



WEST VIRGINIA STATE POLICE FORENSIC LABORATORY

THE LAB REPORT



VOLUME 3 NO. 2

SEPTEMBER 2017

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- CIB and Fingerprint Submissions
- New DNA Policy
- CEP Focus
- Sexual Assault Kit Tracking

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The summer has been a busy time for us at the Forensic Laboratory. The implementation of our case acceptance policy in Drug Identification in conjunction with recently hired staff, overtime allotted for testing and the return of old cases in which testing may no longer be necessary have resulted in a substantial reduction in the drug testing backlog. The Drug Identification backlog in July of 2016 was 2,924 cases. The current Drug Identification backlog is 1,378 cases. A similar process is occurring in the DNA/CEP Sections with expectation of similar results. We thank you for your patience and understanding in helping us become more efficient and resourceful in the forensic services we provide the state of West Virginia.

The Toxicology Section has fully implemented new technology for detecting controlled substances in bodily fluids. This instrumentation with its software and detection capabilities are the newest technologies available in the field of Toxicology and hence took time to optimize. The number of drugs that can be detected has increased from 29 to 92, the detection limit is much more sensitive and the analysis time will be reduced by about 50%. With the increasing number of drivers under the influence of controlled substances, the need for testing and detection of an expansive number of drugs in a timely manner is critical for the safety of our citizens.

And finally, I want to showcase our Trace Evidence, Latent Print, Questioned Documents and Firearms/Toolmarks Sections. These Sections provide, on average, a 30-60 day turnaround for completion of cases. We are proud of the efficient and timely services these analysts are able to provide to law enforcement officers throughout our state. It is our mission that every section of the Laboratory have the necessary resources to operate in this same manner.

As always, we appreciate your support of the Forensic Laboratory. Please don't hesitate to contact us should you have any questions or concerns regarding our services.

Kind regards,

Sheri Lemons

Links:

- [WEST VIRGINIA STATE POLICE FORENSIC LABORATORY FIELD MANUAL](#)
- [FORENSIC LABORATORY EVIDENCE SUBMISSION FORM](#)
- [CURRENT JOB POSTINGS](#)

BIOMETRIC BASICS

Jennifer Taylor

CIB—Biometric Identification Section

The Criminal Identification Bureau (CIB) has a variety of functions and responsibilities. It encompasses the entire Criminal History Database for the state, which includes criminal arrest events, the Sex Offender Registry, the Child Abuse Registry, Uniform Crime Reporting, and the entry of fingerprints by fingerprint technicians. The Biometric Identification Section also includes facial recognition. Our primary duty is to maintain the criminal history repository so that it may function at maximum efficiency. This requires a number of things; however, I wish to present you with a few basics that will help you, and in the long run, help us.

Every function and process of the Criminal History Database is built on one thing: fingerprints. Fingerprints are the absolute life force of the entire section. All records criminal and civil are established by fingerprints. This brings up the first issue: if a person is arrested and not fingerprinted, then we cannot establish that the arrest incident occurred. If fingerprints are captured at the time of arrest, but we do not receive the card or live scan for the arrest event, then we will not be able to establish that the arrest event took place. It is the responsibility of the initial arresting agency to print and then submit the prints to the Criminal Identification Bureau (see WV Code

[15-2-24\[g\]](#)). Amputations, scars, cuts, injuries, bandaged fingers or other exemptions must be noted and a reason given. Ink and rolled fingerprint cards are still accepted; however, the preferred method of fingerprint capture is via live scan. If a live scan is available to you for use, please capture the prints via this method, using your agency's ORI.

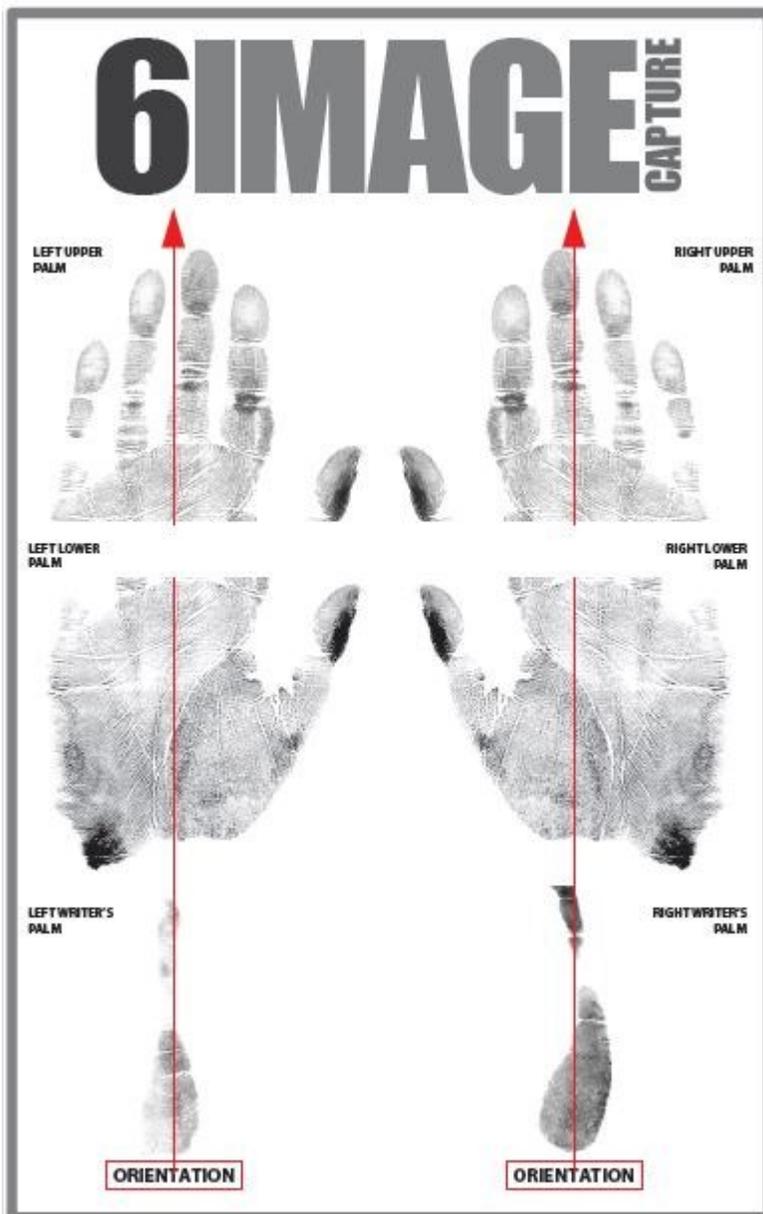
Capturing the highest quality image of each finger and palm is as important as taking and submitting the prints in the first place. All ten fingers are to be rolled from nail bed to nail bed capturing the entire pattern area on live scan or ink and roll capture. Included in the live scan or ink and roll capture are flat or "slap" images that are a simple placement of the thumbs and also the grouping of the four fingers (index to little finger) straight down on the card or platen. The reason we encourage live scan print submissions is that the quality of the images captured on the live scan are of much higher definition than the ink and rolled capture. Also, the live scan captures mug shot and palm print images which expands the biometric data obtained on each individual.

We still are experiencing problems with the fingerprint images that are being captured on the live scan. **Continued on page 3.**

CONT: BIOMETRIC BASICS

When a “slap” image is captured the hands are being placed too high and the image captured is the palm instead of the cluster of 4 fingers together on the platen. Also, when the “slap” image is captured the hands are being rotated beyond 45 degrees which causes prints to be cut off or missing altogether.

Poor quality palm print images are also an issue. When the hand is placed on the platen to capture the palm image it seems that the tendency is to lift very slightly the fingers off of the screen. This is the foremost reason we are receiving rejections from the FBI regarding palm print images. The fingers must be laid down on the screen so that the “building block” matching system that AFIS adheres to can verify that the previously printed fingers are attached to the palm. I refer to it as a building block system because that is actually what it does. The FBI has a palm capture guidance PDF that we can make available to assist in the education of how to capture good quality palm prints. It can also be accessed via their website at www.fbibiospecs.cjis.gov., then Latent Print Services, Palm Print Capture Reference Tools, Palm Print Capture Guide.



THE IMPORTANCE OF FINGERPRINT SUBMISSIONS TO CIB RECORDS

Stephen C. King

Section Supervisor—Latent Print Section

The analysts of the Latent Print Section of the West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory are users of the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) implemented and controlled by the state police, more specifically by the Criminal Identification Bureau's Records Section (CIB Records).

Latent analysts, using workstations and software designed by the manufacturer of AFIS, search qualifying crime scene finger and palm prints (latent prints) through the database. The intent of the search is to find a match to the latent print that may provide an investigative lead to the police agency who submitted the evidence. The crimes being investigated range from simple property crimes to homicide. While the success of the search will be dependent on many factors, one of the most critical factors is whether the maker of the latent print has known fingerprint exemplars in the database.

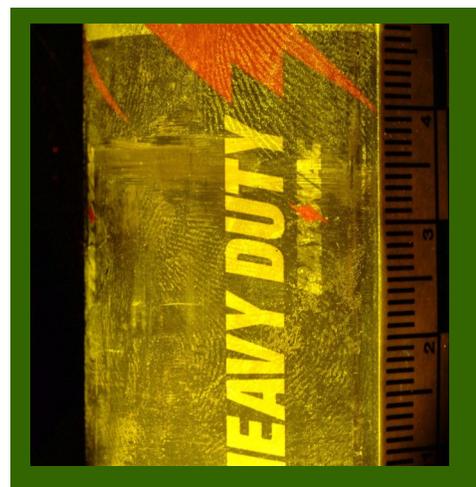
Unfortunately, the database does not have all of the arrest fingerprints it should, perhaps as little as 50% of capacity. As analysts, we know that most of our matches come from districts of the state where the taking of fingerprints at the time of arrest and submission of those exemplars to CIB Records is emphasized by the police departments in those districts. Areas where we have fewer or rare AFIS matches are districts

where the taking of fingerprints and the submitting of fingerprints are not where they need to be.

The Latent Print Section also has the responsibility to assist the Biochemistry Section in maintaining the state's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database. This assistance comes in three forms:

1. CODIS Duplicate Sample Reports, which are used by the Biochemistry Section when it is believed that an offender had a DNA sample collected more than once. The Biochemistry Section considers having the fingerprints compared that are placed on the DNA Database Collection Card at the time the card is filled out by the correctional facility as an accurate way to verify that the collection is from the same individual in case the name and/or social security number differ.

Continued on page 5.



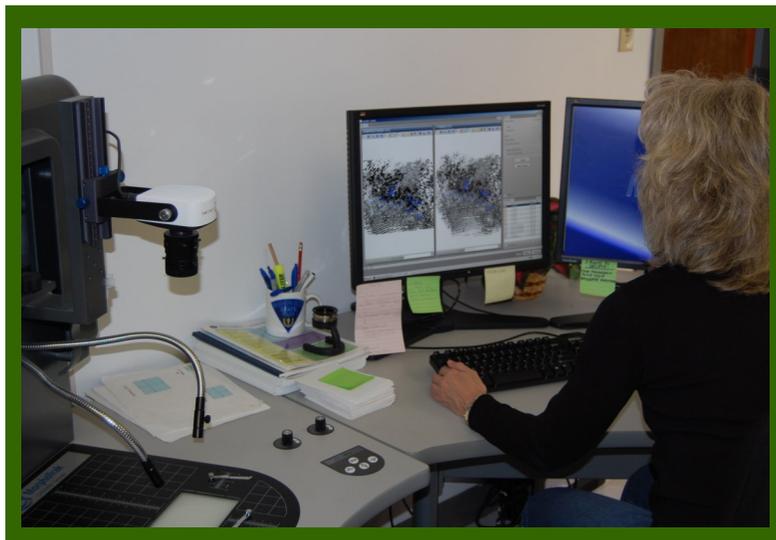
CONT: FINGERPRINT SUBMISSIONS

2. CODIS Print Confirmation Reports, which are used by the Biochemistry Section when a match occurs in CODIS between a West Virginia offender and a forensic sample. The Biochemistry Section uses the fingerprint confirmation as another quality control process to verify that the profile in CODIS is from the individual on file.

3. CODIS Project, which is a joint effort between the Latent Print Section and the Biochemistry Section to update the Criminal History DNA Database status for convicted offenders who have a DNA profile uploaded and/or a DNA sample submitted.

The success of our efforts is significantly based on these individuals being in the criminal history database; however in many instances, individuals who were processed through the criminal justice and correctional systems, and who has a CODIS card completed by a law enforcement or correctional facility officer did not have fingerprint exemplars in the state criminal history database. This means that at the time of the individual's arrest, the arresting agency either did not take fingerprints or, if they did take fingerprints, they did not submit a set to the state database.

The failure of arresting police agencies and correctional facilities to submit fingerprints (and now palm prints) undermines the abilities of two major pieces of technology (AFIS and CODIS) to work to the fullest capacity. It also undermines the large financial investment made by the taxpayers of West Virginia to fund these expensive systems. It is a failure that must be corrected. Please remember that when you take the fingerprints that you are obligated to take, there can be many beneficiaries of your doing so: you, a fellow police officer, a crime victim, or a wrongly accused suspect.



An examiner in the Latent Prints Section working on the AFIS Station.

BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE: A NEW CASE ACCEPTANCE POLICY

David Miller

Section Supervisor—Central Evidence Processing Section

Prior to 2003, the Biochemistry Section employed DNA analysts that would examine items for biological stains (blood, semen, saliva), perform body fluid testing, and then perform the DNA testing, analysis, and reporting. This approach was “front-to-back” handling of one case by one analyst, and required the analyst to spend a great deal of time doing things other than DNA work.

To keep those highly trained analysts focused more on DNA testing, the Central Evidence Processing (CEP) Section was officially created in 2005. Other forensic analysts would find and test for body fluids and report back to investigating officers what material was present for DNA testing. Known specimens, permission to consume, and other information would be requested by the CEP Section, and DNA analysts could spend most of their time doing only DNA testing and analysis.

Due to this separation, CEP analysts examined most submitted items in each case in order to provide the DNA analyst with multiple options for testing. In other words, more items were processed in CEP than were tested in the DNA lab. As technology advanced, more and more items were suitable for DNA testing, and more items were submitted for testing.

Add employee turnover and limited resources, and the result is now a backlog of over 500 cases waiting to be processed for biological material, or about one year’s worth of work. Until recently, these backlogged cases were processed largely in the order they were received. Newly submitted cases would wait their turn to be processed. Investigators are waiting many months to a year or more to learn if they have samples suitable for DNA testing.

The West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory (WVSPFL) is addressing this issue by making two substantial changes to the workflow process for biological evidence.

First, CEP is now assigning cases as they arrive at the laboratory. Cases that arrive this month are assigned to be worked next month. One obvious benefit of this is that more timely information is provided to investigators. Understand, however, that this alone is not a fix and there is a consequence with this approach.

Given our current resources and using our current protocol, CEP staff cannot process all the submitted cases from month to month. Some will remain unprocessed and become backlogged cases. Also, because we cannot keep up with the number of monthly incoming cases, the backlogged cases remain unprocessed.

Continued on page 7.

CONT: BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Second, and due to the above reasons, the WVSPFL has implemented a biological evidence/DNA case acceptance policy (included in this issue) which is designed to reduce the number of items initially submitted in any case. We must reduce the number of items submitted and examined with the goal of completing all incoming cases in a timely manner in addition to addressing the backlogged cases. In doing so, several important points need to be stressed.

Evidence collection should not be reduced. This policy does not negate the need to collect all possible evidence while the opportunity exists. In most cases, however, not all of the collected items need to be submitted at once. The new case acceptance policy limits the number of items which may be initially submitted, depending on the type of offense being investigated.

Probative value should be evaluated. What question can be answered using DNA, which will provide probative information by connecting individuals to the incident?

For example: You are investigating a malicious assault and have collected the clothing worn by the perpetrator of the crime. There are apparent blood stains on the shirt, pants, socks, shoes, and hat. You have one victim and one suspect. Do you need DNA results from blood stains on each of those items, or from only one? Was the clothing found on the suspect or discarded somewhere else? If so, is it important to find the DNA of the suspect on the discarded clothing?

Without considering these types of questions, and without discussing them with the laboratory, unnecessary, expensive, and time consuming analysis can be performed, which adds to the laboratory backlog and increases turnaround times.

Communication with the laboratory is necessary to answer the above questions. To facilitate more communication, a supplemental DNA analysis form is now required for all incoming submissions of biological/DNA evidence. By answering the specific questions on this form regarding each individual item of evidence, we can focus our work on the most important samples first. The form also helps the laboratory determine and document CODIS eligibility and work more efficiently in general.

Our goal is to process all incoming cases by the end of the second month after submission and to provide more timely information to investigators by limiting unnecessary testing and improving communications between investigators and the laboratory. **Please see the DNA Case Acceptance Policy and Supplemental Submission Form 53A**, and contact the laboratory at cep@wvsp.gov or biochemistry@wvsp.gov with any questions.

SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT: CARFENTANIL

Carrie Kirkpatrick

Section Supervisor—Drug Identification Section

The Drug Identification Section of the laboratory was contacted by the US Route 119 Task Force in reference to an investigation involving the purchase of marked tablets said to contain “fentanyl.” The investigating officer asked that the laboratory provide testing to see if the tablets were “fentanyl” in order for him to proceed with his investigation. The tablet purchased was a round blue tablet marked “A/215.” The tablet looked very similar to a tablet manufactured by Actavis suggested to contain Oxycodone; however, upon inspection of the tablet it was noted that the score mark under the A did not go from side to side of the tablet. The tablet was extracted and run on the Gas Chromatograph Mass Spectrometer by a forensic analyst in the section and was confirmed to contain Carfentanil. Carfentanil is a synthetic opioid that is 10,000 times more potent than morphine and is commonly utilized to tranquilize elephants. All officers should use caution and wear the proper personal protective equipment when handling these types of substances. Special precautions should be observed when handling and processing any suspected “fentanyl” substance. This was the first confirmed Carfentanil case at the West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory.



FIREARMS IDENTIFICATION ANNOUNCEMENT!!!

Blake Reta

Technical Leader—Firearm/Toolmark Identification Section

The Firearm and Toolmark Identification Section was fortunate enough to send three of its examiners to the Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiner’s annual training conference this year. The AFTE conference was held in Denver, Colorado, for 2017, but we are excited to announce that the WVSP will be hosting the 2018 conference in **Charleston, WV, at the Charleston Civic Center!** This training conference is attended mostly by firearm/toolmark examiners from around the world as well as crime scene technicians, law enforcement, and attorneys. The conference dates are June 3rd through June 8th and we will be providing more details in our upcoming edition of The Lab Report. The next edition will also focus on the Firearm and Toolmark Identification Section so if you have any specific requests for articles please send an email to

BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE: THE INS AND OUTS OF PROPER PACKAGING

Sydney Jenkins

FA III—Central Evidence Processing Section

Biological evidence is extremely important to many investigations. To make sure that biological samples that have been collected are better protected from degradation, it is important that items of evidence thought to contain biological materials are properly packaged. Mold, heat, humidity, and bacterial contamination can all have adverse effects on DNA. Packaging evidence properly can help decrease the chances of degradation due to these factors.

All items of evidence that are thought to contain biological material should be packaged in paper or cardboard containers which allow air flow. Examples of good containers for biological evidence include cardboard boxes, envelopes, and paper bags. Do not package biological materials in plastic bags, film canisters, or any type of tightly sealed container. These types of containers can promote the growth of mold or bacteria and can affect DNA results.

All packaging should be sealed with evidence tape. The tape should then be initialed by the person sealing the item, with the initials going across the tape and onto the packaging. This is considered a proper seal. Items must be properly sealed before being accepted by the laboratory.

If an item of evidence is collected when it is wet, be sure to allow the item to fully air dry before packaging.

Wet items can grow mold, stick to the packaging, or even leak through the packaging and create a biohazard. Wet swabs should also be allowed to air dry before being packaged. Swabs should be packaged in swab boxes or envelopes, which allow for air flow and keep the swabs from growing mold and bacteria. Never use culture swabs to collect biological materials. These type of swabs are contained in a plastic tube with liquid, designed to keep the swabs wet and promote bacterial growth.

Each item of evidence should be packaged separately to prevent cross contamination. It is also important that each item is properly labeled. A proper label would include a description of the evidence contained inside the package, the location where the item was collected from, and a BIOHAZARD label. Remember that all items of evidence that are thought to contain biological material should be treated as biohazardous. BIOHAZARD labels should always be placed on the outside of a package that contains biological evidence, particularly if it is being sent through the US mail. This helps keep anyone who may come into contact with the evidence safer from biohazards. If other potential hazards (such as sharps) are contained in a package, be sure that this is clearly identified with a label on the outside of the packaging.

Continued on page 10.

CONT: BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE PACKAGING

Known reference samples from individuals involved in an investigation are of particular importance if DNA analysis is desired. As such, it is crucial that these samples be properly collected, packaged, and labeled so that they are suitable for DNA analysis.

Known saliva swabs should be collected by rubbing the inside of the cheeks. The swabs should then be allowed to air dry before being packaged in an envelope or swab box. It is unnecessary to separate swabs collected from the left cheek from swabs collected from the right cheek, as the individual's DNA will not be different between the two sides. If a liquid known blood sample is collected, it must be collected into a purple top (EDTA) tube. Any time liquid blood samples are collected, the purple top (EDTA) tubes should be placed into plastic biohazard bags and properly sealed.

It is very important that all packaging of a known saliva or blood sample be properly labeled with the name of the person from whom the sample was collected. If the samples are not clearly labeled with the full name of the individual, then a written communication from the investigating officer will be required before DNA analysis can be completed. This can slow down the process of completing cases in a timely manner, so be sure that all packaging of known samples clearly states the full name of the individual.

Properly packaging and labeling items of biological evidence can help maintain the integrity of the samples by preventing degradation or contamination, can help keep laboratory personnel and other people who might handle the package aware of potential hazards, and can assist in the timeliness of completing cases by eliminating extra steps.

CASE COORDINATION: MAKING THE DNA ANALYSIS PROCESS MORE EFFICIENT

Joel Harvey

Case Coordinator—Central Evidence Processing Section

As a way to streamline the process of DNA testing, we like to make sure each case provides the Biochemistry Section everything they need to complete their analysis before sending the samples to them. Oftentimes we end up returning cases to the officer because we have not received known DNA samples and/or information the Biochemistry Section needs to proceed with the case. If you have received evidence back without DNA testing being performed, here are some ways to prevent that from happening.

The majority of cases we receive that need known DNA samples and/or more information are property crime cases. If blood evidence from a property crime is submitted, we need information about the evidence for a DNA profile to be CODIS eligible. For example, if swabs of blood from the scene are submitted we need a brief explanation on where the blood was found and why it is believed to be linked to the suspect of the crime. Did the victim state that the blood was not there before the crime was committed and that it couldn't belong to anybody that had access to the house/business? For swabs of door knobs/handles or any form of touch DNA, we would need a known DNA sample from the victim(s) for elimination purposes. If a cigarette filter is submitted, we need to know the location where it was found and why it is believed to be linked to the suspect. Did the victim say nobody smoked in the house or that they didn't smoke that brand of cigarette?

Evidence from murder and violent crime cases may also be returned to the officer if we don't receive the proper known DNA samples or information. If clothing and/or a possible weapon is submitted, we need to know where each item was collected from and why that item is believed to be linked to the suspect or victim.

When an item of evidence is submitted to be examined for the victim's blood/DNA, we must also receive the victim's known DNA sample. The DNA profile from a victim cannot be entered into CODIS. When clothing is submitted, it is helpful to know if the clothing item is known to be from the suspect or victim. If it is not known who the clothing belongs to, that should be documented so we know to swab for wearer's DNA. When a weapon is submitted, it is helpful to know if the officer is looking for the suspect's DNA, victim's DNA, or both.

Continued on page 12.

CONT: CASE COORDINATION

Most of the time sexual assault cases are forwarded on to the Biochemistry Section. However, there are times we need more information from the officer. If the victim has had a prior consensual partner, the Biochemistry Section will need the known DNA sample from that person for elimination purposes. When the suspect's clothing or a condom is submitted, we will need the known DNA sample from both the suspect and victim.

In order for a case to be transferred to the Biochemistry Section and that process to be as efficient as possible, the laboratory needs the proper known DNA samples and case information from the officer. It is important for officers to submit known DNA samples from all involved individuals and detailed information on each item of evidence. Where was the item found? Why is it believed to be linked to the suspect or victim of a crime? Whose DNA are you looking for on the item? Even if an officer receives evidence back without DNA testing being performed, the evidence can be returned to the laboratory along with the known DNA samples and/or evidence information referenced to in the Laboratory Case Report.

NUMBERS, NUMBERS, NUMBERS!!!

Jennifer Howard

Quality Assurance Officer—Central Evidence Processing Section

You may have noticed a new format on the "Evidence Received" portion of your report from the Central Evidence Processing Section, but what do they all mean?

The "Item #" is generated by the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) once the Central Evidence Receiving Section of the lab receives it. The first package submitted will be recorded and given identifying numbers such as, "Item #1", "Item #2", Item #3, etc. Any subsequent submissions will numerically continue from your previous submission (Item #4, Item #5, etc.) For example: If three individual bags are submitted and they contain different items, such as: a pair of pants, a shirt, and a cigarette filter, they will be given identifying numbers by the Central Evidence Receiving Section as "Item #1", "Item #2" and "Item #3", respectively. If a fourth bag is submitted at a later date, it will be identified as "Item #4."

Continued on page 13.

CONT: NUMBERS!!!

Given this scenario, let's assume all three submitted packages were to go to the Central Evidence Processing Section. If the "Item #1" pair of pants contained additional evidence (example: a wallet), it will be identified as "Item 1.1". If the wallet contains additional items, they too will be identified in the same manner. Here is an example:

Evidence Received: The following exhibits were received at the laboratory on 6/30/2017 via evidence locker and placed into secure storage:

Item #1: One pair of pants

Item # 1.1: One wallet

Item # 1.1.1: One MasterCard

Item #1.1.2: One WV Driver's License # xxxxxx

Item #2: One shirt

Item #3: One cigarette filter

What if submitted items are supposed to go to different sections?

This next scenario reflects how your CEP report will read if any of the packages submitted go to a different section in the laboratory. Let's say for example, the Item #2 (shirt) is being submitted to the Trace Evidence Section for GSR analysis.

Here is an example:

Evidence Received: The following exhibits were received at the laboratory on 6/30/2017 via evidence locker and placed into secure storage:

Item #1: One pair of pants

Item # 1.1: One wallet

Item # 1.1.1: One MasterCard

Item #1.1.2: One WV Driver's License # xxxxxx

Item #3: One cigarette filter

Then, when you receive a report from the Trace Evidence Section, your report will read:

Evidence Received: The following exhibits were received at the laboratory on 6/30/2017 via evidence locker and placed into secure storage:

Item #2: One shirt

Continued on page 14.

CONT: NUMBERS!!!

If an agency lists their own item numbers on evidence (example: "1B" on the pants), your report will read:

Item #1 (1B): One pair of pants

There are a number of different scenarios that you may encounter as you receive reports from each section of the laboratory, but we are here to help as we transition into this new system!

Please feel free to call the reporting analyst anytime you have questions. Be safe!

TRACKITY-TRACK: FOLLOWING A SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION KIT FROM HOSPITAL TO ANALYSIS

Aaron Dean
Sexual Assault Kit Administrator—
Central Evidence Processing Section

Every sexual assault evidence collection kit (SAECK) in West Virginia has a unique number affixed to its label. But this number is more than just a few random digits. This is actually how we identify and track individual kits from the time they are shipped to the hospital, to their release to law enforcement, and back to the WVSP laboratory for analysis. To do this, we have partnered with the WV Foundation for Rape Information and Services (WVFRIS) to develop a new online platform to better track kits. Once fully implemented, this will allow us to track kits in near real-time.

So where does the tracking of a kit start? Every hospital has at least one designated employee that is responsible for ordering kits to be sent to

that hospital. This is where the tracking numbers come in. Once an order is received from a hospital, laboratory personnel will package a shipment of kits. The kits that are shipped out are then entered into our tracking system using the tracking number as an identifier. The entry for each individual kit will also include the name of the receiving hospital and the date it was shipped out. The designated hospital user will then be able to see all of the kits in his/her hospital's inventory.

Continued on page 15.

*erwork can be found in the envelope on the bottom
 ult Information Form (page 1), Data Collection Form
 ill. Sexual Assault Information Forms (pages 2–10,*



CONT: TRACKITY-TRACK

From this point, tracking entries are handled by the hospital user. After a kit is used at the hospital, the hospital user can document the kit's disposition in one of several ways;

- To Law Enforcement
- To Marshall University (for cases that are not reported to law enforcement)
- Forwarded to Another Hospital
- Used for Training
- Not used/Destroyed (hospital user must also enter the reason why)

With each of these options, the date of the transaction is also documented. If a kit is released to a law enforcement agency, the name of the receiving agency is also recorded.

Once (or if) a kit is examined at the laboratory, the disposition is updated to include the date that it was submitted to the laboratory. By now, some may have noticed that the laboratory submission form (WVSP Form 53) has been updated to include a kit tracking number. This will allow us to update the entry upon receipt at the laboratory without having to open evidence packages. This way, we will know that the kit is no longer in the possession of the investigating agency.

So how do we use this information, and why is it important? These kits are expensive. Knowing where the kits are and how they are utilized will allow for our resources to be used more efficiently and effectively. There is also a growing push in West Virginia that all sex crime kits must be submitted to the laboratory. This information will also help account for kits still in the hospital inventory, kits that are in the custody of law enforcement that need submitted to the lab, and the kits that are in the laboratory's evidence vault. Now that we are better able to take account of SAECKs, this will prevent losing track of them in the future.

Since January 1, 2017, 361 kits have been distributed to hospitals in West Virginia (as of this writing). Of those, 82 were transferred to law enforcement, 10 were sent to Marshall University, 18 were used for training purposes, 6 were not used or destroyed, and one was forwarded to another hospital for use. The remaining 244 kits are still listed as in hospital inventories.

The image shows a form titled "West Virginia Sex Crime and Blood/Urine Collection Kit" from the West Virginia Department of Public Safety. The form includes fields for "RECEIVING AGENCY", "DATE OF USE", and "CHAIN OF CUSTODY". It also features a "SEAL KIT WITH EVIDENCE TAPE" section and contact information for the West Virginia Department of Public Safety.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: Lara Rutherford



Hometown: Hinton, WV

Education: B.S. Biology (Davis & Elkins College)

B.A. Psychology (Davis & Elkins College)

B.S. Forensic Investigation (Mountain State University)

A.S. Criminal Justice (Mountain State University)

M.S. Forensic Science (Mountain State University)

Work Experience: Worked as Lab Manager / Forensic Analyst at the Fayette County Evidence Center (F.C.E.C.) in Mt. Hope, WV, from 2008 – 2012 responding to local law enforcement agencies to assist with crime scene processing, evidence collection, and latent processing.

Adjunct Instructor at Mountain State University (2010 – 2012) teaching forensic related courses: Introduction to Forensic Science, Introduction to Fingerprints, Advanced Latent Comparison, AFIS I and II, and Indoor/Outdoor Crime Scenes.

Adjunct Instructor at West Virginia Tech (2012 – 2016) teaching forensic related courses: Introduction to Forensic Science, Introduction to Fingerprints, Advanced Latent Comparison, and Indoor/Outdoor Crime Scenes.

Teaching In-Service courses for law enforcement officers from (2010-current).

Role at the WVSP Forensic Laboratory: Forensic Analyst / Training Coordinator (teaching from Basic/Cadet courses at the academy, Road Show courses for law enforcement in-service, school presentations, State Fair information demonstrations, etc.)

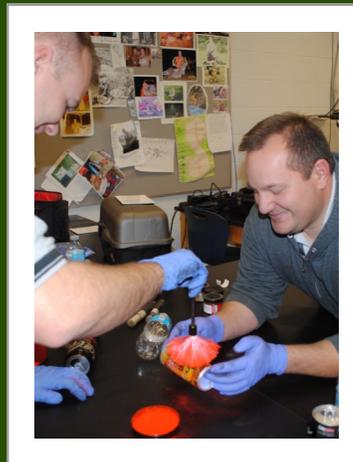
Favorite Part of the Job: The people I work with make each day a wonderful experience. From students, to law enforcement, to the people in my section. Every day is a new challenge and I really enjoy having a stable and experienced group of people to bounce ideas off of and gain new insight into my area of expertise.

The Crime Lab Road Show

The West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory is providing training opportunities for law enforcement, attorneys, and judges! To help us do this we need volunteer agencies to host a one day training opportunity. If you are an interested party please contact Blake N. Reta. (contact information below)

- One day training opportunity for any law enforcement agencies, attorneys, and judges.
- Maximum of 30 attendees.
- Training will feature 1 to 2 sections of the forensic laboratory for lecture and hands on experience with evidence collection.
- The sections that will be providing training will be agreed upon by the forensic laboratory and the volunteer host.

Note: Law enforcement officers are eligible to obtain in-service hours for attending this training.



Note: The training provided will be free to the attendees!

What we are asking of the host agency:

- Provide an area (local school, department complex, etc) for training to occur
- Provide material needed for the training

West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory

Blake N. Reta
 Email: blake.n.reta@wvsp.gov
 Phone: 304-746-2171

Sections of the West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory that can provide lecture / training include:

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| - Biochemistry | - Drug Identification | - Evidence Processing |
| - Firearm/Toolmark | - Footwear/Tire Track | - Latent Prints |
| - Questioned Documents | - Toxicology | - Trace Evidence |

LABORATORY INFO:

West Virginia State Police
Forensic Laboratory
725 Jefferson Road
South Charleston, WV 25309
Phone: 304-746-2100

Section Contacts:

Biochemistry: biochemistry@wvsp.gov
Central Evidence Processing: cep@wvsp.gov
Central Evidence Receiving: cer@wvsp.gov
Drug Identification: drugs@wvsp.gov
Firearms/Toolmarks: firearms@wvsp.gov
Latent Prints: latent.prints@wvsp.gov
Questioned Documents: documents@wvsp.gov
Toxicology: toxicology@wvsp.gov
Trace Evidence: trace@wvsp.gov

FEEDBACK

We always welcome feedback for the upcoming newsletter!

Have comments or suggestion?

Want to know how we do something?

Need to know how we recommend to collect a specific type of evidence?

Feel free to contact the editors and suggest topics and provide us with any comments or feedback.

Your Editors,

Blake N. Reta — blake.n.reta@wvsp.gov
Stephen C. King — stephen.c.king@wvsp.gov



Laboratory Mission and Goal

Mission:

It is the mission of the West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory to provide accurate and impartial scientific support services to all criminal justice agencies operating in the State of West Virginia.

Goal:

The goal of the West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory is to generate accurate, impartial, and timely scientific examinations and opinions for the criminal justice system of the State in the interest of public safety. Establish and maintain a database of convicted felons, sex offenders, case work profiles, and missing persons.

LABORATORY STAFF:

Lab Director:

Sheri Lemons—sharon.e.lemons@wvsp.gov

Quality Assurance Manager:

Meredith Chambers—
meredith.a.chambers@wvsp.gov

Secretaries:

Sharon Allen—sharon.c.allen@wvsp.gov
Tonya Molek—tonya.r.molek@wvsp.gov

Biochemistry:

Melissa Runyan—melissa.n.runyan@wvsp.gov
Angela Gill—angela.k.gill@wvsp.gov
Cristalle Workman—cristalle.g.workman@wvsp.gov
Bailey Hill—bailey.e.hill@wvsp.gov
Joshua Haynes—joshua.t.haynes@wvsp.gov
Nicole Johnson—nicole.l.johnson@wvsp.gov
Hanna Foreman—hannah.e.foreman@wvsp.gov
Kellie Littlefield—kellie.m.littlefield@wvsp.gov
Nicholas King—nicholas.a.king@wvsp.gov
Brittany Antonucci—brittany.e.antonucci@wvsp.gov

Codis Administrator:

Brent Myers: howard.b.myers@wvsp.gov

Central Evidence Receiving:

James Ingram—james.c.ingram@wvsp.gov
Ashley Woods—ashley.j.woods@wvsp.gov
Shelli Philpott—shellie.r.philpott@wvsp.gov

Central Evidence Processing:

David Miller—david.w.miller@wvsp.gov
Jennifer Howard—jennifer.a.howard@wvsp.gov
Joel Harvey—joel.b.harvey@wvsp.gov
Aaron Dean—aaron.d.dean@wvsp.gov
Sydney Jenkins—sydney.e.jenkins@wvsp.gov

Drug Identification:

Carrie Kirkpatrick—carrie.j.ozalas@wvsp.gov
Jared Vititoe—jared.j.vititoe@wvsp.gov
Rebecca Harrison—rebecca.e.harrison@wvsp.gov
Tara Hayslip—tara.a.hayslip@wvsp.gov
Lydia Hakola—lydia.t.hakola@wvsp.gov
Tiffany Neu—tiffany.a.neu@wvsp.gov
Blake Kinder—blake.a.kinder@wvsp.gov
D’Nisha Hamblin—dnisha.d.hamblin@wvsp.gov

Firearm/Toolmark Identification (Footwear/ Tires):

Philip Cochran—philip.k.cochran@wvsp.gov
Calissa Carper—calissa.n.carper@wvsp.gov
Blake Reta—blake.n.reta@wvsp.gov
Ryan Christopher—ryan.d.christopher@wvsp.gov

LIMS Administrator:

Staci Taylor—staci.l.taylor@wvsp.gov

Latent Prints:

Stephen King—stephen.c.king@wvsp.gov
Robyn Lewis—robyn.g.lewis@wvsp.gov
LeAnne Simms—allison.l.simms@wvsp.gov
Lara Rutherford—lara.k.rutherford@wvsp.gov

Questioned Documents:

Brian Wainwright—brian.r.wainwright@wvsp.gov

Toxicology:

Erin Spearen—erin.e.feazell@wvsp.gov
Austi Roush—austi.l.roush@wvsp.gov

Trace Evidence:

Korri Powers—koren.k.powers@wvsp.gov
Nicole Macewan—nicole.r.macewan@wvsp.gov
Farrah Machado—farrah.s.machado@wvsp.gov