

Standard for Proficiency Testing in Friction Ridge Examination



WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy-to-understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are not intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a proposed standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROPOSED STANDARD?

This standard provides guidelines for assessing the performance of individual forensic science service provider (FSSP) personnel and the overall FSSP quality system through proficiency testing in friction ridge examination.

This document is intended to provide discipline-specific information for friction ridge proficiency examinations to supplement ISO/IEC17043:2023, which provides general requirements for proficiency test providers.

WHY IS THIS PROPOSED STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

Proficiency testing is an integral component of an FSSP's quality assurance program. Proficiency testing provides a means of:

- Evaluating the skills and abilities of individual personnel to perform specific examinations
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the FSSP's quality system
- Identifying actual or potential non-conformities in the quality system
- Identifying interlaboratory differences

This OSAC Proposed Standard has been sent to AAFS Academy Standards Board (ASB) for further development and publication. Get involved as a member or by providing public comment.

HOW IS THIS PROPOSED STANDARD USED, AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

This standard prescribes requirements for the selection, development, validation, administration, evaluation, and documentation of proficiency tests used by FSSPs for purposes of assessing the performance of its personnel and overall quality system related to friction ridge examination. The standard requires that tests be developed for all major job functions performed by the FSSP (e.g., detection, preservation, enhancement, examination, an automated search).

These requirements are applicable to tests generated internally by FSSPs and tests obtained from external sources. The standard requires proficiency tests to be obtained from an accredited external provider when a test is appropriate and available for the job function(s) being tested. When this is not available, tests may be obtained from other external sources or developed internally by the FSSP.

This document does not address requirements related to specific methods for conducting friction ridge examinations or the validation of novel friction ridge examination methods prior to implementation.

