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Executive Summary of SFPD DNA QAS audit results for DOJ Management:

The audit team found the laboratory to be well organized and professional, with an excellent training program and highly qualified staff. All of the laboratory personnel and management involved were cooperative and exhibited a positive attitude regarding the audit process. The DNA Unit utilizes outside training resources that provide a wider perspective of forensic DNA analysis. Operationally, the laboratory has also gained efficiency by batching the analysis of its casework. As a result, the overall quality of the work and laboratory operations was very good (to the extent of what we were given and saw during the audit).

The audit of the SFPD DNA Unit was performed under FBI DNA Quality Assurance Standards that require extensive documentation at every level, and even more since the update effective in July 2009. Many laboratories have had and will have findings on these types of issues, especially as the standards are further clarified through audit reviews.

The SFPD Laboratory DNA Unit had three relatively minor documentation issues, the first of which was noted in the previous audit, has been challenged by the Lab, and is under review by a panel of experts under the FBI/NDIS Audit Review process.

- ☑ Standard 11.1b – Not retaining the original handwritten observations on recovered volumes of extract after entry into their DNA tracking database, a problem in only one area of their process. – Need additional laptops on bench or to retain original as the file copy.
- ☑ Standards (12.2, 12.2.7, 12.2.7.1 and 12.2.7.1b) – Changes on CODIS upload by the CODIS Administrator were not initialed by a second analyst as required by the new Standards. A “No” for 12.2.7.1 results in the same finding for the all four. – Just need to have co-signer.
- ☑ Standard 15.5.1 – Last external QAS audit not submitted to NDIS within 30 days per new Standards through an oversight. – Just need to send this audit in on time.

Note that the Appendix C qualifications documentation for the auditors had to be provided prior to the audit, so the forms included, completed by hand, were the forms provided to the DNA Unit.

Because this was not a required routine audit and considering the circumstances in which it was requested, the audit team believed it would be appropriate to provide some additional observations and suggestions to support continued improvements at the DNA Unit. These would not normally be part of the formal external DNA QAS audit process. To that end, the team has made the following observations and recommendations:

- Buy laptops to allow direct data entry from the bench into the DNA analysis tracking database.
- Don't use trainees for even administrative (typo) checks of data in case file...gives the wrong impression.
- Change the way weak (“inc”) alleles are named and documented in their DNA LIMS, so the actual DNA types uploaded are recorded automatically in the tables in the case file.
- Improve document control (protocols, forms, etc) in prep for ISO accreditation.
- Get training in CODIS search stringency (some profiles entered might not hit the intended offender) - DNA Lab provides training through our CODIS Unit...
- Create dedicated senior analyst staff position to conduct validation of instruments and new kits already purchased on federal grants.
- Hire more analysts to allow rotation through validations and method development work.
- Provide a senior administrator specifically to manage grants, especially existing \$1M NIJ efficiency grant
- Add another criminalist I to lab's QC group.
- Have DNA tech ldr, QA Manager or experienced testifying analysts review testimony of DNA staff, rather than just prosecutors.

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