Latent Print Section

Entering and Searching Prints in AFIS and NGI

1.   Scope

Procedures for latent print entry and review of the search responses in the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Next Generation Identification (NGI) database.

2.   Entry and Searches

The Crime Lab has a shared AFIS database with New Hampshire and Vermont. Prints can be searched against cards from all three of these states or searched against Maine cards only. An unidentified latent print is searched through AFIS when there is reason to believe the friction ridge impression originated from an area which is located on a tenprint or palm print card and the impression has enough detail to be searched and compared against candidates generated.

2.1   A step by step process on how to enter prints in AFIS is provided in the Morpho BIS Latent Processing Summary.

2.2   Examiners are trained how to use the system prior to use on case work.

2.3   Enter the print per the processing guide.

2.4   Prints are entered into AFIS via the scanner and/or from a digital image file.

2.5   The case record and report will reflect which prints were searched in the AFIS and/or NGI database, the results of the search, and whether or not the impression(s) were retained in the specific database.

2.6   If the AFIS search produces a candidate of interest, the tenprint or palm print record will be saved in a digital format and entered as an item of evidence in the case. A comparable copy of the tenprint or palm print record will be maintained on the laboratory network drive in the case record.

2.7   A latent print that was not matched in the forward search can be saved to the Unsolved Latent File (ULF) to be continually searched against new tenprints and palm prints as they are entered into the database, at the examiner's discretion. Latent prints are not added to the ULF database when they are identified to an individual, or they are removed as soon as feasible after an identification is made.

2.8   A latent print can be searched in the NGI database once encoded in the AFIS database. The available databases are listed on the submit screen. The box adjacent to the database can be selected and then the search can be submitted.

2.9   The prints may be searched multiple times with varying encoding. If a single search is conducted, and that search is conducted limiting the pattern type, orientation, or search area, these limitations will be noted in the case record.

2.10   If a latent that had been added to the Unsolved Latent File (ULF) generates a candidate of interest, the candidate's card will be compared to the latent. If the comparison results in an identification, the examiner will open a new examination request in LIMS and relate the original evidence to the new request. The card will be entered into LIMS as an item of evidence. A comparable copy of the tenprint or palm print record will be maintained on the laboratory network drive in the case record. If the digital record is obtained in a lossy format, a lossless format will also be maintained in the case record. The lossy format will be considered the original, and any enhancements or annotations will be conducted on the lossless format image.

> 2.10.1 If the candidate of interest is the result of a notification from the State Bureau of Identification (SBI), examiners should first check the case record to determine if the print has been previously identified. If the print has been previously identified, SBI will be notified, and the print will be removed from the ULF. If the identification has been previously reported, it is not necessary to make an additional note in the case record or to issue a new report.

> 2.10.2 If the candidate is the result of a notification from the State Bureau of Identification (SBI), and the print has not been previously identified, the examiner will open a new examination request in LIMS and relate the original evidence to the new request. The procedure under section 2.10 of this method will then be followed.

> 2.10.3 All latent print identifications that are a result of an AFIS search will be verified prior to releasing results. Technical review is not required prior to releasing of verbal results.

> 2.10.4 If the candidate is the result of a notification from the State Bureau of Identification (SBI), SBI will be notified of the result of the comparison after verification. A record of the SBI notification of a candidate of interest will be maintained in the case record.

> 2.10.5 If a reverse search results in an identification, and the case is beyond the statute of limitations, a comparable copy of the latent print and the tenprint or palm print record will be maintained in the case record, and the identification will be verified. The identification and verification will be documented in the case

record. In this instance, it is not necessary for additional unidentified prints in the case to be compared to the new candidate. A report of the results will be issued.

3. **Reporting the Results**
The following searches and results will be reported to the submitting agency:

3.1   The prints searched in the case and the results of those searches.

3.2   In which database(s) the prints were searched.

3.3   The prints that were saved to the database for future searches, and in which databases they are saved.

3.4   If a person of interest is generated and matched to an individual from a reverse or another forward search.

3.5   If a person of interest is generated and matched to an individual from a search conducted out of state.

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