## Quality Division Use Only

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| **Quality Tracking #:** | 2021-054 | **Classification:** | Incident |
| **Non-Conformance Level:** | N/A | **Section:** | Crime Scene |
| **Date of Discovery:** | 09/17/21 | **Date of Incident:** | 09/15/21 |

| Forensic Case Number(s), if applicable: | Agency Case Number(s), if applicable: |
|---|---|
| **2021-31049** | **123402721** |

**Description of Non-conformance:**

**An air gun was not rendered as safe prior to being transferred from the Crime Scene Unit to the Latent Print section. The Crime Scene Investigator (CSI) responsible for the collection and transfer of the air gun made her supervisor aware of the situation immediately after transferring or prior to transferring; however, the supervisor did not communicate this information to the latent print section prior to their examination of the weapon.**

**Additional Information/Follow-Up:**

**Air guns include spring operated guns and CO2/gas operated guns. Some common examples are airsoft guns, bb guns, and pellet guns.**

**The air gun was collected by a CSI while processing a vehicle at the vehicle examination building (VEB) during the night shift. The CSI could not determine if the gun was loaded or not, so she contacted the night-shift Crime Scene Unit (CSU) supervisor on duty. They attempted to find information online about the gun but were unsuccessful. The CSI told the supervisor that she had observed friction ridge details on the gun, so the supervisor instructed the CSI to bring the gun back to the lab and place it in the Latent Print locker. The CSI loosely placed the gun in butcher paper to minimize damage to possible prints. She intentionally didn't fully seal the evidence because she thought a CSU supervisor or Firearms Examiner would be accessing the gun to rendered it safe.**

**The night-shift supervisor told the CSI that she would email the Firearms and Latent Print sections to determine the appropriate course of action to ensure the item was safe prior to processing. The supervisor forgot to send the email prior to leaving early the next morning at the end of her shift. The day-shift CSU supervisor, who was unaware of the situation, transferred the air gun to the Latent Print section the next day.**

**When the Latent Print Processor inventoried the evidence, she observed that the air gun appeared to be loaded. She contacted the day-shift CSU supervisor, who returned and rendered the air gun safe. The day-shift supervisor emailed the night-shift supervisor and the CSI to let them know that the air gun had been loaded. The night-shift supervisor replied and acknowledged that the CSI had proceeded as instructed and that she, the night-shift supervisor, was responsible for not communicating the information to the Firearms and Latent Print sections as she had intended. The night-shift supervisor included the CSU Director in her response.**

| Summary of Root Cause Analysis:<br>Note: Incidents are documented for tracking purposes and trend analysis. Root Cause Analysis is not required for incidents. |
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| N/A |

| Actions Taken: |
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| This nonconformance is being considered an incident rather than a corrective action because loaded air guns do not present the same level of risk as loaded firearms, and this was a first-time occurrence.<br><br>Discussions were held with the Firearms section regarding how loaded air guns should be handled by CSU. A process was agreed on between the sections whereby air guns suspected of being loaded are kept in a secure location by CSU, typically a locker, but not placed in the Latent Print locker. If a CSI is unable to render the air gun safe, or is not comfortable rendering it safe, they can ask for assistance from a CSU supervisor. The supervisor will seek assistance from the Firearms section if they too are unable to render the gun safe. Language was added to the CSU SOP published on 3/17/2022 addressing steps CSIs need to take if they are unable to render air guns safe. |

**Section Manager:** Carina Haynes **Date:** 04/28/22

**Division Director:** Peter Stout, Amy Castillo **Date:** 04/28/22

**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:** 05/13/22