

Forensic Paint Analysis Training Program



WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy-to-understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are not intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a published standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STANDARD?

Paint is a commonly encountered type of trace evidence. Forensic paint examinations and comparisons are often multi-faceted. They include the analysis of several characteristics of a paint sample, and thus require knowledge about various aspects of paint and scientific instruments.

This standard presents a training program for forensic science practitioners to develop an understanding of the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to perform, document, and evaluate forensic paint examination and comparisons.

After completing the outlined training program, the analyst will be capable of working independently on forensic paint examinations and form opinions based on sound scientific knowledge, applicable examinations and instrumental analyses, and practical experience.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

Adherence to this training program provides the theoretical foundation and practical skills required to be qualified as a forensic paint examiner.

This standard presents a modular approach for simple implementation into a forensic science service provider's existing training program(s). It recommends a balance of practical experience, through exercises, and theoretical knowledge from a list of literature references/reading assignments.

HOW IS THIS STANDARD USED, AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

This standard is intended as a practical approach to train forensic science practitioners in the examination and comparison of paint evidence. Several aspects of forensic paint analysis are individually addressed in the guide.

The standard includes an extensive bibliography intended as required reading, to aid in the training of forensic paint examiners.

This standard relies on additional ASTM standard guides, many of which are focused on the instrumental analysis of paint: ASTM D5381-93 (2021) and [ANSI/ASTM E2808-21](#), [ANSI/ASTM E2809-22](#), and [ANSI/ASTM E2937-18](#).

Additional training may be required for a particular method or instrument referred to in this standard practice as it is assumed that the trainee is already competent in these analytical techniques and instrumental methods. Additional training is required for the physical match comparison of paint sample broken edges.

