



Questioned Documents Section - 2016

J19 Status of the Expert Working Group on Human Factors in Handwriting Examinations

Thomas W. Vastrick, BS, 522 S Hunt Club Boulevard, Ste 217, Apopka, FL 32803*

After attending this presentation, attendees will have an understanding of goals and objectives of this National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) -administered project.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing details of what can be expected in the near future as it relates to forensic document examination and this discipline's responses to recent recommendations for strengthening the field.

In response to the 2009 National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Report, *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*, the forensic document profession has been given a portal view of this profession's future. To say that forensic document examination picked up the ball and ran with it would be an understatement. The production of working standards, the publication of numerous significant research projects concerning the foundation of scientific methodologies, and a near-total review of the forensic document examination profession has rendered practitioners well-prepared to face the challenges that are rising with the advent of new forms of criticism and attack.

One such project is the formation of a blue-panel committee of experts in forensic document examination, statistics, research, academia, and the legal profession to come together as one to map the structure under which forensic scientists will practice for decades to come.

What are human factors? These are simply the by-product of people being people. Understanding human idiosyncrasies allow the design of methodologies of examination that can minimize the potential of error and strengthen efficiency and accuracy of forensic scientists.

This presentation will discuss human factors, scope of work for the committee, how this work affects the forensic science practitioner, and what the attendees would like to see as a result of this project. Included in the presentation will be a discussion period in order to obtain the thoughts and ideas of those outside the committee that may assist committee members in the development of the final report.

The Expert Working Group (EWG) Committee has subcommittees and members of other subcommittees who may be called upon during this presentation. There will be some limitation as to what can be discussed outside of the committee, but this presentation will highlight the general goals of the project and overall subject thoughts in addition to some personal thoughts.

Human Errors, Handwriting, NIST