



Criminalistics Section – 2006

B121 A Report on the 2005 FBI GSR Symposium

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The goal of this presentation is to enhance the audience's knowledge of GSR analysis by reporting on the developments at the FBI-sponsored GSR Symposium.

Some of the most experienced GSR analysts have come together to discuss important issues in the discipline. This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by demonstrating why it is imperative to disseminate that information to the whole community in order to develop standards for practices, procedures, and competency initiatives.

A gunshot residue (GSR) symposium sponsored by the FBI Laboratory, was held in Quantico, Virginia May 30th to June 3rd of 2005. The participants were from private and public laboratories, both international and domestic. This diverse group was primarily composed of very experienced analysts, but some had little experience. In spite of these diversities, the participants had a mutual desire to update procedures in GSR analysis and reach a consensus on many recent topical developments, as they all perform GSR analysis by Scanning Electron Microscopy Energy Dispersive X-ray Spectrometry (SEM/EDS).

In three full days of earnest discussions, the format for the symposium followed a pattern whereby a topic was posed as a question or statement. Professional and friendly discussions ensued on the topics. The discussions were enhanced, where necessary, by short reports from the authors of appropriate studies on the topics. Using an electronic personal response system the group then voted on the topic which often led to additional discussion and voting to determine if consensus could be reached on the issue.

Selected topics included: terms to describe particles (unique or characteristic); report writing; contamination issues; brake pads; fireworks; police cars; ASTM E-1588 guide; Proficiency testing; acceptance criteria; victims; suicides; time limits; Instant Shooter Kits, and clothing.

The goal of the symposium was to initiate a dialogue between experienced analysts regarding critical GSR issues. The resulting consensus could then be issued as guidelines for the entire forensic community engaged in gunshot residue analysis. The magnitude of topics proved to be too much for this work to be completed in one symposium. Therefore, a future symposium and/or SWGGSR are being planned.

This presentation will report on the developments of the discussions to date and the results of voting on these varied GSR topics.

FBI, GSR, Symposium