



# THE FQS UPDATE



## WELCOME TO “THE FQS UPDATE”

*“The qualities of a great man are vision, integrity, courage, understanding, the power of articulation, and profundity of character”* Dwight D. Eisenhower

### NEW ADDITION TO FQS

FQS is pleased to introduce Patricia “Pat” Bencivenga as FQS’s new Program Coordinator effective December 1, 2008. Pat recently retired from the position she maintained for over a decade as Crime Laboratory Analyst with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in the Biology/DNA section. Her duties included processing evidence for biological materials and using DNA analysis to include or exclude an individual as a donor to a foreign stain. She has been involved with various validation studies, quality assurance teams, and has testified in 21 counties across the state. She has provided training to both forensic technologists and crime laboratory analysts and has provided numerous presentations to assistant state attorneys, nurse examiners, and detectives. Pat has also served as CODIS administrator. Her knowledge includes DNA auditor training, accreditation programs and ISO 17025. Pat will be based in the Clearwater office. She will manage the FQS consulting side of the activities such as requests for training, education, and other non-accreditation related activities. Please feel free to contact her at (727-538-4134) or [pab@forquality.org](mailto:pab@forquality.org).

FQS is also pleased to announce the appointment of William Tilstone as Quality Manager for FQS-I. His new position will cover many duties including maintaining compliance with external standards, audits and reviews of FQS-I and revisions to the FQS-I Manuals. Bill’s commitment to quality and continued improvement make him the ideal choice in this capacity. The FQS staff is very excited to have someone with Bill’s knowledge and experience in this important position. He can be contacted at [billtils@mac.com](mailto:billtils@mac.com).

Please check the FQS web site ([www.forquality.org](http://www.forquality.org)) for updates to staff contact information.

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### FQS-I’s Role in Accreditation

On November 10, 2008, FQS-I’s Manager of Accreditations Randall Robbins made a presentation at the annual CODIS meeting at the request of the FBI. The presentation demonstrated FQS-I’s role in accreditation, including past work in the accreditation of DNA laboratories to the ISO17025 standard. Additional information was provided to the attendees of the importance of knowing and working with the standards to which a laboratory is being accredited. By doing that, not only does the laboratory understand and support the standards, but allows them to better prepare for the assessments and any responses they may have to make afterward. As FQS-I’s Manager of Accreditations, Randy is responsible for all accreditation related activities. If you have questions please contact Randy at [rpr@forquality.org](mailto:rpr@forquality.org).



## ISO Without Tears Workshop

FOS just completed our fall "ISO Without Tears" workshop November 10-12, 2008. The workshop was presented by William Tilstone and included an overview of ISO standards and accreditation, review of general and technical requirements, as well as a discussion of agency preparations. Also, presented was a review of forensic aspects of ISO 17025 and supplements. Our workshops can be tailor-made to address an agency's needs and can be conducted at individual agencies. Check out our calendar of events and don't miss out on future workshops.

"ISO Without Tears" has been very well received by those who have attended. Here are just a few comments completed by our attendees:

- ◆ "Very knowledgeable instructor and informative"
- ◆ "I now have a greater understanding of the ISO standards and a clarification of the accreditation process"
- ◆ "Made me less stressed and more confident about accreditation"

## New Committees To Serve You Better

FOS has established two new committees designed to focus on your needs. The accreditation and proficiency review committees were established to advise the Manager of Accreditation and/or President on issues regarding accreditation of clients, review substantive changes to manuals and policies, ensure proficiency tests are maintained and monitored, and to provide input in improving operations. Please contact us with any needs your agency may have. We look forward to providing you with exceptional service.

## ACHIEVEMENTS!

Congratulations to the following agencies that achieved FOS-I ISO 17025 accreditation, reaccreditations, or expansion of scope of accreditation in the 4th quarter of 2008:

Genetica (reaccreditation)

Colorado Springs Police Department (initial accreditation)

Orchid Cellmark (reaccreditation)

## Calendar of Events

**March 16-20: "ISO 17025 and Audit Preparation Workshop** (general and advanced), FOS Workshop, Clearwater, FL

**November 9-13: "ISO 17025 and Audit Preparation Workshop** (general and advanced), FOS Workshop, Clearwater, FL

Happy  
Holidays  
From  
FOS



## SCHEDULING RE-ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENTS

Reaccreditation of an agency at the end of its accreditation interval requires an on-site assessment. In order to provide time for remediation of non-conformities and ensure a seamless transition from one accreditation cycle to another, the reaccreditation assessment should be scheduled to occur no later than 2-3 months prior to the expiration of the agency's current accreditation certificate.

Because FOS-I needs sufficient time to assemble an appropriate assessment team, **applications for reaccreditation should ideally be submitted to FOS-I approximately 6 months prior to the agency's accreditation expiration date.**

FOS-I is monitoring expiration dates and sending reminders to our accredited agencies. We appreciate your attention to these reminders when they arrive.

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***Forensic Quality Services (FQS) provides a range of organiza-  
 tional assistance and training/education services to support  
 Forensic Science delivery.***

***Forensic Quality Services-International (FQS-I) is the coun-  
 try's longest established provider of ISO 17025 accreditation  
 to forensic testing agencies in the U.S. It is one of the accredit-  
 ing bodies recognized by the NDIS Procedures Board.***

## SUBMIT AN ARTICLE TO "THE FQS UPDATE"

"The FQS Update" will be published bimonthly starting in January through November by Forensic Quality Services.

**FOS welcomes submissions to this newsletter** and will evaluate all such submissions with regard to their general interest to the readership. FOS reserves the right to edit submissions for length and editorial correctness. Please contact Pat for deadlines or submission requests at [pab@forquality.org](mailto:pab@forquality.org).

#### **Rates for ad space are as follows:**

One-eighth page: \$75/issue, \$300/yr (6 issues)

One-quarter page: \$100/issue, \$450/yr (6 issues)

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Ads should be in an electronic format such as jpeg. Color or black-and-white are acceptable.