



Quality Division Use Only

Quality Tracking #:	2021-047	Classification:	Corrective Action
Non-Conformance Level:	Class II	Section:	Crime Scene
Date of Discovery:	07/15/21	Date of Incident:	03/20/21

Forensic Case Number(s), if applicable:	Agency Case Number(s), if applicable:
2021-22120	036777021

Description of Non-conformance:
A patent print in possible blood was not collected and/or documented correctly.

Additional Information/Follow-Up:
This nonconformance was discovered on 07/15/2021 during the technical review process. During the review of the crime scene photographs the reviewer observed two patent prints in possible blood. The crime scene investigator (CSI) had taken JPEG images of the prints, but she had only taken comparison quality photographs (RAW images) of one of the prints. The Crime Scene Unit (CSU) standard operating procedure (SOP) requires comparison quality photographs of all patent prints prior to collecting the print. The CSI collected the patent print that she took comparison quality photographs of but did not collect the other print.

Summary of Root Cause Analysis:
Note: Incidents are documented for tracking purposes and trend analysis. Root Cause Analysis is not required for incidents.
When interviewed, the CSI stated that she did not see the second patent print. The CSI was processing a black vehicle outdoors in bright sunlight, which made it difficult for her to visualize the prints on the vehicle. While the missed patent print is visible in photographs when viewed on a computer monitor, DSL camera photographs can capture details not observed by the naked eye. CSIs review their photographs on scene to ensure that their camera is working as expected, but the screen is small and does not provide the opportunity to observe small details such as friction ridge patterns.
The CSI followed the SOP for the patent print that she did observe and when interviewed stated that she would have collected the other patent print, had she observed it.



Actions Taken:

Upon interview, the CSI demonstrated accountability for this nonconformance. In this instance environmental conditions appear to have contributed to the CSI's lack of ability to locate the print. CSU management recognizes that there is a risk of CSI missing evidence on scene and acknowledges this risk in their SOP.

Ideally vehicles are processed inside the vehicle examination building (VEB), but due to a significant increase in vehicle submission, some vehicles are processed in the outdoor lot.

After processing was completed, the vehicle was released to the Houston Police Department. The nonconformance was not discovered until the case record was reviewed by a CSU supervisor. Because the vehicle had already been released, additional processing is not an option.

The CSI emailed the investigator on 10/21/2021 to let him know that a patent print in possible blood was not documented using comparison quality photography. The investigator responded on 10/21/2021 that the missed print did not have a technical impact on his investigation.

Section Manager: Carina Haynes

Date: 12/16/21

Division Director: Carina Haynes

Date: 12/16/21

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: 12/20/21