

# FBI Response to OIG's Major Recommendations to Improve the Laboratory

Issue	Response	Status	Target Date
Pursue Accreditation & Additional External Reviews	Agreed	In Progress	The target date for accreditation is the <u>end of 1998</u> .
Restructure Explosives Unit	Generally Agreed	Partially Complete	The unit has already been restructured. Additional space for the Laboratory will be available by <u>7/1 /97</u> .
Clarify Examiner Responsibilities	Agreed	Partially Complete	Examiner positions have already been redesignated as recommended by the <b>OIG</b> . Additional guidelines will be finalized by <u>5/1 /97</u> .
Improve Report Preparation Procedures	Agreed	Partially Complete	Several recommended changes in report preparation procedures have been adopted. Additional guidelines will be finalized by <u>5/1 /97</u> .
Require Peer Review of All Reports	Agreed	Partially Complete	Unit chiefs already substantively review all Lab reports prior to release. The Laboratory also requires a second qualified examiner to confirm all identifications and matches. Additional guidelines will be finalized by <u>5/1 /97</u> .

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Improve Case Documentation	Agreed	Partially Complete	Existing policy requires that all reports be supported by adequate documentation prior to release. Staffing for an additional oversight group will begin by <u>5/1 /97</u> .
Improve Record Retention	Agreed	In Progress	The new Laboratory case file room will be fully operational by <u>6/1 /97</u> .
Improve Examiner Training &	Agreed	In Progress	The modification of all examiner training programs will be completed by <u>6/1/97</u> .
Clarify & Revise Policy Regarding Testimony by Examiners	Agreed	Partially Complete	The Laboratory has revised its testimony policy to emphasize the issues raised by the <b>OIG</b> . Additional guidelines will be finalized by <u>5/1 /97</u> .
Finish Writing Protocols	Agreed	Partially Complete	To be completed by <u>6/1 /97</u> .
Refine Evidence Handling Policies	Agreed	Partially Complete	The Lab's revised Evidence Control Policy specifies detailed procedures for handling evidence. Evidence handling and contamination issues are high priorities in the design of the new Lab facility.

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Enhance Scientific Backgrounds of Lab Management	Agreed	In Progress	The FBI is engaged in a national search for a scientist with significant management expertise to serve as the new Assistant Director of the Lab. The target date for selection of a candidate is <u>8/1/97</u> . Additional senior-level scientist positions are also being created.

## Forensic Examinations Conducted 1994 to 1996

Category	1994	1995	1996
Number of Examination Requests	13,379	16,312	15,984
Number of Specimens Submitted	113,201	110,334	136,629
Number of Examinations	671,807	632,825	696,543

## **Latent Fingerprint Comparisons 1994 to 1996**

Category	1994	1995	1996
Latent Fingerprint Comparisons	3,240,387	2,598,964	2,184,998

## Time Table for Accreditation

February - April 1997

Modifications to quality system based on internal audit.

April - August 1997

Audits to determine the status of quality system initiatives and programs; development of proficiency testing and other required programs in newly re-organized units.

September 1997

External audit by the National Forensic Science Technology Center staff and affiliates.

October - November 1997

Modifications to quality system based on the external audit.

December 1997- January 1998

Internal global audit required by **ASCLD/LAB** for the accreditation application.

End of 1997

Target Date for Submission of Accreditation Application.

April - June 1998

Target Date for **ASCLD/LAB** Inspection.

End of 1998

Target Date for Accreditation.

## Some Recent Actions Taken To Improve the FBI Laboratory

- Creating a Quality Assurance Unit to implement the Quality Assurance Program and to assist the Laboratory in obtaining accreditation.
- Obtaining funding for a new state-of-the-art Laboratory facility in **Quantico**, Virginia.
- Forming highly trained Evidence Response Teams to expand the number of personnel who are equipped to handle the identification, collection and preservation of evidence at crime scenes.
- Creating the Computer Analysis and Response Team to conduct the forensic analysis of electronic media.
- Expanding forensic science into new areas, in part by establishing the Hazardous Materials Response Unit, which will allow the Laboratory to respond effectively to situations involving nuclear, biological or chemical materials.
- Adopting a revised courtroom testimony policy, which includes more stringent monitoring of testimony by Laboratory examiners.
- Modifying report preparation procedures to require each examiner to write and sign his or her own report of examination results.
- Adopting more stringent case review procedures to ensure the accuracy and completeness of Laboratory reports and supporting documentation.
- Forming technical working groups within the forensic science community to standardize protocols and improve procedures, including materials analysis and latent fingerprint examinations.