



**Quality Division Use Only**

Quality Tracking #:	2021-036	Classification:	Incident
Non-Conformance Level:	N/A	Section:	Firearms
Date of Discovery:	06/21/21	Date of Incident:	03/05/21

Forensic Case Number(s), if applicable:	Agency Case Number(s), if applicable:
2021-18071	001116021
2021-21778	017344721
2021-27447	017314021

**Description of Non-conformance:**

A NIBIN hit notification was issued with the incorrect Houston Police Department agency case number (ACN) due to an error at the HPD Property Room.

**Additional Information/Follow-Up:**

HFSC processed a firearm for ACN 001116021 and when the test fired cartridge cases were entered into NIBIN, a possible hit was made between ACN 001116021 and ACN 017344721. HFSC issued an IBHT notification on 3/5/2021 informing its stakeholder of the possible hit. The stakeholder requested a confirmation examination on 3/15/2021.

This issue was discovered on 06/21/2021 when the Firearms Examiner began work on the NIBIN hit confirmation request. The hit was between a test fire (ACN 001116021 item 004-01) to fired evidence (ACN 017344721 items 001 and 002). After logging in the evidence and looking at fired evidence cartridge cases using a microscope, the Firearms Examiner reviewed the NIBIN hit information. The Firearms Examiner noticed that the cartridge case in the NIBIN hit was not the same type of cartridge case she received as evidence. She also noted that the same HPD Property Room number was listed in NIBIN for two different ACNs.

After communicating with the requesting officer and HPD Property Room personnel, it became apparent that the incorrect ACN was listed in the Property Room image. The potential NIBIN hit was actually between ACN 001116021 and ACN 017314021 (not ACN 017344721).

**Summary of Root Cause Analysis:**

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

N/A



**Actions Taken:**

The Firearms Examiner notified the section manager at the time of discovery. The requesting officer was emailed to notify him that there was an issue with the evidence and that work would be stopped while the issue was being investigated. The HPD Property Room was also notified and helped HFSC with the investigation. Once it was determined that the stakeholder had entered the fired evidence under the wrong ACN in NIBIN, HFSC notified the investigator that work would be stopped for the wrong case (ACN 017344721).

The HPD Property Room corrected the ACN on the NIBIN entry of interest. HFSC requested the evidence from ACN 017314021 (HFSC case number 2021-27447) and compared the correct fired evidence to the test fire evidence from ACN 001116021 (HFSC case number 2021-18071). Report 0001 was issued on 7/27/2021 under HFSC case number 2021-27447 documenting the examination. A stop work notification was issued for ACN 017344721 (HFSC case number 2021-21778). The IBIS Hit notification for ACN 001116021 was amended on 7/27/2021 to associate the correct agency case numbers.

Email communication with the investigating officer and with HPD Property Room personnel were added to all three cases in JusticeTrax LIMS.

The cause of this nonconformance was the result of actions by an outside agency and were beyond the control of HFSC. However, had the issue not been discovered there is a risk that the investigator would not have received the correct information regarding a potential hit because the comparison would have been between two unrelated cases. Therefore, HFSC decided to document this nonconformance as a quality incident.

This nonconformance was discussed with firearms staff during a Firearms section meeting on 09/07/2021.

Section Manager: Donna Eudaley

Date: 09/27/21

Division Director: Amy Castillo

Date: 10/11/21

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

Technical Leader: N/A

Date: N/A

CODIS Administrator: N/A

Date: N/A

Quality Director: Erika Ziemak

Date Closed: 10/18/21