

Verification and Blind Verification

Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	2
2	SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS	2
2.1	Verification.....	2
2.2	Blind Verification.....	2
3	PROCEDURE	2
3.1	Coordinator	3
4	VERIFICATION	3
5	BLIND VERIFICATION	4
6	SINGLE EXCLUSION/INCONCLUSIVE DECISIONS WITH MULTIPLE INDIVIDUALS	6
7	SINGLE CONCLUSION SITUATIONS NOT REQUIRING BLIND VERIFICATION	6
7.1	Unknown Biometric Identity Tracker.....	6
8	DISAGREEMENT RESOLUTION	7
8.1	Disagreement on Type of Print Claimed.....	7
8.2	Blind Verification Evaluation Disagreements	7
9	REVISION HISTORY	8

Verification and Blind Verification

1 INTRODUCTION

- A. Verification is the application of Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation to a friction ridge print(s) by another examiner.
- B. Blind verification is a type of verification by another examiner who has limited case information and does not know the evaluation decision of the primary examiner.
- C. Blind verification is used as a means to reduce confirmation bias and limit contextual bias in the examination process.

2 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

These procedures apply to personnel who are involved in conducting verifications or blind verifications.

2.1 Verification

- A. Verifications must be performed on all identifications; however, other evaluation decisions may be verified.
- B. Verifications cannot be performed by an examiner who has consulted on the print(s) to be verified.

2.2 Blind Verification

- A. A blind verification must be performed in cases with a single evaluation decision (i.e., single conclusion), excluding those circumstances listed in [Section 7](#) and [Section 7.1](#).
- B. In addition, a blind verification will be performed when a print(s) being reported as an identification(s) has required resolution of a technical disagreement, unless
 - 1. a Scientific Review Board was used or
 - 2. a conclusion of known inconclusive was changed to identification following a verification.
- C. Blind verifications cannot be performed by an examiner who:
 - o has consulted on the print(s) to be blind verified,
 - o has knowledge of the evaluation conclusion(s), or
 - o has detailed case information.

3 PROCEDURE

- A. When required, verification or blind verification must be completed prior to providing those results to the contributor.
- B. If a blind verification is conducted, a separate verification is not required.
- C. A supervisor may determine that a print(s) not meeting those requirements in [Section 2](#) will be verified and/or blind verified as the case or examination dictates.
- D. If there is a difference of conclusion (either analysis or evaluation), see [Section 8](#).

3.1 Coordinator

- A. The role of coordinator is performed by a supervisor.
- B. In immediate cases or other situations established by management, all or some of the administrative functions may be performed by an individual in a non-supervisory role or as described by management.
 - 1. Permissions, limitations, or situations will be established by management in writing.

4 VERIFICATION

- A. The primary examiner will provide:
 - The examiner's evaluation(s).
 - Unmarked image(s) of the print(s) to be verified.
 - Any other image(s) relied upon to arrive at the examiner's Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation conclusion(s) (e.g., image(s) of the same print developed in a different development medium).
 - All associated known exemplar(s) used by the primary examiner to support the examiner's evaluation conclusion.
- B. The coordinator selects the verifier and directs the exchange of the applicable verification materials.
 - 1. A coordinator or primary examiner may be asked to provide additional information concerning the print (such as evidence type) or coordinate the transfer of a digital image(s).
 - 2. The appropriate Unit Chief ensures that verifiers are chosen on a rotational basis.
- C. The verifier receives the verification materials and:
 - Ensures eligibility to perform a verification as described in [Section 2](#).
 - Conducts and records an Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation examination of the print(s) submitted for verification following the procedures in the *Examining Friction Ridge Prints* document (FRD-500).
 - May search the Next Generation Identification System.
 - If an Identification is not effected as a result of an automated search, the examiner's final decision must be based on manual comparison(s) with the provided record(s).
 - May request a digital copy of the original and/or digitally processed image(s) through the coordinator or from the primary examiner.
 - May consult with another examiner.
 - This consultation must be recorded in the FBI Laboratory file.
- D. The verifier records the following:
 - All appropriate markings on the provided unmarked image(s) of the print(s) to include:
 - The information used to reach the conclusion(s) as described in FRD-500.
 - The analysis and evaluation decision(s) reached.

- Conducts and records an Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation examination of the print(s) submitted for blind verification following the procedures in the FRD-500.
 - May search the Next Generation Identification System.
 - If an Identification is not effected as a result of an automated search, the examiner's final decision must be based on manual comparison(s) with the provided record(s).
 - May request a digital copy of the original and/or digitally processed image(s) from a coordinator.
 - May request to consult with another examiner.
 - A coordinator will identify examiners with no prior knowledge of the conclusion(s).
 - This consultation must be recorded in the FBI Laboratory file.
- D. The blind verifier records the following:
- All appropriate markings on the provided unmarked image(s) of the blind verified print(s) to include:
 - The information used to reach the conclusion(s) as described in FRD-500.
 - The analysis and evaluation conclusion(s) reached.
 - If the print(s) is deemed not suitable for comparison, the blind verifier must record that a blind verification was completed and the conclusion(s) reached was not suitable for comparison.
 - The name(s) or unique number(s) (e.g., Universal Control Number(s)) of the individual(s) compared.
 - The notation that it is a blind verification.
 - Signature of the blind verifier and date or date range of blind verification.
 - Indication in the FBI Laboratory file of which known exemplar(s) was provided.
 - Examples of this include transfer of the original item(s) on the chain of custody or initialing a digital or physical copy of the exemplars.
- E. Once blind verification is completed:
- The blind verifier informs the coordinator of completion and returns the applicable blind verification materials to the appropriate location.
 - The blind verifier must await notification from the coordinator prior to any discussions about the print(s).
 - The coordinator reviews the conclusion(s) reached by the blind verifier and directs the return of all appropriate records to the primary examiner.
- F. If there is no disagreement, the quality step is met and the following is recorded in the case notes:
- The conclusion(s) reached.
 - Indication of which prints were blind verified.
 - Identity of the blind verifier.

6 SINGLE EXCLUSION/INCONCLUSIVE DECISIONS WITH MULTIPLE INDIVIDUALS

- A. In instances where a single exclusion decision will be reported with multiple individuals, the blind verification will be performed with one or more of the known individuals.
- B. In instances where a single inconclusive decision will be reported with multiple individuals, the blind verification will be performed with one or more of the known individuals.
- C. The number of individuals will be at the discretion of the coordinator and based on data such as case information or a discussion with the primary examiner.

7 SINGLE CONCLUSION SITUATIONS NOT REQUIRING BLIND VERIFICATION

Blind verification is not required, but may be performed on single conclusions in the following scenarios as dictated by the needs of the examination or case:

- Unknown deceased.
- Standard or non-standard intentionally recorded prints.
- Next Generation Identification System comparisons, including Unsolved Latent Match cascade examinations (exclusions and inconclusive decisions only).
- Reported latent to latent identification(s) require only verification.
 - All other conclusions of latent to latent comparisons are not verified or blind verified.
- Any identification where the identified individual has been previously identified and verified in a connected incident, case, or submission.
 - If a blind verification is not done, a verification of the new identification is required.
 - *Example: Individual A is identified in a case record, the print is successfully blind verified, and the identification is reported. The individual is identified in a new submission in a case which has been linked to the original case record. A single identification for individual A in the second case will be verified, but a blind verification is not required. However, a blind verification may be done at the request of the examiner or the discretion of the supervisor.*
- Any single inconclusive (known or latent) to an individual identified to another print in the case record.

7.1 Unknown Biometric Identity Tracker

- A. The Unknown Biometric Identity Tracker is used to collect information about latent to latent identifications that are made between incidents as a result of an automated search in the Unsolved Latent File.
 - 1. All latent to latent associations were verified when originally effected.
- B. When a collection of associated latent to latent prints recorded in the Tracker is identified with a known individual, the required quality check for these associations will be one of the following options:
 - A blind verification between the known record and a single latent print in the collection OR

- A verification between the known record and two latent prints in the collection, provided the two latent prints came from two different incident numbers.
- C. Once the quality check requirement has been reached, no additional verifications or blind verifications are required.
- D. If there is a difference of conclusion (either analysis or evaluation), see [Section 8](#).

8 DISAGREEMENT RESOLUTION

If differences in conclusions (print type, suitability for comparison, or any evaluation decision) are apparent after verification or blind verification, the primary examiner and the verifier or blind verifier, as applicable, will reference the *FBI Laboratory Operations Manual* (LAB-200), the *Disagreements and Scientific Review Boards in Technical Casework* document (FRD-502), as well as Sections below to resolve these differences.

8.1 Disagreement on Type of Print Claimed

- A. If examiners disagree on the type of print claimed (fingerprint, palm print, or impression) but the evaluation decisions agree, discussion is needed between the examiners to obtain a single analysis decision.
- B. All appropriate comparisons must be completed for the final decision of type of print.
- C. For blind verifications, any additional comparison(s) conducted will be treated as an additional verification or examination and the original conclusion will remain a blind verification.

8.2 Blind Verification Evaluation Disagreements

- A. If a blind verification undergoes disagreement resolution and the blind verifier's original evaluation conclusion changes, the comparison will change from a blind verification to a verification and be recorded as such.
- B. If, after disagreement resolution, the blind verifier changes their original conclusion to identification, an additional blind verification is required, unless a Scientific Review Board was used or the Technical Leader deems a blind verification is not needed per Section 8.2-C.
 - 1. All other disagreement resolutions do not require an additional blind verification.
- C. After two unsuccessful blind verification attempts, the examination will be reviewed by the Technical Leader.
 - 1. The review will determine if the quality measures taken are adequate for the risk presented or if additional actions are needed.
 - 2. The outcome of the review will be recorded in the FBI Laboratory file.
 - 3. Any additional actions stemming from the review will follow the appropriate FBI Laboratory and discipline documents.

9 REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Issued	Changes
09	10/17/2022	Section 4-C and Section 5-C – added search allowance. Section 7 – Added exception for prints identified across cases.
10	08/15/2023	Section 2.2 – Removed term “exception” Section 3.1 – Added allowance for coordinator. Section 4-B and Section 4-C– Includes verifier as option. Section 4-E – Removed coordinator review and makes verifier responsible for returning materials. Section 5-B – Added primary examiner for providing known exemplar(s). Section 5-E – Modified options for records. Section 7 – Changed title, made old Section 8 a subsection, added inconclusive allowance Removed old Section 9.2 Section 8.2-B and Section 8.2-C – Modify method to address circular blind verification.