

National Commission on Forensic Science  
Feedback from Professional Organizations: Forensic  
Science Practitioner Perspectives Panel  
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# Law Enforcement Agencies: Who We Are

- Major City Chiefs Association (MCCA)
- Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCIA)
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)

We represent the majority of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies in the United States, and provide quality forensic services to investigate all levels of criminal activity.

Our member agencies are committed to supporting quality forensic services, advancing and improving technologies whenever possible, and advocating for continued research and funding in forensic science.

# IACP, MCCA, ASCIA

Forensic science plays a critical role in the criminal justice system, and must be held to high standards. For these very reasons, our organizations have long supported the following:

- accreditation of all forensic service providers in all forensic disciplines;
- increased partnerships between scientists in forensic labs and academia;
- increased grant opportunities and funding to support basic and applied forensic research, expansion and updating of laboratory facilities, equipment and capacity enhancement efforts;
- the creation and resulting work products of the Organization of Scientific Area Committees to strengthen and advance forensic science; and
- objective forensic science providers within law enforcement that help focus and improve investigations and provide actionable intelligence to improve police response and service.

# IACP, MCCA, ASCIA and the NCFS

Through each forensic science committee and coordinated efforts, our organizations:

- routinely interact with members of the NCFS
- respond to posted documents
- provide comments
- attend meetings in person

Additionally, IACP representatives have presented to NCFS; IACP has a liaison to the NCFS; one member of the IACP Forensic Committee is a Commissioner on the NCFS; and another member is a Vice-Chair of the NCFS.

# Independence

- Since the 2009 National Academy of Sciences report, *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward* was released, our organizations have strongly advocated that crime laboratories should remain within law enforcement parent agencies.
  - Proper forensic science within law enforcement can be used to drive and improve investigations, and improve overall police response and service.
  - LE must commit to independence and objectivity within its organization
    - Forensic units must be staffed by *scientists and technicians (sworn or civilian)*, who are properly trained in scientific method principles, and receive continuing education in their respective disciplines
    - The senior leader of the forensic science organization should have sufficient expertise in forensic science and management to effectively lead both the scientific and operational aspects of the organization
    - Forensic units must be properly resourced and staffed

# The Issues: Federal Funding

- MCCA, ASCIA, and IACP believe that the federal government should have a role in supporting all publicly funded forensic laboratories.
- Funding should be provided for accredited crime laboratories and forensic service providers to meet the growing demands for forensic science to aid investigations.
  - Fully fund current federal grant programs, such as the Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant program as well as the DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Grant program to provide resources for all forensic disciplines.
  - Fund additional grant programs for non-DNA forensic disciplines to model that of the CEBR grant.
  - Fund infrastructure grants, possibly with matching fund requirements, to allow agencies to build modern forensic facilities

# More Federal Funding

- Support partnerships between academia, the private sector and government forensic scientists to advance current technologies as well as develop new capabilities.
- Provide training to the community
- Allow for the efficient technology transfer of products
- Coordinate federal funds related to forensic science to allow collaboration with ongoing research efforts by the Department of Defense and other federal agencies with federal, state and local law enforcement to enhance the delivery of forensic services to the criminal justice community and homeland security *without duplicating efforts or funding.*

# OSAC

- The National Institute of Science and Technology, along with Department of Justice (DOJ), created the **Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science in March of 2015.**
  - We support the development of national standards for each forensic discipline by the OSAC in a manner similar to the adoption of the FBI DNA QAS that has been developed by SWGDAM



# Law Enforcement Priorities & Needs

Forensic Science should ensure scientific unbiased validity of its test results so that investigations can be aided at earlier stages, and juries around the country have the proper information to form their opinion as to guilt or innocence.

- Infrastructure: a national commitment to establishing the facilities needed to provide quality forensic services and meet the increasing demand of submissions
- Equipment: a commitment to resource and properly equip forensic providers
- Personnel: Education, recruitment and continuing education of forensic practitioners
- Research & Development: collaboration with academia and private industry to develop and tech transfer real world solutions
- Quality Services: all services performed within a framework of national standards and accreditation
- Needs assessment: determine the needs of the broad forensic community to assist DOJ information-gathering towards assessing and reporting on forensic laboratory needs

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