

ASB Best Practice Recommendation 143, First Edition
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**Best Practice Recommendations for Technical Review
in Friction Ridge Examination**



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Foreword

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

It is essential that friction ridge examiners provide a sound basis for each conclusion drawn. Technical review of an examiner's work product by another competent examiner is a proactive measure to determine if this basis exists. This document provides several recommendations to guide the technical review process.

This document was revised, prepared, and finalized as a standard by the Friction Ridge Consensus Body of the AAFS Standards Board. The draft of this standard was developed by the Friction Ridge Subcommittee of the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science.

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the term '**should**' indicates that a provision is not mandatory, but recommended as good practice.

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Keywords:

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Best Practice Recommendations for Technical Review in Friction Ridge Examination

1 Scope

This document provides best practice recommendations for how to perform technical reviews of friction ridge impression examinations. The document provides general guidance on technical reviews best practices including a check list and sample review forms.

This document does not address administrative review, verification, or testimony monitoring.

2 Normative References

There are no normative reference documents.

3 Terms and Definitions

For purposes of this document, the following definitions apply.

3.1

examiner (friction ridge) competent friction ridge examiner

An individual who has successfully completed their FSP's training program and has demonstrated to the FSP that they possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the tasks required of their current position. An individual authorized to conduct friction ridge examinations for the FSP by observing and interpreting data, making decisions, forming conclusions and opinions, issuing reports and/or providing testimony.

3.2

Forensic Service Provider FSP

A forensic science entity or forensic science practitioner providing forensic science services.

3.3

nonconforming work

Work that does not comply with FSP policies and procedures.

3.4

technical review

A qualified second party's evaluation of reports, notes, data, and other documentation to ensure there is appropriate and sufficient support for the actions, results, conclusions, opinions, and interpretations.

3.5

verification

Confirmation, through either re-examination or review of documented data by another examiner, that a conclusion or opinion conforms to specified requirements and is reproducible.

NOTE "Specified requirements" are the FSP's policies and procedures relating to analysis, comparison, and evaluation of friction ridge impressions.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1** Technical review of the case record shall be conducted by a competent friction ridge examiner as defined in 3.1.
- 4.2** Technical review of the case record may be conducted concurrently with verification.
- 4.3** Technical review of the case record should occur in every case. FSPs shall have a written policy defining what is required in technical review.
- 4.4** Technical review shall be documented in the case record. As an example, the requirements for technical review can be satisfied by completing a checklist (see Annex A).
- 4.5** The FSP shall have a policy to address nonconforming work.
- 4.6** Nonconforming work shall be documented in the case record. Refer to Annex B for a sample nonconformity assessment form.

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Annex A (informative)

Sample Technical Review Checklist

The presence of items on this checklist does not imply that they are required. Each agency may create a checklist that addresses its own policies and procedures.

YES NO N/A NOTES

- Are the notes legible and proper?
- Do the notes indicate that a proper inventory was conducted and completely documented?
- Are the notes organized, neat and understandable?
- Are the notes pages consecutively numbered?

YES NO N/A EXAMINATION OF FRICTION RIDGE IMPRESSIONS

- Have the examinations been performed according to the FSP's standard operating procedures?
- Have the components of best practice recommendations for the friction ridge examination methods been met?
- Have the components of best practice recommendations for verification been met?
If the verification was blind, was the verifier shielded from the case examiner's conclusion?
- Were conclusion(s) selected from the FSP's standard operating procedures?
- Are the conclusion(s) appropriate based upon the data?

YES NO N/A SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Are all images, printouts, and screenshots used to support conclusions in the case file?
- Has all relevant digital evidence been accounted for?
- Are all images, printouts, and screenshots properly labeled?
- Have observed details/characteristics been annotated where appropriate?
- If consultation occurred, has it been clearly documented?
- If conflict resolution occurred, has it been clearly documented?

YES NO N/A EXAMINATION REPORT

- Is the report format and wording, including any limitations of conclusions, in accordance with the FSP's standard operating procedures?
- Have the requested examinations been addressed?
- Are the results properly transcribed and clearly communicated to the reader?
- Have appropriate additional samples/standards/exemplars been requested, if needed?
- Has the evidence submission been inventoried and its disposition included?

NOTES/REMARKS

INSTRUCTIONS: The examiner and reviewer must explain all "NO" responses that were not corrected.

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Annex B
(informative)

Sample Non-Conformity Assessment Form

Name of Examiner Involved: _____ Date: _____

FSP Case Number: _____ Agency Case Number: _____

Name of Reviewer: _____

Non-Conformity:

Incomplete Documentation Clerical Error Erroneous EXC Erroneous ID

Reviewer Comments: _____

Suggested Action (Reviewer): _____

Root-cause analysis:

Corrective/preventive action:

Supervisor/Director:

Assessed by: _____ Position/Title: _____

Supervisor/Director Determined Action: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____ CPA No: _____

Involved Examiner Acknowledgement: _____ *Date:* _____

Involved Examiner Comments: _____

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