

OSAC 2023-S-0026 Task-Relevant Information in Friction Ridge Examination

*Friction Ridge Subcommittee
Physics/Pattern Scientific Area Committee
Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science*





Draft OSAC Proposed Standard

OSAC 2023-S-0026 Task Relevant Information in Friction Ridge Examination

Prepared by
*Friction Ridge Subcommittee
Organization for Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science*

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Disclaimer:

This OSAC Proposed Standard was written by the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science following a process that includes an [open comment period](#). This Proposed Standard will be submitted to a standards developing organization and is subject to change.

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To be placed on the OSAC Registry, certain types of standards first must be reviewed by a Scientific and Technical Review (STR). The STR process is vital to OSAC's mission of generating and recognizing scientifically sound standards for producing and interpreting forensic science results. The STR shall provide critical and knowledgeable reviews of draft standards or of proposed revisions of standards previously published by standards developing organizations (SDOs) to ensure that the published methods that practitioners employ are scientifically valid, and the resulting claims are trustworthy.

The STR will consist of an independent and diverse panel, including subject matter experts, human factors scientists, quality assurance personnel, and legal experts, which will be tasked with evaluating the proposed standard based on a comprehensive list of science-based criteria.

For more information about this important process, please visit our website at: <https://www.nist.gov/topics/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/scientific-technical-review-panels>.

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10 **1. Introduction**

11 1.1. This document has been developed with the objective of improving the quality and
12 consistency of friction ridge examination practices.

13
14 1.2. In 2015, the National Commission on Forensic Science adopted a Views Document that
15 stated: “The standards and guidelines for forensic practice being developed by the
16 Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) should specify what types of
17 information are task-relevant and task-irrelevant for common forensic tasks.” This
18 Technical Report responds to that recommendation.
19

20 **2. Scope**

21 2.1. This document specifies information that is task-relevant and task-irrelevant for friction
22 ridge examinations, i.e., Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation.
23

24 2.2. This document does not address other tasks that friction ridge examiners perform, such
25 as collection, preservation, processing, conducting Automated Biometric Identification
26 System (ABIS) searches, conflict resolution, and verification. This document also does
27 not address the relevance of information necessary for administrative tasks, accreditation
28 requirements, or reporting of results.
29

30 2.3. This document does not address requirements regarding exposure to task-irrelevant
31 information in friction ridge examinations.
32

33 **3. Terms and Definitions**

34 For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.
35

36 3.1. Exemplar impression: The deliberately recorded images or impressions from the friction
37 ridge skin of an individual.
38

39 NOTE 1 to entry: Examples may include, but are not limited to, inked tenprints, inked
40 palm prints, Livescan prints, powder and lift prints, casted/moulded prints, or
41 photographs of friction ridge skin.
42

43 3.2. Questioned impression: An impression or image of friction ridge skin whose source or
44 identity is unknown; it can include latent impressions, impressions from an unknown
45 source or a known source.
46

47 3.3. Task-Relevant: Information is task-relevant for analytic tasks if it is necessary for
48 drawing conclusions:
49

- 50 (i) about the propositions in question,
51 (ii) from the physical evidence that has been designated for examination,

- 52 (iii) through the correct application of an accepted analytic method by a
53 competent analyst.
54

55 3.4. Task-Irrelevant: Information is task-irrelevant if it is not necessary for drawing
56 conclusions about the propositions in question.
57

58 NOTE 1 to entry: Information that is irrelevant for friction ridge examination may well
59 be relevant for other administrative, analytical, or reporting tasks.
60
61

62 4. General Information

63 4.1. Only the following information is considered task-relevant for friction ridge
64 examination:

65 4.1.1. Friction ridge impressions

66 4.1.1.1. During analysis of questioned impressions, exemplar impressions are task-
67 irrelevant.

68 4.1.2. Substrate

69 4.1.3. Matrix

70 4.1.4. Processing methods

71 4.1.5. Date and/or method of collection for exemplars

72 4.1.6. Orientation and location of impressions

73 4.1.7. Environmental/location from which questioned impressions were recovered

74 4.1.8. Whether any exemplars were generated by a database search, the size of any
75 databases searched, and any search parameters
76

77 4.2. All information not enumerated in Section 4.1 is presumed task-irrelevant for friction
78 ridge examination. It is not possible to enumerate an exhaustive list of information
79 that is task-irrelevant for friction ridge examinations. Information that is task-
80 irrelevant for friction ridge examination includes, but is not limited to the following:

81 4.2.1. Results of other forensic services

82 4.2.2. Documentation and/or conclusions by other friction ridge examiners

83 4.2.3. Crime type

84 4.2.4. Legal status of case and/or persons of interest

85 4.2.5. Other evidence or investigative information, whether forensic or not

86 4.2.6. Any information about the identity, relationship to the investigation, criminal
87 history or demographic information about the source(s) of exemplar(s)

88 4.2.7. Identities of personnel involved in the investigation, e.g., submitting officer

89 4.2.8. Lab and agency case numbers

90 4.2.9. Item number(s)

91 4.2.10. Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) rank and/or score

92 4.2.11. Any information about the reference population (the population of potential
93 donors of questioned impressions)
94
95

96 **5. Normative References**

97 5.1. National Commission on Forensic Science, Ensuring That Forensic Analysis Is Based
98 Upon Task-Relevant Information, Technology, (2015), available online:
99 <https://www.justice.gov/ncfs/file/818196/download>.

100
101

102 **6. Appendix A: Change Log**

Version	Date	Change
1.0	DD/MM/YYYY	Original Issue

103