

Questioned Documents Unit (QDU) Procedures for Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) Requests for Support

1 Purpose

These procedures establish requirements for Questioned Documents Unit (QDU) analysis activities conducted in response to a request for support (RFS) from law enforcement, the Intelligence Community, or foreign partners when the purpose is to provide an investigative lead, intelligence, or information (i3) and *not* intended for use in judicial proceedings.

2 Scope

These procedures apply to all QDU personnel who process or conduct analyses for RFS i3 products and supplements the *FBI Laboratory Practices for Providing Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) Products*.

3 Distinction between i3 Activities and Forensic Examinations

In addition to forensic examinations, QDU conducts activities in direct support of intelligence collection and analysis, including but not limited to the following:

- Redacted

- Database queries
- Research requests
- Make/model determinations

3.1 Although some of these intelligence activities may have forensic value and/or involve processes that are also used in forensic examinations, the purpose of an i3 RFS product is to rapidly provide intelligence and information to assist decision makers, whereas forensic examinations provide expert conclusions to aid law enforcement investigations and assist the trier of fact in court.

3.2 An RFS analysis does not constitute a forensic examination. Therefore, if an item submitted as part of a RFS is later needed for a forensic examination, the item must be resubmitted, and a *Laboratory Report (7-1)* will be issued.

4 RFS Procedures

4.1 Initiation of an RFS

RFSs are submitted to the QDU from law enforcement agencies, the Intelligence Community, or foreign partners. The Unit Chief, appropriate Technical Leader, or designee may authorize the acceptance of a RFS if the purpose is for information, intelligence, and/or investigative assistance and not intended for judicial proceedings/expert testimony.

4.1.1 The contributor will submit the RFS in writing, such as an e-mail, that contains the following information:

- Name of contributing agency
- Individual point of contact at the contributing agency and contact information
- A description of the service requested

4.1.2 RFSs that are accepted will be initiated in Forensic Advantage (FA) or will be tracked in a database maintained by QDU when the case is handled outside of FA. The RFS will be assigned to the QDU employee (hereafter referred to as “analyst”) with the necessary skills, training, and experience to complete the request.

4.2 Conducting a RFS Analysis

The methods, procedures, and processes used to conduct an RFS i³ analysis will vary greatly depending on the type and nature of each RFS. Analysts will document the processes used in their analysis and retain their notes in the RFS file. For additional information regarding the RFS file, see section “6 Retaining Records” below.

4.2.1 QDU technical procedures will be utilized whenever possible when conducting examinations on intelligence items.

4.2.2 Extraordinary measures may be employed on items examined under this procedure. Extraordinary measures include the use of classified procedures, modified procedures, and published procedures that may not have been validated in the FBI Laboratory.

4.2.2.1 Any intelligence or classified tools used or developed specifically for intelligence purposes will be discussed with the contributor prior to use. The QDU technical procedures for such tools will be utilized, if available. The Unit Chief, Technical Leader, and contributor must approve the use of extraordinary measures.

5 Reporting Results

5.1 The Questioned Documents Unit will routinely issue RFS i³ product results using the QDU Standard Results Form (Appendix A).

5.2 The reporting method may vary depending on the type and nature of the RFS and the most effective method to communicate the results. The Unit Chief or designee will document the approval of the use of an alternate RFS i3 product as part of the administrative review. Other RFS i3 products may include:

- Email
- White Paper
- Memorandum
- Electronic Communication (EC)
- PowerPoint slide or Infographic
- Integration into another Intelligence Product

5.3 Requirements Portions

RFS i3 products generated by QDU will contain the following information:

- Date issued
- Subject of i3 product
- Basic contact information to include unit telephone number and/or email address
- Classification and applicable dissemination controls and portion markings
- Laboratory number(s)
- The statement, “This FBI Laboratory product is intended for investigative lead, intelligence, or information purposes only.”

5.4 Reviewing Results

All final results will undergo a technical review and an administrative review. These reviews may be conducted by the same individual; however, an analyst cannot review their own work.

5.4.1 Technical Review

RFS i3 products and analyses will be technically reviewed, and all comparisons and database associations will be verified by an analyst(s) with the necessary skills, training, and experience to conduct the analysis they are reviewing and who are authorized to conduct technical reviews and verifications in casework. The verification and technical review will occur prior to, or concurrent with, an administrative review and will determine if:

- The reviewer is in agreement with all comparisons and database associations
- The appropriate analysis has been performed
- The results are accurate and consistent with the supporting records
- There are sufficient analysis records to support the results

Upon completion of the verification and technical review, the reviewer(s) will record their approval in the RFS file.

5.4.2 Administrative Review

The Unit Chief will ensure the RFS i3 results are administratively reviewed to determine if:

- The results are clear, concise, accurate, and complete, including correct spelling and grammar
- The format and content of the results conforms to these procedures
- The supporting records are complete
- A technical review has been completed and properly recorded (if applicable)

Upon completion of the administrative review, the reviewer will record their approval in the RFS file.

5.5 Issuing Results

Approved results may be issued to the contributor via Sentinel, email, hard copy, or any other appropriate method. Unless restricted due to classification or other reason, results will be uploaded and serialized in Sentinel.

6 Retaining Records

Unless restricted, RFS i3 analysis related notes, preliminary results, substantive communications with the contributor, and any other related documents will be serialized in a 1A/1C package(s). When the RFS is handled outside of FA, administrative information will be tracked in a database maintained by QDU to record appropriate metrics.

7 Discontinuing a RFS

A RFS may be discontinued at any point in the process. Records generated prior to the request to discontinue i3 analyses will be retained in accordance with the *FBI Laboratory Practices for Providing Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) Products*.

8 References

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

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
0	04/15/21	Original document issued.

Redacted - Signatures on File

Approval

Questioned Documents
Unit Chief

Date: 04/14/2021

Questioned Documents
Technical Leader

Date: 04/14/2021

Footwear/Tire Tread
Technical Leader

Date: 04/14/2021

QA Approval

Quality Manager

Date: 04/14/2021

Appendix A. Standard Results Template

Redacted - Form on File