



Quality Division Use Only

Quality Tracking #:	2020-091	Classification:	Corrective Action
Non-Conformance Level:	Class II	Section:	Latent Print Section
Date of Discovery:	11/02/20	Date of Incident:	10/29/20

Forensic Case Number(s), if applicable:	Agency Case Number(s), if applicable:
2020-13795	134221520

Description of Non-conformance:
Two cartridges were inadvertently thrown in the trash bin after latent print processing and later recovered.

Additional Information/Follow-Up:
On 10/29/2020, items 012-01 through 012-86 were placed in a wire tray on a rolling cart that was lined with butcher paper to be examined by a latent print processor in the photography lab. The processor began individually viewing each item under the laser for the presence of friction ridges and placed each item in a clear plastic bag while counting the number of items. One of the items was found to have friction ridges and was placed in a smaller plastic bag and the bottom was labeled "1" with a black permanent marker. Both bags were then placed inside the original packaging to be temporarily stored in the LPP technical review cage, which is within the processing laboratory, awaiting suitability check. Once the items were transferred to the technical review cage the processor began cleaning her work areas and the cart. Areas in the photography lab were wiped down and gloves were removed and placed on the cart. The butcher paper that was lining the cart was removed and placed in a nearby trash bin in the lab area. On 11/2/2020, a latent print examiner came to the processing lab to conduct suitability checks as a part of the review process. The items from this case were placed in the examiner's custody from the technical review cage to be examined in a photography lab using the laser. The examiner counted the items in the bags and found that there were 84 instead of the stated 86 cartridges. The examiner immediately notified the processor of the observation. The processor was already away from the lab for the day. On 11/3/2020, when the processor arrived at the lab, the items were placed back into the processor's custody to be counted and the lab was thoroughly searched. The two items were found to be inside of the butcher paper in the trash bin, along with gloves and paper towels, that previously lined the cart used during processing. The



processor believes that while placing the items in the clear bag, two of the items inadvertently dropped back on the cart instead of in the bag. The processor counted 85 (plus the 1 in the separate bag) items and did not realize the items were still on the cart when transferred to the technical review cage for suitability check. The processor's notes reflected that these two cartridges did not contain any friction ridge detail.

Summary of Root Cause Analysis:

Note: Incidents are documented for tracking purposes and trend analysis. Root Cause Analysis is not required for incidents.

Since this item contained multiple, identical child items, it was not readily visible that two of the 86 were missing from the package after processing. This nonconformance was attributed to the fact that there was no process in place to confirm or verify that all items had been returned to the parent packaging.

Actions Taken:

On 11/3/2020, after the items were located, the processor placed the two cartridges in a separate plastic bag and named the items 012-02 and 012-03. All items were returned to the original package and transferred back to the technical review cage. A comment was added to the chain of custody to explain that the two child items were not packaged with the parent from the time the processor completed her analysis until they were noticed missing and located four days later. A comment was added to the latent print processing notes and report referencing this quality report number. A meeting was held with the latent print processor and the quality specialist on 11/4/2020 to discuss ways to prevent this from recurring. The processor stated when they receive money as items of evidence, they have a second person verify the money count. She suggested they could do a similar process when handling multiple identical items within one parent item. A meeting was held with the latent print processors, the manager, technical leader, and supervisor to discuss this issue and determine the best method for item count verification. As of 11/24/2020 the latent print processors now have a second staff member count and verify that all child items are accounted for after processing and after review. This check is noted by the assigned processor and



reviewer in the notes, respectively. This applies to items that have 20 or more small child items such as cartridges or items that could be misplaced. In addition, three test tube racks were obtained to use when processing cartridges in order to organize the items and prevent them from rolling off the work bench.

Section Manager: Rebecca Green

Date: 12/18/20

Division Director: Amy Castillo

Date: 12/23/20

Incidents or Corrective Actions that involve the Biology/DNA section are reviewed by the Technical Leader and CODIS Administrator.

Technical Leader: Jeniffer Molina

Date: 12/18/2020

CODIS Administrator: N/A

Date: N/A

Quality Director: Erika Ziemak

Date Closed: 12/29/20