

Laboratory Reports, Reviews, and Retained Records

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Laboratory Reports, Reviews, and Retained Records

1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides discipline specific guidance for *Laboratory Reports* (LIMS 7-1, 7-1), reviews, and retained records to supplement the *FBI Laboratory Operations Manual* (LAB-200). Alternate reporting methods are addressed in the *Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information Services and Products* document (FRD-850).

2 SCOPE

- A. These procedures apply to personnel who prepare, review, or issue *FBI Laboratory Reports* and/or generate FBI Laboratory file records in the friction ridge discipline.
- B. Requirements for technical and administrative reviews and reviewers apply to personnel who review all discipline casework, regardless of product type.

3 LIMITATIONS

No Limitations

4 LABORATORY REPORT CONTENT AND FORMAT

4.1 Format

- A. Terms, Methods, Limitations, and Interpretations will be combined into a single section with associated references immediately following.
 - 1. This section may be included in the body of the report or as an appendix.
 - 2. If applicable, there will be a statement in the report referring to the appendix.
- B. The Department of Justice Uniform Language for Testimony and Reports for the Forensic Latent Print Discipline will be included as a reference.

4.2 Examinations Not Conducted

- A. Evidence listed in the Laboratory Report as received but not examined may be addressed in the Listing and Description of Evidence, Results of Examination, or the Remarks sections.

5 COMMUNICATING EXPEDITED RESULTS

- A. Personnel may provide results regarding processing outcomes, analysis, and all evaluation decisions to a contributor prior to the completion of the technical review and issuance of a *Laboratory Report*.
- B. All prints must be appropriately verified or blind verified as described in the *Verification and Blind Verification* document (FRD-501).
- C. When communicating the expedited results, the employee will follow the appropriate sections in the *FBI Laboratory Operations Manual*.

6 TECHNICAL REVIEWS

6.1 Requirements for Technical Reviewer

- A. A Technical Reviewer must have:
 - o casework experience following qualification, and
 - o authorization to conduct technical reviews.
- B. The Technical Reviewer must not have processed evidence nor performed comparisons in the case being reviewed, with the exception of:
 - o verifications;
 - o blind verifications;
 - o Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation checks;
 - o processing checks; or
 - o Supervisor reviews.

6.2 Requirements for Technical Reviews

- A. With the exception of circumstances described in Section 5 and Section 8 all examination results must be technically reviewed prior to issuance.
- B. In addition to the requirements listed in the *FBI Laboratory Operations Manual*, this review will determine if:
 - o All requests have been addressed.
 - o All reported prints meeting the requirements in the *Verification and Blind Verification* document have been appropriately verified or blind verified and recorded.

7 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS

7.1 Requirements for Administrative Reviewer

- A. The Administrative Reviewer will be approved to conduct administrative reviews.
- B. The Administrative Reviewer must not have processed the evidence nor performed comparisons in the case being reviewed, with the exception of:
 - o verifications;
 - o blind verifications;
 - o Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation checks;
 - o processing checks; or
 - o Supervisor reviews.

7.2 Requirements for Administrative Reviews

- A. With the exception of circumstances described in Section 5 and Section 8, all issued products must be administratively reviewed prior to issuance.
- B. In addition to the requirements listed in the *FBI Laboratory Operations Manual*, this review will confirm the accuracy of the report content based on the supporting records.

7.3 Classification Reviews

A separate review of the classification markings may be conducted by personnel trained in classification and will be noted in the FBI Laboratory File.

8 NO TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS

- A. Per a risk assessment, examination results for cases that meet the following criteria may be issued without a technical and administrative review.
 - 1. The individual has approval to issue FBI Laboratory Reports or Summary Sheets without a technical or administrative review.
 - 2. Only not suitable for capture or not suitable for comparison (excluding cases with additional prints) results will be issued via the product.
 - 3. The cases are non-complex.
 - i. Examples of complex cases include those with non-standard surface types and/or conditions, those requiring complicated disassembly, those with limitations placed on examinations, those with complex associations between items, those with classification/dissemination control concerns, or those with consultations.
- B. The case number will be tracked, and a notation recorded in the FBI Laboratory File indicating that the case meets the criteria, and no technical and administrative review was conducted.

8.1 Following Product Issuance

- A. A percentage of cases will be audited after issuance.
 - 1. Fifty percent of an individual's cases will be audited initially.
 - 2. Following successful review of five cases, the percentage of audited cases will be reduced to thirty-three percent, twenty-five percent, and twenty percent in five case intervals, with twenty percent as the lowest audit percentage permitted.
 - 3. Issues noted during the audit may result in an increase of the percentage of audited cases for that individual, a return to fifty percent of audited cases, or removal of the approval to issue products without technical and administrative reviews.
- B. The audit will include:
 - 1. the equivalent of a technical and administrative review of the issued technical records.
 - 2. a review of all retained friction ridge detail for suitability.
- C. Any disagreements will be addressed via the discipline disagreement procedures.
- D. If an internal case audit is done, the audit and any outcomes will be tracked.

9 RETENTION OF RECORDS

- A. Disseminated results and FBI Laboratory file records will be retained in:
 - o The appropriate physical storage area (e.g., FBI Laboratory file room),
 - o the Multi Biometric Identification System (MBIS) server of the Next Generation Identification System,

- Sentinel,
 - the digital imaging retention system and/or
 - the Laboratory Information Management System.
- B. The term “annotated” in regard to images refers to Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation notations on or associated with an image in addition to records of consultation or verification/blind verification.
1. Any other markings are not considered annotations.

10 DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC RECORDS

In addition to FBI Laboratory file records, discipline hardcopy or digital records may include, as appropriate:

- A. Annotated and non-annotated images of friction ridge prints
- B. Object shots or any reproductions not used for an examination
- C. Negatives, including those containing friction ridge prints
- D. Next Generation Identification screenshots (required for annotated images but optional for information (e.g., search parameters) captured elsewhere)
- E. Photocopies of evidence when the photocopy is used for examination (e.g., intentionally recorded friction ridge prints)
- F. Photographic requests (e.g., database screen printout), when retained by Friction Ridge Discipline.
- G. Hazardous Evidence Analysis Team Latent Print Photography Checklist
- H. Records from discussions or consultations of examinations (e.g., enlargements, narrative)

11 INTENTIONALLY RECORDED PRINTS RECEIVED IN THE LABORATORY

- A. Intentionally recorded friction ridge records (standard or non standard) are treated as evidence if submitted directly to the FBI Laboratory from an entity other than the Intelligence Unit or Criminal Justice Information Services Division.
 1. Any copies (hardcopy or digital) of these evidentiary records will be treated as FBI Laboratory File records.
 2. Electronic agency database records received from Executive Branch agencies, such as Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense, may be treated as part of the FBI Laboratory file rather than evidence.
- B. Intentionally recorded friction ridge records (standard or non standard) that are obtained through the Criminal Justice Information Services Division or the Intelligence Unit are treated as FBI Laboratory file records.
- C. Refer to the *Digital Images* document (FRD-400) for information on the retention of digital images.

11.1 Retention of Submitted Intentionally Recorded Prints

- A. Any submitted hardcopy intentionally recorded prints received in the discipline may be retained.

- B. The individual will record the consent from the appropriate entity (e.g., contributor, Evidence Management Unit, Intelligence Unit) in the Communication Log when necessary.
- C. The FBI Laboratory file will include a notation that the item is no longer evidence, and the prints will become technical records.

11.2 Forwarding of Submitted Intentionally Recorded Prints to the Criminal Justice Information Services Division

- A. Any submitted hardcopy intentionally recorded prints received in the discipline may be submitted to the Criminal Justice Information Services Division.
- B. The individual will record the consent from the appropriate entity (e.g., contributor, Evidence Management Unit, Intelligence Unit) in the Communication Log when necessary.
- C. The Universal Control Number will be provided to the contributor for submitted records, as appropriate.

12 RETENTION OF ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE RECEIVED IN THE LABORATORY

- A. Electronic evidence will not be returned to the contributor.
 - 1. Copies of the images will be retained as appropriate and are not considered evidence.
- B. Media containing digital images of friction ridge prints submitted to the Laboratory is considered physical evidence, except as noted in Section 13.1.

13 TERRORIST EXPLOSIVE DEVICE ANALYTICAL CENTER RESPONSE SUBMITTED COMPACT DISKS

Compact disks containing images of prints captured during examination of Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center evidence item(s) in the field are submitted to the FBI Laboratory intended for examination in conjunction with the original evidence.

13.1 Pre-Accreditation Compact Disks

- A. Depending on the time frame, many pre-accreditation (accredited August 31, 2018) cases processed by the forward-deployed Department of Defense Laboratories contained disks that were intended to be tracked either on the chain of custody or in the Explosives Reference Tool database.
- B. The disks were retained in FBI space; however, the tracking of the disks can be unreliable, as they were often treated as part of the case documentation rather than as evidence.
- C. As these disks contain images associated with a specific incident, if the examiner wishes to use the images in casework, the examiner will first verify that the images are associated with the case in question.
- D. The disks will not be considered evidence but will be designated as a part of the FBI Laboratory file when in a 1A.

13.2 Post-Accreditation Compact Disks

Any disks contained within post-accreditation cases will be tracked as an item of evidence through the Laboratory Information Management System chain of custody.

14 PHYSICAL RECORDS

- A. Physical supporting records are not individually serialized
 - 1. The compiled records are retained in a serialized 1A in the appropriate physical storage area (e.g., FBI Laboratory file room).
- B. Physical case notes, with the exception of images of friction ridge prints and digital media, will be numbered consecutively (i.e., page __).
 - 1. Only the first page of the case notes must be numbered to account for the totality of the pages (i.e., page __ of __).
 - 2. Case-related notations on the reverse side of photographs of friction ridge prints do not need to be page numbered
- C. All physically retained FBI Laboratory file records will be accounted for on the 1A.
- D. Electronic records are accounted for in Sentinel, as appropriate.

14.1 Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center Response Pre-Accreditation Physical Records

14.1.1 FBI Laboratory File Records

- A. Prior to issuing a Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center response to an official request or investigation which involved casework performed prior to accreditation (accreditation date August 31, 2018), an examiner may be unable to locate portions of the FBI Laboratory file (e.g., case notes) due to factors such as migration of files and examinations of large numbers of records.
- B. If the examiner is able to locate a copy or duplicate version of the record, the record will be added to the file with clear indication that it is a copy and the action taken recorded in the case notes.
- C. If the record is unable to be recreated, the examiner will note specifically in the current record what is missing.
- D. In situations where a record item is missing, and it does not impede the requested technical examination, the examiner may still conduct examinations and issue a report or expedited result(s).
- E. If the record(s) are found at a later date, they will be added to the FBI Laboratory file and a notation will be placed in the record addressing their return.

14.1.2 Acknowledgements in Physical Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center Records

- A. If an FBI Laboratory file record is missing an examiner or technician acknowledgement of work (as required by the existing documents at the time), the absence will be recorded in the FBI Laboratory File and nothing further done.
 - 1. The record will be specific to what is missing and where it is missing from.

- B. This allowance applies only to FBI Laboratory file records that were created prior to accreditation (accreditation date August 31, 2018) and/or were created at the Quantico Laboratory site or Lorton Site.
 - 1. All other instances will be addressed according to current document requirements.

15 NEXT GENERATION IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM AND/OR DIGITAL IMAGING RECORDS

- A. Electronic supporting records generated within the Next Generation Identification System or an appropriate digital image retention system will be retained within those systems and are considered part of the FBI Laboratory file.
- B. For the Next Generation Identification System, only those records contained on the MBIS server and the biographic search transaction history are considered part of the FBI Laboratory file.
- C. The systems track the actions of individuals based on password protected electronic access.
- D. Records for all systems will be easily associated with a case or will have a notation in the FBI Laboratory file providing direction to the records.
- E. Digital records retained on media (e.g., disk) will be retained in the physical 1A.

16 LABORATORY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND SENTINEL

- A. Electronic supporting records generated within the Laboratory Information Management System will be retained in that system and will be uploaded to Sentinel, as appropriate.

17 REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Issued	Changes
09	03/15/2024	Section 6.2-A and Section 7.2-A – Added Section reference Section 8 - Added
10	04/10/2024	Section 8.1 – added more details on audits