



<b>ATF-LS-LP4</b> <b>Latent Print Report Writing</b>	Published Online: <b>March 2018</b>
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Unofficial Copy; May Not Be Most Current Version	Page: 1 of 3

I. **Scope:** This Policy is applicable to all Laboratory Services Laboratories.

II. **References:**

- SWGFAST:
  - Standards for Examining Friction Ridge Impressions and Resulting Conclusions (current version)
  - Standard for Reporting Friction Ridge Examinations (current version)
  - Terminology (current version)

III. **Apparatus/Reagents:** None

IV. **Safety Precautions:** None

V. **Policy:** This PPG sets the minimum standards and guidelines for reporting fingerprint examinations performed in the ATF Laboratories.

VI. **Procedures:**

**Exhibit Identifiers**

Where appropriate, Exhibit numbers and descriptions will follow those used by the submitting agency on the Evidence Transmittal Form. Should a discrepancy exist, the exhibits will be described as identified by the examiner. The Exhibit section should accurately reflect all of the evidence examined. At a minimum, fingerprint cards will be described using the name of the person printed and date as an identifier.

**Reporting Processing Results**

Latent print examination reports should clearly describe which items of evidence were processed for latent prints, and the results of the processing.

**Identifiable Latent Prints Developed**

Terminology for reporting the results of processing may vary from specialist to specialist, however when identifiable latent prints are developed, the report should communicate the number of latent prints developed and captured, and the exhibit from which the prints were captured.

**No Identifiable Latent Prints Developed**

Terminology for reporting that no latent impressions of value were developed may vary from specialist to specialist. The statement should be clear to the reader.

**Reporting Comparisons:**

Reporting the results of comparisons may vary from specialist to specialist; however, the following reporting levels and wording guidelines assigned to each should be used for reporting:

**Identification:** Identification is the result of the comparison of two friction ridge impressions

containing sufficient quality (clarity) and quantity of friction ridge detail in agreement. Identification occurs when a fingerprint specialist determines that two friction ridge impressions originated from the same source. It must be applicable to all common areas in both impressions and there can be no unexplainable discrepancies.

When an unknown latent print is identified to a known print, the reporting language will include, at a minimum, information on which exhibits the latent print(s) were recovered from, and to which person(s) the identification was made.

When reporting identifications, fingerprint specialists will use language that clearly communicates the identification. The specialist will use statements similar in content to those noted below.

- XXX is a fingerprint of John Doe
- XXX has been identified as a fingerprint of John Doe
- XXX was made by John Doe

**Inconclusive:** An inconclusive conclusion results when a fingerprint specialist is unable to identify or exclude the source of a latent print that has sufficient quality and quantity of friction ridge detail to be identifiable. Inconclusive evaluation results must not be construed as a statement of probability. Probable, possible or likely identification conclusions are outside the acceptable limits of the friction ridge identification science.

When reporting inconclusive findings, fingerprint specialists must clearly indicate the reason for the inconclusive finding. The specialist will use statements similar in content to those noted below.

- The three (3) developed latent prints from Exhibit XXX were compared with the submitted fingerprints of XXX, no identifications were effected. Due to the insufficient quality of the inked prints, clearly and fully-rolled inked fingerprints, with emphasis on the tips of the fingers, and palm prints of the subject(s) under investigation should be submitted to the laboratory for comparison.
- The three (3) developed latent fingerprints from Exhibits xxx were compared, insofar as possible, with the available fingerprints of John Doe, but no identifications were effected. Clearly and fully rolled inked fingerprints are needed for a conclusive comparison.
- The comparison of latent print 1L1 to the fingerprint impressions appearing on Exhibit FP 1 was inconclusive; the latent print may entail an area that is not sufficiently recorded on the inked prints. Clearly and completely rolled inked fingerprints, including the tips of the fingers, should be submitted for further comparison to latent print 1L1.

**Exclusion:** Exclusion is the result of the comparison of two friction ridge impressions that contain sufficient quality (clarity) and quantity of friction ridge detail, when all comparable anatomical areas are available, and when there is a discrepancy. Exclusion occurs when a fingerprint specialist determines that two friction ridge impressions originated from different sources.

When reporting exclusions, fingerprint specialists will use language that clearly communicates a non-identification. The specialist will use statements similar in content to those noted below.

- XXX is not a fingerprint of John Doe
- XXX is excluded as being a fingerprint of John Doe

#### Next Generation Identification (NGI) Non – Identification(s)

- In addition to reporting that the search resulted in no potential comparison candidates, the laboratory report must communicate the exhibit and the latent print designation of the prints that were searched against the database.

#### Next Generation Identification (NGI) Potential Identification(s)

- The laboratory report must clearly communicate that the search resulted in a potential comparison candidate and must request a fingerprint card of that candidate from the agent for comparison to the latent print(s).

#### **DNA Evidence Collection**

- Refer to LS 5.10 for documenting the collection of DNA samples during latent print examinations.
- Latent print examiners are not authorized to report conclusions regarding suitability of exhibits for DNA collection.
- Personnel trained in DNA collection are responsible for documenting the DNA collection activities

#### **VII. Quality Assurance/Quality Control:**

Standard peer and or technical reviews will include a check for appropriate reporting.

A select number of latent print reports of analysis will be reviewed for appropriate reporting by a technical expert during the annual internal quality reviews.