



Criminalistics Section – 2010

A1 The Importance of Accreditation: Advancing Forensic Science and Laboratory Management

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After attending this presentation, attendees will gain an understanding and knowledge on the general importance, current status, and future direction of laboratory accreditation.

The presentation will impact the forensic science community by serving as a historical review of the historical, current, and future importance of laboratory accreditation programs.

Laboratory accreditation programs have been in existence for well over twenty-five years. Originally implemented and still used today as a voluntary programs to demonstrate compliance with accepted standards of quality, the recent release of the National Academy of Sciences Report, entitled *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*, has brought a renewed awareness to the importance of accreditation programs. Moreover, the movement towards internationally based standards, such as ISO/IEC 17025, has brought a new awareness to satisfy not only the technical quality standards, but also to meet the needs of stakeholders and further improve the overall management systems in forensic laboratories. Now more than ever, quality and managerial systems in forensic science are being put to the test. This presentation will briefly review the history of accreditation, its importance in the criminal justice system, the current status and future direction of laboratory accreditation, including its impact on policy makers and forensic service providers.

ASCLD, Accreditation / ISO, Laboratory Quality