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FOREWORD

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The body of knowledge which comprises forensic science is a compilation of procedures adapted from other disciplines that encompass many of the physical and natural sciences. During the history of forensic science, a multitude of scientists have greatly contributed to the protocols, methods, and procedures that have become a routine part of analysis. Every effort has been made in this manual to give proper recognition to the authors of specific procedures; however, in some instances, the original sources of forensic procedures have been lost in antiquity. For others, the general procedures belong to the public domain and are recorded in many basic references concerning forensic science. In addition, many of the procedures described in this manual have been adapted from standard laboratory practices and the citation of thousands of references which deserve credit for aiding in the development of these procedures is neither practical nor possible. To all those scientists who have contributed to the knowledge of forensic science contained herein, we do extend collective recognition and gratitude.

Procedures manuals which offer reliable information that is then combined with corresponding training manuals serve as the foundation for effective quality management of analyses. Extensive effort has been made to ensure that the routine procedures described herein will produce accurate and valid analytical results. However, not all possible analyses that may be encountered in casework can be appropriately covered in a procedures manual, nor can all possible variations to a described procedure be included. Therefore, this manual is written with the understanding that minor variations that do not significantly alter the described procedure may be used. An analyst may use a non-routine procedure not specifically stated in this manual, provided all the following conditions are met:

- 1. The procedure used is based upon documented and scientifically accepted practice.
- 2. A notation is made on the worksheet indicating the procedure followed is not specified in the procedures manual.
- 3. The analyst also indicates on the worksheet why the particular procedure was selected over a procedure contained in this manual. Rationale must be detailed sufficiently to withstand close scrutiny by independent examiners.
- 4. The analyst provides documentation showing that the non-routine procedure had been tested prior to application with evidence. Test criteria shall include test samples that approximate the characteristics of the evidence, the results obtained with the routine procedure, and the results obtained with the non-routine procedure. Documentation will also include related data concerning the non-routine procedure's sensitivity, precision, and possible sources of error.
- 5. The non-routine procedure used will be recorded to a standard such that another scientist of similar skills and experience can understand fully the procedure used and the results obtained.

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Additionally, there may be procedures which pertain to all sections. Such is the case with laboratory reagents. In order to standardize the testing and monitor the shelf life of reagents used by analytical sections, the Forensic Sciences Command has developed protocols which are universal for all sections. These protocols regarding reagent expiration and testing are found in the Command Quality Manual.

INTRODUCTION

The total or partial reconstruction of fragmented or separated objects that were subjected to accidental or deliberate force is the successful work product of a physical match examination. Distinguishable features are revealed through the methodology of preparation of the item, examination to extract information, and analysis of the information to arrive at a conclusion. While general procedures in physical match examinations are usually straightforward, non-standard procedures may be needed and are addressed in the Foreword of this manual.

The forensic purpose of a physical match is to establish that two or more separated objects were, at one time, part of another fragment, or a contiguous entity in a unique arrangement. A successful physical match is proof of the correlation that exists between the two objects. A physical match can be made because of the correlation between two objects that became separated due to varying degrees of force resulting in a random fracturing process.

As the process and analysis of a physical match unfold and become more than general concepts, it becomes obvious that the material is incidental to the examination and conclusion. The physical match examination can be performed on any material but most commonly occurs with broken glass, plastic, metal, paper, currency, checks and wood. Cases have also been resolved using broken teeth and bones of humans and animals. Tears in textile material, a variety of tape, foil, and plastic bags can also be received from contributors for analysis. Plastic bags and films of all variety have become common place in submissions to laboratories as physical match items.

The analyst or examiner must have attained sufficient skills to develop an understanding of the applications of the scientific method, to recognize and compare both class and individual characteristics, and arrive at a documented analytical conclusion through the examination process. These skills surpass the observation and description abilities of the casual or average observer. For example, an average observer may see the damage but the scientist will find that a tear is force, applied down the plane of an item, leaving a trail of debris in its wake. The scientist will also note that a break from force results in striations and hackle marks.

Class characteristics of an item place the item into a broad category or group. The features that associate an item with a group never link it to a single source. The shoes are Adidas brand, they are size ten, they have blue leather uppers, and have white shoe laces are all features that describe an item. But, none of these features can separate the shoes from the hundreds or even thousands that were manufactured. Is the item made of brittle material, does it flex, does it stretch? All of these are class-related features. For example, the examination of black electrical tape cut with a very sharp blade may result in a statement addressing only the class characteristics of the items.

Individual characteristics are those features, either deliberate, caused from the manufacturing process or accidentally caused by damage or wear, that provide information that associate an item with a single source. As an example, additives like clay, talc, and sand in the manufacturing process of low-density polyethylene serve to accelerate wear on manufacturing equipment, adding unique marks in the manufacturing process. Other examples would be the individual characteristics used in the examination of firearms, tool marks, latent prints, footwear, and tire tracks. Identifications

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cannot be made in the absence of individual characteristics.

The types of physical matches are found in four main areas. Two-dimensional separations are available in the examinations of material like glass, plastic, knife blades, tools, and paint chips. Three-dimensional separations are also found in upturned edges of some of these same materials with additional items not being limited to broken auto accessories and emblems, cut hoses, and paper matches. A third source of information is found in overlaid objects that may have established a unique pattern at their former interface. A fourth source is that of special cases in which contiguous edges may be missing as from a ream or tablet of paper, saw kerf, wood grain, polish or grinding stria in materials, and fingernail ridges.

Care should be exercised by the examiner concerning the interference their examination can have on subsequent Forensic Biology and DNA examinations. The best option is for the Forensic Biology section to receive any multi-section items first, asking for the input from the physical match examiner during the initial visual inspection. The main reasons for this are as follows:

- 1. An item must first pass through Forensic Biology for stain identification before being submitted to DNA. Handling the item can potentially interfere with the visual screening necessary to locate a bloodstain prior to DNA analysis.
- 2. The Forensic Biologist must sometimes use a stereo microscope to locate trace amounts of bloodstains. The mere handling of an item can unknowingly cause the destruction of this type of stain.
- 3. Due to the increased sensitivity of DNA profiling technology, laboratories now have dedicated Forensic Biology/DNA sections. By receiving multi-section items first, the Forensic Biologist can locate and remove any stains and properly collect and note any trace evidence observed, limiting the possibility of contamination or extraneous deposits.

Note: The use of standard laboratory clean technique protocols is strongly recommended for evidence handling in physical match cases that are not initially a multi-discipline case.

Other considerations that should receive attention will be the need for subsequent examinations in addition to Forensic Biology and DNA. Some items of evidence may present the need for the collection of trace material, latent print examination, footwear examination, tool mark examination, or perhaps tire track examination. The initial observation of the items could indicate the need for an examiner or analyst in another laboratory discipline to visually examine the evidence prior to the preparation phase of the workflow.

Before beginning any physical match comparison, for any materials analysis involving comparison of a known to an unknown, the unknown sample will be examined/reviewed to determine enough information is detected in the unknown to justify a comparison to known standards. Methods of conducting a physical match examination are based upon visual examinations. The visual examination is directed toward the details from manual edge-to-edge realignment, surface markings

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(markings from all sources, patterns and designs, or wear and accidental damage), measurements and pattern counts, microscopic and photographic assistance, detail in two and three-dimensional separations, and other side by side direct examinations taking into account the right to left reversal and positive and negative corresponding details.

The techniques used in physical match examination are based on visual acuity and interpretation of the results of examinations through analytical decision making. The laboratory instrumentation used during the examination include, but are not limited to, standard low power magnifiers, microscopes, casting materials, photography and imaging to include analog and digital, and any number of forensic light sources such as ultraviolet lamps, polarized light, lasers, and alternate light sources. Some traditional techniques and tools used to measure refractive and reflective indexes as well as gradient density produce data that are indicative of class characteristics. There may be other laboratory techniques and instruments available that have application to physical match examinations and should not be ignored if their use will contribute to the end product - information.

The recommended report wording appears in Appendix I. The selected text that reports the findings of a fracture match examination are not all inclusive. There will be occasions when the wording is a guideline that serves as the building blocks for the findings.

There are three statements that can be made in the conclusion of a physical match. First, the items were at one time a single entity. All the pieces fit. Second, that the examination and analysis are inconclusive. One or more joining pieces were not collected or the pieces were too badly stretched or damaged. The third statement would be that the items were not at one time a single entity. The pieces do not fit and do not share the same class characteristics.

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ILLINOIS STATE POLICE

PHYSICAL MATCH PROCEDURES MANUAL

PROTOCOL: Physical Match

METHOD: Physical Match

PROCEDURE: PHYSICAL MATCH

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Physical Match Procedures Manual

INTRODUCTION

The forensic purpose of a physical match is to establish that two or more separated objects were, at one time, part of another object or fragment as a contiguous entity in a unique arrangement. The materials to be examined are incidental to the examination and conclusion of a physical match. A physical match examination can be performed with any material but most commonly occurs with broken glass, plastic, metal, textile material, paper, a variety of tape, plastic bags, paper matches and foil. A physical match can be made because of the correlation between two objects that became separated due to varying forces that produce a random fracturing process.

OTHER RELATED PROCEDURES:

None

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Standard Laboratory Precautions

PREPARATIONS

Standard Laboratory Preparations

INSTRUMENTATION

None may be needed. When the aid of instrumentation is needed, it may include standard low power magnifiers, photography and imaging, various microscopes, casting material, light sources with an application to the examination, or other instruments and equipment as the submitted items of evidence may present.

PROCEDURE OR ANALYSIS

Make an examination to determine the items are broken or separated and to distinguish between class and individual characteristics. Compare any class and individual characteristics in a side-by-side examination. Make a conclusion from analysis of the examinations.

- I. Criteria for Physical Match
 - A. Broken, torn or separated
 - B. Capable of being physically realigned
 - C. Fit together as a "Lock and Key"
 - 1. Along an edge-to-edge border
 - 2. Surface and other markings
 - D. Pieces are unique and not interchangeable with similar pieces elsewhere
- II. Class Characteristics including but not limited to:

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- A. Dimensions
- B. Type, method, and material of construction
- C. Color, clarity, and surface texture
- D. Coatings and dip lines
- E. Markings, placards, and designs
- F. Folds and perforations by type, location, and dimension
- G. Fluorescence in ultraviolet light
- H. Machined areas including holes and grooves
- III. Individual Characteristics including but not limited to:
 - A. Fracture contours, edges two and three dimensional
 - B. Hackle and feathering marks
 - C. Surface markings
 - D. Adhesive or attachment patterns
 - E. Cuts, tears, stretch marks, and stains
 - F. Scratches, dents, and tool markings
 - G. Inclusions, punches, and perforations
 - H. Flaws and discoloration
 - I. Grain and annual growth rings (of wood)
 - J. Missing portions such as saw kerf and missing pages
- IV. Make a Conclusion

REPORT WORDING

See Appendix I.

MINIMUM STANDARDS AND CONTROLS

See Appendix II.

REFERENCES

See Appendix III.

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PHYSICAL MATCH PROCEDURES MANUAL

APPENDIX I: REPORT WORDING

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PHYSICAL MATCH REPORT WORDING GUIDELINES

I. CASE INFORMATION

Agency name, name of investigating officer, laboratory case number, CSSC case number (when applicable), agency case number, victim, offense, and suspect(s).

II. EVIDENCE SUBMITTED

A listing and description of items as received from agency, evidence storage area, or mail. A description of the packaging is not appropriate unless an item is not examined.

III. EXAMINATION AND RESULTS (OR FINDINGS)

Statement of the results of examinations (processing, evaluations, and comparisons) performed on the items submitted.

IV. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SUBMISSIONS

Agency is requested to submit additional items of evidence in order that all fragments can be identified or eliminated. This paragraph may be omitted if the need for additional items of evidence are specified in the comparison findings or if additional items are not needed for examination. Evidence disposition may be added in this section.

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C<u>RITERIA</u>:

A surface to surface examination and analysis of the information reveals the items were at one time a single entity.

EXAMPLES:

Items (list items) constitute a physical match and at one time formed a single object.

Items (list items) and Items (list items) came from the same object.

CRITERIA:

A surface to surface examination and analysis of the information reveals an inconclusive finding.

EXAMPLES:

It was not determined if Items (list items) constitute a physical match.

Although similarities were noted between Item (list item) and Item (list item) extensive distortion in the material precludes a definite conclusion.

Item (list item) and Item (list item) have the same class characteristics. Class characteristics are observable details such as colors, composition, texture, and measurements; however, no individual characteristics (or, identifying features) were noted.

CRITERIA:

A surface to surface examination and analysis of the information reveals the items were not at one time a single entity.

EXAMPLES:

Items (list items) do not constitute a physical match and did not at one time form a single object.

Item (list item) can be eliminated as the source of Item (list item).

Item (list item) could not have come from Item (list item).

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APPENDIX II: MINIMUM STANDARDS AND CONTROLS

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MINIMUM STANDARDS AND CONTROLS

INTRODUCTION

The examiner must possess the ability to distinguish between class and individual characteristics. The evidence submitted must possess class characteristics for evaluation and individual characteristics sufficient for individualization. An identification cannot be made in the absence of some individual characteristics.

- I. Physical Match Class Characteristics
 - A. Standard One or more class characteristics must be presented by the items before an examination can begin.
 - B. Control The analyst or examiner will ensure that one or more class characteristics are apparent prior to beginning a side by side comparison for a physical match.
- II. Physical Match Individual Characteristics
 - A. Standard General. The items of evidence submitted must have been broken, torn or separated as the result of force. A side-by-side comparison should reveal class characteristics and that the items can be realigned and fit together as a "lock and key" or by other surface markings that are disclosed in the examination. The pieces must be unique and may not fit with other pieces under examination.
 - B. Control General. The analyst or examiner will determine that the items submitted for physical match comparison were broken, torn, or otherwise separated by force. An examination will reveal that the items have class characteristics before commencing a side-by-side comparison. Prior to arriving at the conclusion of a physical match, the analyst or examiner will find that the items are capable of being realigned, that they fit together as a "lock and key," that the pieces do not fit with other pieces under examination, and that there are no unexplainable differences.

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- III. Documentation of Physical Match
 - A. Standard The characteristics of a physical match shall be documented in work notes. The notes will be supplemented with sketches, diagrams, and imaging or combinations of these recording methods for at least one match in the case.
 - B. Control
 - 1. The analyst or examiner will ensure that an image is captured or that an accurate drawing or sketch of a physical match will be maintained in the case file. If the image does not record individual characteristics, then a drawing or sketch will supplement the image to denote obscure characteristics.
 - 2. The analyst or examiner recording the image or making the drawing will ensure that appropriate laboratory markings appear in or on the image or drawing.
- IV. Verification
 - A. Standard All positive conclusions of a physical match will be verified by another physical match analyst or examiner conducting independent physical match case work.
 - B. Control The analyst or examiner conducting the verification will mark the laboratory notes of the analyst or examiner of record with their name and the date that the verification was made with the phrase, "Verified by: <u>(name)</u> on (date)," or words to that effect.

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APPENDIX III: REFERENCES

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