



ATF-LS-LP1 Introduction	Published Online: March 2018
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The ATF Laboratories Management System includes technical operational guidelines for each discipline area. These guidelines were established by ATF laboratory employees, specific to each discipline. The format for Methods of Analysis, as well as guidelines for developing and maintaining the documents is laid out in ATF-LS-4.3 Document Control. These Methods of Analysis are to be the standard for all ATF Fingerprint Examiners. As with most scientific methods, allowance for variation from the prescribed method is sometimes necessary. Variation from any of these methods will be clearly documented in case jackets and verified by peer and supervisory review. Case documentation and case file peer review guidelines are explained in ATF-LS-5.9.4 Case Record Review and ATF-LS-4.13 Records Management for Laboratory Services. The following requirements apply specifically to case documentation of fingerprint evidence analysis.

Verification of Identifications and Non Identifications

When a comparison of an identifiable latent print to a known print is made, in addition to the technical peer review documentation required by ATF LS 5.9.4 Case File Review”, a peer verification of the identification or non identification will be made and recorded in the case notes.

Standard Approach to Examination: ATF Laboratory Fingerprint Specialists process a wide range of evidence types. For this reason, there are many Standard Approaches to Examination scenarios used by ATF Fingerprint Specialists. In addition to the basic approach requirements found in this manual, standards for other scenarios can be found in the “Manual of Fingerprint Development Techniques, Home Office, Police Scientific Development Branch”. At least one copy of this manual will be maintained in each Latent Print Unit. Any variance from either of these Standard Approaches will be documented in the examiner case notes.

A multi discipline approach should be considered when performing fingerprint examinations. During the performance of the fingerprint examination if evidence relevant to other disciplines is detected, the examiner will halt his examination until he/she has consulted with the affected discipline. A record of the consultation will be maintained in the fingerprint examiner’s case notes. In instances where an appropriate examiner is not available for consultation, the examiner should consult with his/her supervisor.