

Image Assessment

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Image Assessment

1 INTRODUCTION

This document describes procedures for assessing electronic images. An image assessment is a review of electronic evidence prior to or instead of receipt of physical evidence, primarily for the purpose of facilitating the expeditious determination of whether the depicted material is probative or relevant to an investigation (typically whether the depicted material is of human skeletal origin).

2 SCOPE

This document applies to Anthropology Examiners in the Trace Evidence Unit (TEU).

3 EQUIPMENT

- Computer or mobile device
- Human and non-human skeletal reference material (e.g., casts, published literature, or skeletal collections)

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Receipt of Images

- A. Images may be received by email or SMS (text message).
- B. Ideally, images include a scale and appropriate considerations for lighting, angle, obstructions, etc.
- C. If the examiner believes that additional or different images may help the assessment, they may be requested from the contributor.
- D. There are no file size/type requirements for anthropological image assessments.

4.2 Image Assessment

- A. An image assessment typically includes determining whether the depicted material is skeletal versus non-skeletal in origin (see Skeletal or Non-Skeletal Origin Determination procedure), or human versus non-human in origin (see Human or Non-Human Origin Determination procedure).
- B. Such assessments, by their nature, can only be performed visually based on the content of the image.
- C. Results may be inconclusive due to either image quality or the nature of the depicted item(s). For example, conclusions may be limited for fragments with insufficient diagnostic morphology, or bones with similar morphology in many species such as ribs or shaft fragments.
- D. As appropriate, the examiner may advise the contributor that direct examination of the depicted item(s) may provide additional information.

4.3 Expedited Results

- A. Results of assessments may be provided to the contributor (either verbally or electronically) prior to technical and administrative review. (NOTE: verification is not required for image assessments.)
- B. Caveats regarding expedited results will be included in accordance with the LAB-200: Operations Manual.

4.4 Administrative Procedures

- A. The contributor will be advised of the procedure for submitting a request letter or Laboratory Examination Request (LER). Once received, the request will be forwarded to the Evidence Management Unit for entry into FA. Alternatively, the electronic request and results can be uploaded into Sentinel as a record email if a request letter or LER is unable to be obtained.
- B. Once an anthropology case record has been created in FA, an entry will be placed in the Case Communication Log documenting the communication of expedited results to the contributor.
- C. The evidence items and descriptions will be added in FA. The evidence naming convention will include that the evidence is electronic, and the original image file name, for example: "Item 1 Electronic Evidence (Photo1.JPG)." Actual image files will be documented in the Case Notes and do not need to be separately uploaded to FA.
- D. Following the examination, the evidence will be placed into archive.

5 LIMITATIONS

The conclusions that can be reached from anthropological examinations to determine skeletal or non-skeletal origin are dependent on the condition and completeness of the submitted material. Results based on fragmentary or poorly preserved material may be inconclusive.

The conclusions that can be reached regarding human or non-human origin are dependent on the condition and completeness of the skeletal remains. Result based on fragmentary or poorly preserved material may inconclusive.

The conclusions that can be reached based on the examination of images are dependent on the condition and completeness of the depicted skeletal material as well as the quality of the images. Results may be limited or inconclusive. Describe limitations of the technical procedure.

6 REFERENCES

ANTHRO-300: Forensic Anthropological Examinations (current version)

ANTHRO-302: Human or Non-Human Origin Determination (current version)

ANTHRO-303: Skeletal or Non-Skeletal Origin Determination (current version)

FBI Laboratory Safety Manual (current version)

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7 REVISION HISTORY

| Revision | Issued | Changes |
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| 01 | 01/28/2022 | Formatting and language changes to conform to new template. |