Document #13

Standard for Friction Ridge Comparison Proficiency Testing Program (Latent/Tenprint)

1. Preamble

Proficiency testing is part of a quality assurance program that an agency must have in place. A proficiency testing program is a reliable means of measuring the quality of each examiner's ability to perform work. Proficiency tests must be taken individually. Proficiency testing measures individual performance and identifies areas where improvements may be needed. Proficiency testing is part of an overall quality assurance program that includes continuing training and education. This document provides a standard for a proficiency testing program, which includes planning, design, administration, evaluation, documentation, and corrective action.

2. Scope

2.1. A proficiency test program is intended to evaluate an individual examiner's application of a methodology and the agency's procedures.

2.2. Only examiners trained to competency will be tested.

3. Program Plan

3.1. An agency must write a plan to encompass the testing program. At a minimum, a proficiency testing program plan must include the following:

3.1.1. Who is to be tested

3.1.2. Frequency of testing

3.1.3. The knowledge, skills, abilities to be tested

3.1.4. Test design

3.1.5. Test materials

3.1.6. Test format

3.1.7. Test source

3.1.8. Test administration

3.1.9. Test validation

3.1.10. Criteria for successful completion

Document #13 Standard for Friction Ridge Comparison Proficiency Testing Program, Ver. 2.0	Date of First Issue 05/08/09	Current Issue Date 11/14/12 Web Posting Date 11/24/12
Date of Last Review N/A	Date of Next Review 05-2014	Appendix present/Letter No

3.1.11. Analysis of the test results

3.1.12. Feedback of the test results to the examiner

3.1.13. Corrective actions

3.1.14. Documentation

3.1.15.

4. **Test Design**

   4.1. Tests may be developed in-house or obtained from an external source.

   4.2. Test material shall be representative of normal casework and

       4.2.1. Include multiple unknown and known prints.

       4.2.2. Be inclusive of all the levels of detail.

   4.3. Other considerations

       4.3.1. Tests should include multiple developmental techniques.

       4.3.2. Tests should include varying degrees of difficulty level.

       4.3.3. Tests should include impressions from different sources that bear resemblances in first and second-level detail.

   4.4. Test reporting form:

       4.4.1. Must include the conclusions.

       4.4.2. May include the agency's documentation, report writing, and evidence handling procedures.

   4.5. Test material

   All participants must have materials of the same quality.

   4.6. Test Validation

       4.6.1. The ability of a test to reliably assess examiner performance shall be validated prior to final production and distribution.

       4.6.2. Validation is accomplished through predistribution testing of three or more examiners, preferably from different agencies. To validate the test, pre-distribution test results shall correspond with the preparer's specifications.

5. **Test Administration**

   5.1. Each examiner trained to competency must be tested at least annually.

   5.2. Undue time constraints should not be imposed.

   5.3. All conclusions must be those of the examiner without consultation.

   5.4. Verification is permitted and must be documented.

   5.5. Test location and conditions should reflect a normal working environment.

   5.6. Tests shall be administered in one of the following three formats:

       5.6.1. Open

       In open testing, examiners are aware they are being tested.

       5.6.2. Blind

       In blind testing, examiners are not aware they are being tested.

Document #13 Standard for Friction Ridge Comparison Proficiency Testing Program, Ver. 2.0	Date of First Issue 05/08/09	Current Issue Date 11/14/12 Web Posting Date 11/24/12
Date of Last Review N/A	Date of Next Review 05-2014	Appendix present/Letter No

2 of 4

5.6.3. Double-blind

In double-blind testing, the examiner and the unit are not aware they are being tested.

6. Test Evaluation

6.1. Criteria for successful completion shall be defined in the program plan. Failure to effect all possible individualizations may be acceptable depending on an agency's policy, test design, and test purpose.

6.2. Corrective actions

6.2.1. Corrective action must be taken when an erroneous individualization or exclusion occurs.

6.2.2. Other departures from the expected results must be reviewed for corrective action.

6.2.3. Administrative and clerical errors must be reviewed for corrective action.

7. Documentation

7.1. The following should be documented:

7.1.1. Program plan

7.1.2. Program director

7.1.3. Test designers

7.1.4. Test validation results

7.1.5. Test participants

7.1.6. Date tested

7.1.7. Test materials

7.1.8. Test results

7.1.9. Test feedback

7.1.10. Reviews, inquiries, and corrective actions

7.1.11. Test record maintenance

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Date of Last Review N/A	Date of Next Review 05-2014	Appendix present/Letter No

3 of 4

8. Revision Table

Version	Effective Start	Effective End	Posted	Archived	Change
1.0	05/08/09	11/14/12	07/27/09	11/14/12	Original issue
2.0	11/14/12	N/A	11/24/12	N/A	No change to content Reformatted (start of new version number)

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