



Forensic Quality Services

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RE: “Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward”

FQS provides a wide range of services to the forensic community through two separate business units. Forensic Quality Services-International (FQS-I) is an accreditation body operating programs for accreditation of agencies which conduct testing or scene inspections in areas in which the results may have legal (criminal, civil) or regulatory implication. Forensic Quality Services-Consulting (FQS-C) provides training workshops, academic programs, analysis and consulting services for the forensic science community. Forensic Quality Services-International is the country’s longest established provider of ISO accreditation to Forensic Science testing laboratories in the U.S. It is one of the accrediting bodies recognized by the NDIS Procedure Board and is part of the Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO).

FQS strongly supports mandatory forensic laboratory and police science law enforcement accreditation as well as individual forensic scientist certification. It is our obligation as forensic scientists to provide the highest degree of quality to the community and the criminal justice system. We do agree that rigorous testing in all disciplines is required but would like to recognize the forensic laboratories’ contributions to the criminal justice system, their commitment to excellence, and the validity of their results. More standards to support the accuracy of testing and thorough comprehensive reviews of forensic laboratories should be embraced by all levels of the scientific community as part of the continued improvement we all strive for.

Proper validation, training and education of personnel, as well as sustainable resources are some of the issues presented in the report. These problems have plagued the community and have needed to be addressed with a long term agenda. FQS is committed to supporting improvement efforts and is working diligently with the forensic community to provide information from the report and to solicit feedback from our accredited laboratories.

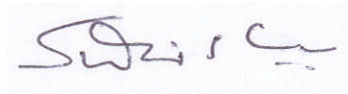
FQS supports the formation of the National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) as a separate government agency. The NIFS scope targets forensic concerns not covered entirely by any other federal agency at this time.

FQS does not have a specific position on whether crime laboratories should be separate entities from law enforcement agencies. FQS is of the opinion that a crime laboratory that is a unit within a law enforcement agency must have scientific independence within the

agency in order to ensure that bias in scientific testing and reporting of results, even if unconscious or unintentional, does not exist.

FQS is appreciative of the hard work conducted by the committee on their study of the forensic community. The report brought to light many issues for review. One thing the forensic science community has always agreed upon is the absolute requirement for reliability of the results so that innocent people will not be falsely convicted of crimes they did not commit. We are no strangers to continuing education and to adapting to the ever changing needs of the forensic science community. We will work toward expeditiously correcting deficits in the system. Throughout its 10 years of operation, FQS has shown a commitment to quality in all areas of forensic science. We welcome any improvements and feel that the commitment of our accredited laboratories and crime scene units to excellence and dedication to their field will make any transition easy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sudhir Sinha", is centered on a light blue rectangular background.

Sudhir Sinha, Ph.D.
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