

# **Guide for Casework Documentation**

## **1. Scope**

- 1.1 This Guide provides procedures for documenting the examination of footwear and tire impression evidence.
- 1.2 The particular procedures and methods employed in a given case will depend on the evidence.
- 1.3 This Guide may not cover all aspects of unusual or uncommon evidence.
- 1.4 This Guide does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this Guide to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.
- 1.5 This Guide is not intended as a substitute for training in the documentation of the procedures used in the examination of footwear and tire impression evidence. Completion of a training program and experience in these skills is essential to understanding and applying the principles outlined in this Guide.

## **2. Terminology**

## **3. Significance and Use**

- 3.1 The procedures outlined here are grounded in the generally accepted body of knowledge and experience in the documentation of the items and methodology used in the examination of footwear and tire impression evidence. By following these procedures, the footwear or tire track examination can be properly documented.
- 3.2 Notes are taken in order to describe the items received, procedures followed, examinations conducted, and conclusions reached.

## **4. Interferences**

## **5. Equipment and Requirements**

- 5.1** Materials and equipment necessary to document and record observations and procedures.

## **6. Procedures**

- 6.1** Describe the original packaging, such as outside container, its condition and any identifying source information in accordance with laboratory policy.

- 6.2** Inventory contents and mark in accordance with laboratory policy.

- 6.3** Describe the impressed items sufficiently to be distinguished from other similar items.

**6.3.1** Original items

For example, "Piece of glass measuring 4 inches by 8 inches bearing a footwear impression"

**6.3.2** Original lifts

**6.3.2.1** The type of lift (gelatin, electrostatic, adhesive, etc.)

Note: if adhesive lift, indicate which side the adhesive is on

**6.3.2.2** The type of impression lifted (original residue, fingerprint powder and color)

**6.3.2.3** Description of the impression(s) lifted (patterned impression, multiple impressions, heel impression, etc.)

**6.3.2.4** Source of impression / item identifier, if indicated

**6.3.3** Casts

**6.3.3.1** Type of casting material (Dental stone, sulfur, etc.)

**6.3.3.2** Dimensions, condition and quality of cast (length, broken, washed, etc.)

**6.3.3.3** Description of the cast impression(s) (footwear, tire, etc.)

**6.3.3.4** Source of impression / item identifier, if indicated

**6.3.4** Digital storage media

**6.3.4.1** Type of storage media (CD, DVD, etc.)

**6.3.4.2** General description of content. For example, “CD containing 10 images labeled 001.jpg-010.jpg”

**6.3.4.3** Description of images used in impression examination. For example, “Images of footwear impressions labeled 001.jpg – 006.jpg”

**6.3.5** Negative(s)

**6.3.5.1** General description of negatives (size, black and white, color, etc.) For example, “Ten (10) 35 mm color negatives, frame numbers 1-10, on strip number 45301”

**6.3.5.2** Description of content of negatives used in impression examination. For example, “negatives 3 through 7 depict footwear impressions”

**6.3.6** Print(s) / Photograph(s)

**6.3.6.1** Type of photographs (black and white, color, size, number, etc.)

**6.3.6.2** Description of content. For example, “Six photographs of shoe impression in snow, identified as impression 7”

**6.3.7** Videos

**6.3.7.1** Description of format (DVD, VHS, etc.)

**6.3.7.2** Description of content. For example, “DVD bearing video of crime scene, case # 12345”

**6.4** Describe the known items sufficiently to be distinguished from other similar items.

**6.4.1** Known shoes

**6.4.1.1** General description of shoes to include brand name, size, outsole design, condition, label information

**6.4.1.2** Date collected and from whom. For example, “shoes obtained 3/14/07 from Jimmy Jones”

**6.4.2** Known tires

**6.4.2.1** General description of tires to include manufacturer, model, size, Department of Transportation number, design, condition, and mold number

**6.4.2.2** Date collected, from what vehicle, and from what position

**6.4.3** Submitted test impressions of shoes

**6.4.3.1** Impression medium (gel lift, Identicator print, etc.)

**6.4.3.2** Source (who shoe belongs to)

**6.4.3.3** Information about the shoes provided with the test impression (make, model, description, size, etc.)

**6.4.3.4** Quality of impression

**6.4.4** Submitted test impressions of tires

**6.4.4.1** Impression medium (ink on white paper, Treadprint, etc.)

**6.4.4.2** Source (vehicle information and position)

**6.4.4.3** Information about the tires provided with the test impression (make, model, description, size, etc.)

**6.4.4.4** Quality of impression

**6.4.5** Prints / images of known shoes or tires

**6.4.5.1** Description of media (digital image, print, photograph, etc.)

**6.4.5.2** Content of print/image. For example, "Four (4) 4" x 6" prints depicting tires on police vehicle #129"

**6.5** Record the Procedures used during the preparation, photography, and examination of this evidence. Refer to specific procedures as outlined in the Guide for Examination of Footwear and Tire Impression Evidence and the Guide for the Preparation of Test Impressions from Footwear and Tires.

**6.5.1** Casework notes should be taken to document all phases of case preparation, test impression preparation, and examination with sufficient detail to allow another competent examiner or supervisor to fully evaluate the entire examination process and

conclusions reached. These notes should include specific notations, arrows, comments, pictures or whatever is necessary to document class characteristics, wear characteristics, and individual characteristics that were observed and formed the basis for the examiner's opinion.

**6.5.2** Notes can be in the form of handwritten or typed observations, annotated photographs with arrows, lines or other symbols to mark the details used to render a conclusion, overlays of test impressions attached to the photographs of questioned impressions, and any other suitable ways to document observations.

## **7. Report**

**7.1** Evidence examined, examinations conducted, procedures utilized, evidence photographed, and conclusions reached should be documented and may also appear in a report.

## **8. Bibliography**

Bodziak, W. J., *Footwear Impression Evidence*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; CRC Press: Boca Raton, FL, 2000.

SWGTHREAD, "Guide for the Examination of Footwear and Tire Impression Evidence", JFI, 56 (5), 2006, pp.800-805.

SWGTHREAD, "Guide for the Preparation of Test Impressions from Footwear and Tires", JFI, 55 (6), pp.781-786.