Colleagues,

This week I want to make sure you are aware of several opportunities to make public comment on national issues of importance to forensic science. I understand that different labs have varying policies on your ability to make comments on these documents, but for those that are able, I would encourage you to read through these proposed documents and make comments on areas that you like and those that need revision. It’s of critical importance that the forensic laboratory community weighs in on these issues, even though they are initially intended for application to federal labs. ASCLD expects many of these views and recommendations to become de facto views/recommendations to the broader community through the court systems, public opinion, and possibly federal funding opportunities.

The ASCLD Board of Directors is currently drafting comments to submit to several of these documents; however, the feedback that we have received is that volume of comments is very important. Please consider commenting if you have the ability to do so within your agency’s policies.

National Commission on Forensic Science Documents – DEADLINE: July 5, 2016 at 11:59pm EST.

To submit comments to the NCFS documents, visit www.regulations.gov, and search for Docket No. ODAG 162.

1. **Views Document on Report and Case Record Contents**
2. **Recommendation on Documentation, Case Record and Report Contents**
3. **Views Document on Next of Kin Communication and Interactions during Medicolegal Death Investigations**
4. **Recommendation on National Office for Medicolegal Death Investigation**
5. **Recommendation on Proficiency Testing**
6. **Views Document on Accreditation and Recognition of Forensic Science Certification Bodies**
7. **Views Document on Certification of Forensic Science Practitioners**
8. **Views Document on Accreditation Program Requirements**

Proposed Uniform Language for Testimony and Reports – DEADLINE: July 8, 2016 at 11:59pm EST.

Comments can be filed at the links to each document below.

1. **Toxicology ULTR**
2. **Toxicology Supporting Documentation**
3. **Latent Print ULTR**
4. **Latent Print Supporting Documentation**
5. **SeroLOGY ULTR**
6. **SeroLOGY Supporting Documentation**
7. **Glass ULTR**
8. **Glass Supporting Documentation**
9. **Fiber ULTR**
10. **Fiber Supporting Documentation**
11. Footwear/Tiretread ULTR
12. Footwear/Tiretread Supporting Documentation
13. General Chemistry ULTR
14. General Chemistry Supporting Documentation

DOJ Forensic Science Discipline Review Framework – DEADLINE: 8/1/2016, 11:50pm EST

Comments may be submitted at the links below:
Department of Justice Forensic Science Discipline Review of Testimony: Draft Methodology

Have a great week!

-Jeremy Triplett

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Research Reports

NIJ Forensic Science R&D Reports for ASCLD Crime Lab Minute Vol 5

These research reports have been submitted by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) especially for their relevance to crime laboratory activities. ASCLD has not reviewed nor does it necessarily endorse the
findings of this research.

Justice Department Issues Draft Guidance Regarding Expert Testimony and Lab Reports in Forensic Science

The Justice Department announced today the release of draft guidance documents governing the testimony and reports of the department’s forensic experts. These documents, available for public comment through July 6, are designed to ensure that department forensic experts only make statements in the courtroom and in laboratory reports that are supported by sound science.

Using Forensic Botany to Aid Law Enforcement Investigations

The work of NIJ-supported researchers from Sam Houston State University, was recently featured in Newsweek, Houston Matters and Forensic Magazine. Their study uses DNA genotyping of plants to identify exact DNA fingerprints of specific plant life. For example, identifying the exact DNA of marijuana strains could link samples back to their distributors or the DNA of pollen samples could also be used to link pollen evidence to crime scenes.

The Use of E-Cigarettes for Illicit Drugs

The work of NIJ-supported researchers from Virginia Commonwealth University, was recently featured on the university website and in an upcoming NPR interview. Their study explores how drug users are using e-cigarette devices to vape illicit drugs. The team is testing the output of various illicit drugs from an e-cigarette device and whether increasing the voltage on the device would increase the dose delivery. Part of this project will also test claims that e-cigarettes are “safer” than the alternatives.

Forensic Science: A Time of Transformation

This NJI Journal article addresses some of the ongoing discussions in the forensic, legal, and law enforcement communities over the roles of science and forensic science and the certainty of testimony presented in the courtroom. The article gives special attention to problems related to expressing certainty in non-DNA forensic evidence fields, such as trace evidence, latent prints, and firearms.

Error Rates for Latent Fingerprinting as a Function of Visual Complexity and Cognitive Difficulty

Comparison of forensic fingerprint images for purposes of identification is a complex task that, despite advances in image processing, still requires highly trained human examiners to achieve adequate levels of performance. This NIJ-supported project examined the relationship between the measurable, visual dimensions of fingerprint pairs and the level of comparison difficulty for the examiners. The research found that error rates are a function of comparison difficulty and showed that it is limiting and even misleading to talk about an overall error rate for the field as a whole. The researchers noted that one of their experiments provides strong evidence that prints vary in difficulty and that the variations affect the likelihood of error.

Improve the PDQ Database to Enhance Investigative Lead Information from Automotive Paints

In a hit-and-run incident with no witnesses, investigators are often left with automotive paint layers recovered from the victim’s clothing as evidence. Modern automotive paint systems consist of several layers – a clear coat over a color coat over

ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) ANAB provides accreditation for ISO/IEC 17025 forensic test laboratories and ISO/IEC 17020 forensic inspection agencies and a wide variety of training, workshops, and academic programs.

ISO/IEC 17020 and Audit Preparation for Forensic Police Agencies

September 15-16, 2016, Alexandria, VA

Cost: ASQ member $600, non-ASQ member $650

ISO/IEC 17025 and Audit Preparation for Forensic Test Agencies

September 12-14, 2016, Alexandria, VA

Cost: ASQ member $750, non-ASQ member $800

ASCLD-LAB Training

Training classes to help forensic laboratory personnel understand the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 General Requirements for the Competency of Testing and Calibration Laboratories.

ASCLD/LAB-International Assessor Training Course for Testing Laboratories

ASCLD/LAB-International Assessor Training Course for Breath Alcohol Calibration

ASCLD/LAB-International Internal Auditor Training Course

ASCLD/LAB-International Preparation Course for Testing Laboratories

ASCLD/LAB-International Preparation Course for Calibration Laboratories

American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA)

A2LA’s Training Program

Bode Cellmark Forensics provides advanced forensic solutions offering crime labs ways to reduce their workloads and budgets.

Bode’s newest offerings include:

Sexual Assault Kit Backlog Reduction Program streamlines processes to eliminate backlogs of untested sexual assault kits.

Bode Buccal™ is uniquely designed to improve DNA databanking collecting and automate processing. The Bode Buccal 2 is a DIRECT COLLECTION SYSTEM that requires minimal training. There is NO Transfer Step Required.
Investigating the Impact of Forensic Evidence Testimony on Juror Decisions

Under this NIJ-supported project, Arizona State University researchers conducted three different experiments to study different aspects of forensic expert testimony. In the first experiment, juror responses were analyzed to see if the impact of having the type of method scientifically-validated influenced jurors. They found that experience of the expert influences jurors more than the type of method in terms of credibility; but this may not have been translated into verdicts. The second experiment dealt with the forensic expert’s level of certainty over whether there is exculpatory evidence. Researchers found that exculpatory evidence did not weigh heavily on the mock jurors initially, but during the deliberation the presence of exculpatory evidence became equally as influential as other evidence. Finally, the third experiment investigated the influence of whether the forensic expert concedes that the analysis may include errors. The study found when the trial involved bite mark analysis, the concession decreased the value of the evidence; when the case was a fingerprint analysis, the concession actually increased the certainty of the analysis.

Examining the Effects of Environmental Degradation on the Optical Properties of Manufactured Fibers of Natural Origin

Synthetic fibers derived from natural, biological sources – known as Manufactured Fibers of Natural Origin (MFNOs) – are becoming increasingly popular in textiles and clothing. NIJ-supported researchers at the McCrone Research Institute theorized that because the underlying polymer in MFNOs is naturally derived, the materials are more likely to be affected by environmental conditions over time, and any changes in their optical and physical properties due to degradation may have consequences in the forensic laboratory. The researchers evaluated three types of MFNOs exposed to six different environments and found that the properties of the materials were largely unchanged. Some samples showed morphological changes when exposed to ultraviolet light or submerged in water, but “these results may potentially strengthen an association if the same optical and morphological changes are seen in both the questioned and known MFNO fibers.”

Identifying and Communicating Genetic Determinants of Facial Features: Practical Considerations in Forensic Molecular Photofitting

Researchers at Pennsylvania State University, with NIJ funding, utilize the modeling of human facial features so that they can be analyzed and then related to underlying genetic variation. An important finding of the project is methodology for giving researchers a way to work with facial features to accomplish new analyses especially in helping to identify the roles played by variation at particular genes. By jointly modeling sex, genomic ancestry, and genotype, two independent effects of particular alleles on facial features can be recovered. Results on a set of 20 genes showing significant effects on facial features provide support for this approach as a novel means to identify genes affecting normal-range facial features and for approximating the appearance of a face from genetic markers.

The Effects of Acquisition of Blood Specimens on Drug Levels and the Effects of Transportation Conditions on Degradation of Drugs

NIJ-supported researchers from the Iowa Department of Public Health address the practitioner need of two layers of undercoating. In this project, NIJ-supported researchers at Oklahoma State University developed infrared prefilters and a cross correlation algorithm for searching the Paint Data Query (PDQ) automotive database. A prefilter was developed to differentiate automotive paint samples by automobile manufacturer using the clear coat and undercoat paint layers. The algorithm can determine the assembly plant where the vehicle was made.
examining three different peripheral blood specimen collection/processing procedures in order to determine whether significant differences in drug concentration could be detected.

**Separation and Identification of Drugs of Abuse Using ESI-IMS-MS**

This NIJ-supported research by Florida International University developed a method for performing rapid and inexpensive analyses of seized drugs commonly encountered by law enforcement, particularly controlled amphetamine substances and the emerging designer drugs that are similar in structure to amphetamine-based substances. The results suggest that chiral separation by an achiral modifier in the gas phase and the detection and identification of designer drugs are possible using the ESI-IMS-MS with an optimal solvent system.

**Microfluidic System for Automated Dye Molecule Extraction and Detection for Forensic Fiber Identification**

This NIJ-supported project succeeded in identifying and creating the optimum extraction conditions for different dyes and fabrics, and it developed an automated microfluidic dye extraction system that produces these conditions. This report provides information on the extraction solvent, the extraction chamber material, cavity shape, valve configurations, extraction temperature, and the macro fluidic extraction and analysis. The developed system enables objective comparisons of fiber dyes and a statistical error calculation useful in court testimony.

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**News Around the Globe**

**State crime lab involved in West Carrollton illegal dumping case.**
West Carrollton Police Chief Doug Woodard said the state's crime lab became involved as the city began collecting evidence from the Hydraulic Road…

**Oregon district attorney reviewing convictions in crime lab scandal.**
Evidence of corruption in the crime laboratory has led a Deschutes County prosecutor to review hundreds of convictions to ensure the public's trust in.

**Regional lab could solve DNA backlog in Southeast Texas.**
Crime scene tape is wrapped around a pole at the north Vidor home were a man and woman were found murdered late Thursday night. The victim...

**Analyst unable to match prints to Brantner.**
Steve Harrington, who retired from the Wisconsin State Crime Lab in 2006, testified for a couple of hours. He was the original forensic analyst..

**Research Shows 3400 Rape Kits Untested in Iowa.**
The kits are not automatically sent to the crime lab and there are a variety of reasons that might account for why there are at least 3,400 untested...

**Offenders getting snared by DNA databank hits.**
In the Appleton case, the Wisconsin Crime Lab notified police in May that DNA collected from the assault victim's finger, which entered her assailant's...

**Building of forensic lab could begin earlier.**
A Department of Justice briefing document, published over the weekend, said Forensic Science Ireland was in “critical need” of a new laboratory...

**Oregon district attorney reviewing convictions in crime lab scandal.**
Evidence of corruption in the crime laboratory has led a Deschutes County prosecutor to review hundreds of convictions to ensure the public's trust in.

**Forensic Conferences**

WVU Forensic Management Academy
August 28 – September 2, 2016
Six days on-site in Pittsburgh, PA
Click [here](#) for course description and registration.

Aug 7-13, 2016: International Association for Identification – Cincinnati, OH
Trial in New Year's Eve 1983 slaying hinges on DNA evidence.
It was New Year's Eve 1983. Lynne Cox, then 18, was excited because it was the first time she was allowed to count down to the new year at a party. ..

was shot and killed in May 2014. The DA's Office dropped charges against his accused killer after a delay in DNA testing. (Courtesy of Joy ...}

Forensic team at Chelmsford address linked to Great Baddow murder.
Police and forensic investigation teams are at an address in Melbourne, Chelmsford, linked to the murder of Great Baddow pensioner Brian Hurr...

Understanding the Nature of Work of a Forensic Scientist.
In a particular show, a forensic scientist can easily extract fingerprints and even DNA sample in almost any material. Although this is relatively true, ...

Ballistics testing will play a key role in Syracuse shooting investigation.
Sponsler said forensic scientists like those at the Onondaga County crime lab will typically test fire a gun to see if the test bullet matches a bullet.

Allegheny County forensic investigator tackles cold cases.
Circumstances: An 18- to 35-year-old black woman was found in the basement of a house in the 600 block of North Avenue.

DNA test exonerates rape suspect.
A BULAWAYO man accused of breaking into a woman's house and raping her, heaved a huge sigh of relief after a DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) test...

DNA match leads to arrest.
A cold case bank robbery that occurred almost 20 years ago led to the arrest of William Stinemetz, 52, of Palm City, Florida, according to a news ...

State crime labs pick up the pace.
The ISP forensic services lab is seen here testing DNA samples. ... high employee turnover rates, the sole state forensic lab in Boise is putting itself on track ... the sole state forensic lab that processes DNA evidence, oftentimes the linchpin ...

Innovative program cuts violent-crime arrests among Chicago youth.
The study by researchers from the University of Chicago Crime Lab, Northwestern University, Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania...

State police probe fingerprint alteration at forensic lab.
BEND, Ore. (AP) — Oregon State Police are investigating the agency's own Portland-area lab after they say a fingerprint analysis appears to have ...

Attorney Files Federal Class Action Lawsuit Against MSP, Oakland County Labs.
Michigan marijuana Komorn Law has filed a class-action suit in federal court against the Directors of the Michigan State Police Forensic Science ...

Wiley Spectra Lab, The World's Largest Spectral Database.
Wiley Spectra Lab is an expert spectral data system that uses empirical ... or the relief for crime victims when the right tools can improve a forensic lab's ...

Writs of innocence denied in Wilford case.
Ty Brooks has been matched with seven latent prints lifted from Wilford's home, according to testimony provided by Alexander Mankevich, a latent print ...

Morning Joe: Senators Thwarting Gun Control Legislation 'Need to Grow Up'
I suppose comedy is in the eye of the beholder.
Wille Geist's final thoughts rounded out the depressingly unfunny nature of their gun control
**3D bullet analysis provides boost to Allegheny County crime lab.**

Analyzing microscopic markings on spent shell casings and matching them to guns used in other crimes is no longer just a thing of prime time...

**Crime Lab Tech Takes Stand In Murder Trial**

State Crime Lab fingerprint analyst Karley Hujet testified about identifying prints found in Bert Beck’s van as those of Dennis Brantner. The 62-year-old...

**Fingerprint expert ties Brantner to Beck's van**

Karley Hujet, a fingerprint expert from the Wisconsin State Crime Lab, testified that previously unidentified fingerprints in a 25-year-old cold case came...

**Ballistics testing will play a key role in Syracuse shooting investigation**

Sponsler said forensic scientists like those at the Onondaga County crime lab will typically test fire a gun to see if the test bullet matches a bullet...

**Doctoring DNA: US Approves Cancer-Fighting Human Genetic Experiments**

As a result of upcoming genetic trials, researchers may develop new ways to successfully treat different types of cancer and decrease mortality rates ...

**Toxicology report ordered on gunman in double-murder-suicide**

A toxicology report is being sought on a man who police say gunned down two relatives Friday in a Moxham double-murder-suicide. Blood tests have been sent to a forensics lab to determine if drugs or alcohol might have been in 51-year-old Robert Klein’s system the evening of the shooting, which claimed both the man’s 48-year-old wife, Suzanne, and son, Eric, Cambria County Coroner Jeffrey Lees said. ...

Click here for complete academy details and to complete an academy application today! (Link to: Ron Smith And Associates QMAcademy)

**National Footwear & Tire Track Training Academy**

SEPTEMBER 5-16, 2016 (2 weeks Footwear)
OFF (September 19-30, 2016)
OCTOBER 3-14, 2016 (2 weeks Footwear)
OFF (October 17-28, 2016)
OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 11, 2016 (2 weeks Tire Track)

RS&A now offers a Footwear and Tire Track Training Academy which includes 4 weeks of footwear examination training followed by 2 weeks of tire track examination training. Applicants can elect to complete the entire 6 week footwear and tire track academy or break it up and choose only the 4 weeks of footwear training or the 2 weeks of tire track training. The academy graduates of this 6 week program will learn the skills necessary to complete supervised footwear and tire track casework and will be ready to apply for a IAI Footwear Certification once time requirements have been met.

It is scheduled to begin September 5, 2016 in Hattiesburg, MS at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Only 20 academy applicants will be selected to attend.

The entire 6 week footwear and tire track academy the cost is set at $11,250.00.

The 4 week footwear only academy is set at $7,500.00.

The 2 week tire track only academy is $3,750.00.

Cost includes academy instruction, room and board, and 3 meals per day according to training selection.

Click here for complete details and to apply for admission today. (Link to: http://www.RonSmithandAssociates.com/Footwear)