D18   Current Status of the Scientific Working Group on Bloodstain Pattern Analysis (SWGSTAIN)

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have an understanding of the current objectives and purposes of the Scientific Working Group on Bloodstain Pattern Analysis (SWGSTAIN) as well as the potential impact the guidance documents produced by this working group will have on the discipline of bloodstain pattern analysis.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by updating them on the work currently being completed by SWGSTAIN.

In 2002, the FBI Laboratory coordinated a meeting to explore the idea of a scientific working group related to bloodstain pattern analysis. A core group of sixteen recognized bloodstain pattern analysis experts affirmed the need for a scientific working group on bloodstain pattern analysis, SWGSTAIN. Currently, the membership of SWGSTAIN includes 29 recognized bloodstain pattern analysis experts who represent law enforcement agencies, laboratories, and private practitioners, in North America, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. In 2009, the Midwest Forensics Resource Center, assumed the leadership role of SWGSTAIN from the FBI Laboratory.

The mission of SWGSTAIN is to promote and enhance the development of quality bloodstain pattern analysis practices through the collaborative efforts of governmental forensic laboratories, law enforcement, private industry, and academia. Currently, the SWGSTAIN membership is split into five (5) standing committees: (1) Taxonomy and Terminology; (2) Training and Education; (3) Quality Assurance; (4) Legal; and 5) Research. Each of these sub-committees has been assigned and is working on specific tasks that are deemed necessary by the entire working group. During our bi-annual meetings each sub-committee presents status updates to the entire working group. Once a committee is nearing the completion of a guidance document, the document is then distributed amongst the entire group for comment. This often occurs multiple times prior to the documents being published for public comment. Documents are not released for public comment until the document is passed through the membership and then through the SWGSTAIN Executive Board.

Within this presentation, the role of each sub-committee will be discussed along with their respective published guidance documents. In this presentation specific attention will be given towards addressing the projects currently being undertaken by the SWGSTAIN Research sub- committee. SWGSTAIN recognizes the need for further research in bloodstain pattern analysis and is working towards addressing what areas in the discipline are in need of research. In addressing the areas in need of further research, the Research sub-committee with the assistance of the entire SWGSTAIN membership, has compiled an extensive bloodstain pattern analysis bibliography that is available on www.swgstain.org.

In addition, SWGSTAIN is working to be proactive towards current issues impacting the discipline. A public position statement regarding the National Academy of Sciences Report on Forensic Science was recently published. The work of SWGSTAIN is on-going and relies upon the input of bloodstain pattern analysis practitioners. The current documents that are available for public comment as well as the completed guidance documents can all be found on www.swgstain.org.

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