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# Minimum Guidelines for Facial Image Comparison Documentation

## 1. Scope

1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide minimum guidelines and a common baseline of information for facial image comparison documentation.

1.1.1 Documentation may be in the form of notes, images with markups and annotations, narratives, worksheets, electronic records, investigative lead or forensic reports, or any combination of these methods.

1.2 This document does not discuss methods for how to conduct a facial image comparison, conclusion scale(s), or details that may be agency specific.

## 2. Terminology

### 2.1 Definitions

2.1.1 Forensic Report: a document whose intent it is to provide information to assist a trier of fact (e.g., judge or jury).

2.1.2 Investigative Lead Report: a document whose intent it is to provide information to assist operational personnel (e.g., investigator, detective, or analyst).

## 3. Significance and Use

3.1 These guidelines should be used as a reference by the practitioner to adequately document the facial image comparison process.

3.2 This document outlines the information needed to provide a clear understanding of the process conducted during a facial image comparison to the recipient.

3.3 The sections below provide the recommended minimum guidelines for information that should be documented in accordance with the type of report and agency specific needs.

#### **4. Items to Document for a Facial Image Comparison**

These items are not presented in order of importance or priority.

##### 4.1 Administrative Data

###### 4.1.1 Case Identifier

###### 4.1.2 Dates

###### 4.1.2.1 Date Received

###### 4.1.2.2 Date Searched/Compared

###### 4.1.2.3 Date of Image Capture (if available)

###### 4.1.3 Requestor(s)

###### 4.1.3.1 Contact Information

###### 4.1.4 Any Written/Verbal Correspondence

###### 4.1.5 Relevant Case Information (if provided)

###### 4.1.6 Organization Conducting Examination

###### 4.1.6.1 Contact Information

###### 4.1.6.2 Practitioner(s)

###### 4.1.7 Details and Scope of the Request (if provided)

###### 4.1.8 Origin of Images

###### 4.1.9 Filename/Identifier of Images Received

4.1.10 Indication of whether a facial recognition (FR) search was conducted and results (if applicable)

###### 4.1.10.1 Gallery Searched

4.1.10.2 Number of Candidates Returned (based on maximum number returned or threshold used)

4.1.10.3 Ranking of returned potential candidate(s) if returned list is not randomized

4.1.11 Disclaimer – Agencies should include in all facial image comparison reports their own disclaimer identifying the limitations of the comparison method used and the recommended usage of the report.

4.1.12 Reference to Comparison Method Used

4.1.13 Description of the disposition of original and derivative works (e.g., returned, or retained)

4.2 Analysis

4.2.1 Determination of image applicability in the context of the question (e.g., Question asked is: are these two people the same? However, the images of the two persons display a large age difference and were taken days apart, then the persons cannot be same.)

4.2.2 Indication of images that do or do not meet agency specific requirements for comparison

4.2.2.1 Explanation for determination that images do not meet agency specific requirements

4.2.3 Image Analysis Documentation (e.g., lighting conditions, image resolution, etc.)

4.2.4 Processed Image(s) (if applicable)

4.2.4.1 Filename/Identifier of Processed Image(s) (if applicable)

4.2.4.2 Steps Taken to Process Image(s)

4.3 Comparison

4.3.1 Documentation of the Comparison

4.3.1.1 Compare and document features of the face visible in each image, as defined in the ASTM E3149 Facial Image Comparison Feature List for Morphological Analysis.

4.3.1.2 A documented account of the compared features

4.3.2 Observed effects of imaging conditions and physical stability of facial components or component characteristics

4.3.3 A visual example of the compared facial images

4.4 Evaluation

#### 4.4.1 Conclusion Scale Used

4.4.1.1 Definitions or information and interpretation of what drives a conclusion (if applicable)

#### 4.4.2 Conclusion Reached

#### 4.5 Verification

##### 4.5.1 Verification Notation

4.5.2 If the examination is not verified by a second examiner, a disclaimer that the comparison is not verified must be included in the report.

### 5. Additional Information

5.1 In accordance with the Agency's data retention policies, the following should also be saved (hard/digital):

5.1.1 All Correspondence (e.g., email, case notes, reports, etc.)

5.1.2 Received Images

5.1.3 Processed Images

5.1.4 Chain of Custody

5.1.5 Disposition (if applicable)

5.2 There should be documentation within the agency on the following:

5.2.1 Algorithm

5.2.1.1 Vendor Name

5.2.1.2 Version

5.2.1.3 Specific Configurations

5.2.1.4 Date Implemented

5.2.2 Software

5.2.2.1 Vendor Name

5.2.2.2 Version

5.2.2.3 Specific Configurations

5.2.2.4 Date Implemented

5.3 Agency Accreditation

5.3.1 Reference to Agency Comparison Method

5.3.2 Reference to Agency Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

5.4 Practitioner Qualifications

## 6. Referenced Documents

6.1 American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International Standard<sup>1</sup>  
E3149 Facial Image Comparison Feature List for Morphological Analysis

6.2 FISWG Physical Stability of Facial Features of Adults

6.3 FISWG Guide for Role-Based Training in Facial Comparison

6.4 FISWG Standard Practice/Guide for Image Processing to Improve Automated  
Facial Recognition Search Performance

6.5 FISWG Facial Comparison Overview and Methodology Guidelines

6.6 OSAC Standard Framework for Developing Discipline Specific Methodology for  
ACE-V

FISWG documents can be found at: [www.fiswg.org](http://www.fiswg.org)

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<sup>1</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.