

Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro

A. Purpose:

To ensure that all standard methods employed in the Firearms Unit are suitable for the customer's request(s).

B. Responsibility:

Forensic Science Examiners or other laboratory personnel assigned to the Firearms Unit.

C. Procedure:

1. All methods used to fulfill customer requests shall be deemed suitable by the Unit supervisor/lead. This includes the range and accuracy of the results obtained being relevant to the customer's needs. All methods are based on standard methods described and developed by professional organizations – eg. Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners (AFTE), Scientific Working Group for Firearms and Tool Marks (SWG-GUN), Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) Subcommittee on Firearms and Toolmarks.
2. Before a new method is introduced, it must be validated according to the appropriate parameters. A validation plan shall be developed and approved by the Unit supervisor/lead and the Deputy Director of Identification. All documentation of the new method and the validation plan shall be stored in the Unit's Validation Plans binder, which is kept in the Firearms Unit main work area. Where applicable, the reliability of the new method shall be compared to published results and become part of the validation file.
3. Any changes to an existing method must be validated as above.

D. References:

1. Firearms Unit Validation Plan binder