

Evidence Management Unit Procedures for In-Processing Evidence

1 Scope

The Evidence Management Unit (EMU) of the FBI Laboratory is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate in-processing procedures are performed on evidence submitted for forensic and/or technical exploitation. These procedures apply to all appropriately trained EMU personnel who receive evidence, inspect evidence for safety, perform evidence breakdown/inventory, complete data entry, and/or manage cases.

2 Equipment/Materials/Reagents

- Chemical fume hood or other appropriately rated safety cabinet
- Dosimeter film badge
- General laboratory supplies
- Laboratory Information Management System (Forensic Advantage (FA) or Explosive Reference Tool (EXPeRT))
- Ludlum Model 26 Frisker (Portable radiation detector) or equivalent
- X-ray machine (cabinet or portable)

3 General Procedures

EMU personnel will follow the practices and procedures detailed in the FBI Quality Assurance Manual and the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual. In addition, the following procedures will be performed when applicable.

3.1 EMU personnel must contact an Industrial Hygiene and Safety Manager, or another appropriately trained individual, if any evidence package is suspected to be radioactive or is labeled as radioactive. Each package suspected of containing radiological evidence will be screened using a portable radiation detector.

3.1.1 Any package that screens positive for radioactive material will be removed by the Industrial Hygiene and Safety Manager, or another appropriately trained individual, for further analysis and/or disposal.

3.1.2 If no radiological material is detected, EMU personnel will continue with these procedures.

3.2 All improvised explosive device (IED)-related evidence will be visually inspected for safety by appropriately trained personnel.

3.2.1 Appropriately trained EMU personnel will ensure IED-related evidence is inspected for safety when the submission is either an EMU-managed Multiple Unit Submission (MUS) or a Single Unit Submission (SUS) assigned to a unit other than the Explosives Unit (EU).

3.2.1.1 For these submissions, appropriately trained EMU personnel will ensure that the safety check is recorded in FA. The name of the individual who visually inspected the item(s) and the date it was inspected must be recorded. If necessary, any additional information regarding the safe handling of the evidence will also be recorded in FA.

3.2.2 If additional information is needed to ensure the evidence is safe to handle, appropriately trained personnel may take a high-resolution x-ray image of the evidence.

3.2.2.1 While the x-ray equipment is being operated, appropriate EMU personnel will wear their assigned dosimeter badge, as necessary, and follow all appropriate safety protocols.

3.2.2.2 Sealed containers (e.g., bottles, cans, pails), containers with unlabeled evidence, or containers with obscured/illegible labels must be x-rayed by appropriately trained personnel prior to being opened to ensure the evidence is safe to handle.

3.2.2.3 If the item is x-rayed, a second appropriately trained individual will review the x-ray. When necessary, multiple images may be required to obtain optimal resolution to clearly visualize the components. The two individuals must review the x-ray image(s) and agree to the next course of action.

3.2.2.3.1 X-ray images will be retained in the case file. Information including who reviewed the images will also be recorded in FA.

3.2.3 Following the x-ray of evidence containers, appropriately trained personnel must use proper engineering controls (e.g., chemical fume hoods or other appropriately rated safety cabinets) to open and inspect the contents of the container if necessary.

3.2.4 If the item is determined to need disassembly, EMU personnel will conduct a search in the appropriate database(s) (e.g., Special Operations Forces Exploitation (SOFEX), Weapons Technical Intelligence Exploitation and Analysis Tool (WEAT)) to determine if any actions were previously taken. This review must be recorded in FA.

3.2.4.1 EMU personnel will contact a qualified Explosives and Hazardous Devices Examiner or Special Agent Bomb Technician (SABT) for further disassembly and/or disposal.

3.2.4.2 If the item is determined to need disassembly that will affect an examination(s), the appropriate examiner(s) will be consulted, when necessary, prior to the disassembly occurring.

3.3 If repackaged by EMU personnel, hazardous evidence (e.g., blasting caps, military ordnance, bulk explosives) will be placed inside a plastic re-sealable anti-static bag before being

transferred to the proper storage container and/or facility for future analysis or disposal when practicable.

3.4 Contamination Control

Refer to the EMU Procedures for Minimizing Contamination for contamination control procedures.

3.5 Container Inventory

3.5.1 Appropriately trained personnel (i.e., Explosives Safety Specialist, Explosives and Hazardous Devices Examiner, or SABT) must be contacted if any evidence package or item is suspected to contain an explosive device or energetic material. Steps to ensure the item's safety may be required as described in Section 3.2.

3.5.2 For cases managed by the EMU, any firearm received by EMU personnel must be examined by appropriately trained personnel to determine if the firearm is safe to handle.

3.5.3 Aside from photographs of damage, if photography is used to record the condition in which IED-related evidence was received, EMU personnel will complete the EMU *Photo Check-In Form* (Appendix A) for EMU-managed submissions.

3.5.3.1 If photographs are taken of IED-related evidence associated with any SUS or an EU-managed MUS, EMU personnel will ensure that the photographs are provided to the managing unit/discipline as appropriate.

3.6 Evidence Processing

3.6.1 When multiple cases are received within a shipment, EMU personnel will ensure the cases are separated into their own evidence container(s).

3.6.2 During in-processing, EMU personnel will ensure that all items generated have an accurate Chain-of-Custody (COC).

3.6.2.1 Based on submission circumstances (e.g., number of items in the submission, how the evidence was packaged), different approaches to breakdown/inventory may be appropriate. If necessary, EMU personnel can choose to perform additional steps (e.g., creation of packaging layers) during breakdown/inventory to help ensure an accurate COC is initiated/maintained for all items.

3.6.3 For IED-related submissions, if items such as SIM cards, cell phones, laptops, explosive materials, etc. need to be repackaged, EMU personnel should place the items in a plastic re-sealable anti-static storage bag.

3.6.4 For IED-related evidence, EMU personnel should cover battery terminals with paper evidence tape when possible and when doing so will not negatively impact future forensic examinations.

3.6.5 If such a review has not already been completed for IED-related submissions, EMU personnel will review the appropriate contributor database(s) (e.g., SOFEX, WEAT) to obtain information regarding previous analyses performed on the items received.

3.6.5.1 If an analysis/examination that would normally be performed by a unit/discipline is no longer applicable due to processing/handling of the item(s) prior to its arrival at the FBI Laboratory, EMU personnel will record any necessary information in the communication log as appropriate.

3.6.6 For IED-related submissions being managed by the EMU, the case manager will ensure the documentation of initial inventory is retained in the case file.

3.6.7 For data sharing purposes, information pertaining to IED-related submissions is pulled from FA into EXPeRT. Information that is automatically pulled and/or manually uploaded into EXPeRT should be properly classified. If a request for limited data sharing is received for a submission, the information should be handled in accordance with the request.

3.6.8 EMU personnel will upload supporting records to the FA Case Object Repository, the shared drive, and/or EXPeRT as appropriate. All records will be saved by the FBI Laboratory number, submission number, classification level (when necessary), and record title (e.g., 2016-01234_1 UFOUO Serial 2 TEDAC Submission Form).

4 Safety

Refer to the FBI Laboratory Safety Manual for the following information:

- Biological Safety
- Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan
- Hazardous Waste Disposal
- Personal Hygiene
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Safe Work Practices and Procedures

5 References

Evidence Management Unit Procedures for Minimizing Contamination, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

Evidence Management Unit Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Safety Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

<u>Rev. #</u>	<u>Issue Date</u>	<u>History</u>
3	02/03/2020	Updated entire document.
4	04/15/2021	Minor updates throughout document. Adjusted wording throughout document for clarity. Consolidated information pertaining to EXPeRT into 3.6.7.

Approval

Evidence Management
Unit Chief

Redact - Signatures on File

Date: 04/14/2021

QA Approval

Quality Manager

Date: 04/14/2021

Appendix A: *EMU Photo Check-in Form*

Redact - Form on File