. and by facilitating participation of its membership who represent all forensic disciplines, areas of the country and levels of jurisdiction and government.

ASCLD is in strong support of conducting a comprehensive forensic needs assessment. Public forensic science laboratories provide critical examinations required to investigate and solve crime. Demand for these examinations in many areas has outstripped capability to supply timely analysis. Examples include backlogs of untested sexual assault cases, significant increases in drug case submissions stemming from the nationwide opioid crisis, and rapid investigative

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leads provided by the National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN). This needs assessment will permit a gap analysis to determine the resources and advanced technologies required to ensure the appropriate breadth and speed of forensic services available across this country. Appropriate resource levels permit timely and quality forensic analysis, which increases public safety by providing reliable investigative information to apprehend perpetrators before additional crimes are committed. It provides exonerating information for the wrongfully accused to prevent miscarriages of justice.

Forensic examiners base their findings on data obtained from evidence using sound scientific practices and standardized procedures. Training and resources are critical to enable forensic examiners to provide the justice system with timely, objective, data based interpretations. These interpretations are critical to assist the finder of fact in the administration of justice.

Recently ASCLD released its National Outreach Priorities and Agenda, which includes support for the following initiatives related to Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein's announcement:

- A central, independent body within the Department of Justice that coordinates DOJ efforts related to forensic science with a mission that is solely forensic science focused.
- Leadership of the body referenced in the point above with practical forensic science experience, fundamental scientific education, and crime laboratory leadership.
- Advocacy for resources to enable research and development, testing and evaluation, technology, information exchange, training and capacity building for the forensic infrastructure.

ASCLD believes that Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein's announcement is fully complimentary with ASCLD's position to further the objective use of science to promote justice and liberty. ASCLD and our membership look forward to advancing forensic science on behalf of the safety and protection of rights of all US citizens.