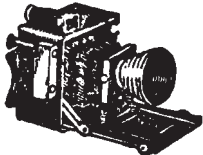




THE PRINT

*The Official Publication of the Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers
An Association for Scientific Investigation and Identification Since 1937*

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Los Angeles County Regional Identification System Contract Awarded to Cogent Systems, Inc.

(This article is reprinted from the November 2001 issue of Minutiae Muse, published by the Los Angeles County Regional Identification System.)

Cogent Systems, Inc., is a world leader in the development of biometric identification technology. Founded in April 1990, the company is headquartered in South Pasadena, California. Its technology is currently in use in major automated fingerprint identification systems and palm print identification systems in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia.

Cogent's mission is to become the world's leading supplier of automated biometric identification systems by ensuring that its technology remains at the forefront of this steadily growing industry. In this context, Cogent strives to advance the state of the art in biometric accuracy and performance and to provide cost-effective solutions to customer requirements. A key corporate value is a commitment to understanding and meeting customer needs. This means that they work in partnership with their customers to deliver solutions that meet or exceed their mission requirements. It also means that they provide exceptional support for each system they deliver, taking into consideration each customer's evolving operational needs. Most importantly, they strive to protect their customer's financial investment by providing systems flexible enough to accommodate changing user needs and advances in hardware and software technology. In this way, they minimize the risk of early obsolescence and maximize the value of each dollar invested in their technology. As current customers can attest, their systems are designed to provide technical migration paths to allow their customers to cost-effectively expand their systems and upgrade to new technology as their needs evolve.

[Editor--It should be noted that this will probably be the world's first 1000 dpi AFIS. It will also include palmprints. Features such as multiple generations of exemplars and many other latent print oriented search features were included in the design. Obviously, the latent print examiners in Los Angeles County have been pleased with this announcement.]

Fingerprints on the Ropes?

(This article is reprinted from the October 2001 issue of Law Enforcement Technology.)

by **ALAN MCROBERTS**

The most accepted form of physical evidence is under attack. In 1996, Professor James Starrs proclaimed that “fingerprint identifications are worse than on the ropes. They are down and verging on being counted out.” The professor at the George Washington University National Law Center and senior editor for “Scientific Sleuthing Review” wrote this in “Forensic Science on the Ropes: Procellous Times in the Citadels of Infallibility, An Upper Cut to Fingerprinting,” “Scientific Sleuthing Review,” Volume 20, No. 4. His supposedly unbiased critical review was the predecessor of many public attacks on fingerprints. These attacks have raised concerns among the rank and file, as well as in top levels of law enforcement. Magazines (“Lingua Franca,” “New Scientist,” “California Lawyer”), newspapers (“New York Times,” “Los Angeles Times” and many others), national television (ABC news) and online media (ABCnews.com) have had stories with titles such as “The Myth of Fingerprints,” “Identity Crisis,” “Smudged Prints, Experts Question the Authority of Fingerprint Analysis” and “Fingerprinting’s Reliability Draws Growing Court Challenges” to question the applications of this century old science.

A few academic types have attempted to use changes in the Federal Rules of Evidence to raise issues about the reliability of fingerprints as evidence. In the last two years, more than a dozen motions to suppress fingerprint evidence were filed. In each instance, the court either denied the motion or heard the motion and dismissed it upon the completion of a hearing. A significant written opinion was published last year. In *United States vs. Wade M. Havvard*, Southern District of Indiana, the Honorable David F. Hamilton, in a written opinion, stated, the “explanation makes sense, and the court credits it....The court is satisfied that latent print identification easily satisfies the standards of reliability in *Daubert* and *Kumho Tire*. In fact, after going through this analysis, the court believes that latent print identification is the very archetype of reliable expert testimony under those standards.” On July 18 the United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, upheld the opinion. While

the courts have repeatedly allowed and upheld the use of fingerprints, the critics have succeeded in bringing challenging new lines of questioning and cross examination to the latent print examiner and have raised the bar for the acceptability of fingerprint evidence. Some of the issues have related to methodology and standards.

During the last quarter century, specific trends have matured in forensic science. Examiner certification, laboratory accreditation and consensus standards have emerged as necessities for progressive law enforcement laboratories. The development of consensus standards, which supported the use of DNA evidence in the courts, was successful. These standards were developed by the Scientific Working Group on DNA Analysis Methods (SWGAM), sponsored by the FBI. (The general public became aware of SWGAM during the public viewing of testimony discussing blood evidence in the O.J. Simpson trial).

SWGFAST objectives

With SWGAM’s success, the FBI recognized the benefit of scientific working groups and the need to develop “consensus standards” for various forensic disciplines. In 1995, the FBI hosted a group of latent print examiners at the FBI academy to discuss developing consensus standards which would preserve and improve the quality of service provided by the latent print community. The resulting working group evolved and is now known as the Scientific Working Group on Friction Ridge Analysis, Study and Technology (SWGFAST). It patterned itself after SWGAM and proceeded to prepare guidelines to provide guidance for the use of fingerprints.

At the International Association for Identification’s (IAI) 85th annual conference held recently in Miami, Florida, a member of the audience commented that she had been asked in court about SWGFAST and if she was familiar with the guidelines. Preserving and improving the quality of public service should be a concern for all professionals. It is in the best interest of the science that latent print examiners are acquainted with and embrace the goals and objectives of SWGFAST.

SWGFAST members are actively involved in the field of friction ridge examination. They represent the fingerprint community at large with a balance of members from the private sector and twenty-five North American law enforcement agencies. The members bring diverse perspectives from local, state, and federal agencies, but the common goal to preserve and improve the quality of service brings this group of dedicated professionals together as a team. In the initial meetings, the following objectives were established:

- To establish guidelines for the development and enhancement of friction ridge examiners' knowledge, skills and abilities.
- To discuss and share friction ridge examination methods and protocols.
- To encourage and evaluate research and innovative technology related to friction ridge examination.
- To establish and disseminate guidelines for quality assurance and quality control.
- To cooperate with other national and international organizations in developing standards.
- To disseminate SWGFAST studies, guidelines and findings.

While the FBI receives credit for sponsoring SWGFAST, and a number of other similar scientific working groups, it would be a mistake to say that the group functions as an FBI committee for the benefit of the FBI. The FBI profits the same as any other law enforcement agency that embraces the guidelines produced by SWGFAST. Their policies and procedures are consistent with consensus standards and industry norms. The guidelines provide common goals for training and quality assurance issues. Professional standards, such as latent print identifications requiring a verification by a qualified second examiner, are issues which the courts rely on when faced with defense motions challenging the validity of the science. While SWGFAST has a limit of 40 members, it solicits input from any interested party. All guidelines are produced as "drafts for comments." These drafts are then published in the official publication of the International Association for Identification (the world's largest organization representing the identification community). The drafts for comment and finalized drafts are also available on the Internet at www.swgfast.org and other web sites. They are freely distributed to local fingerprint organizations and interested parties. Discussions and presentations are encouraged in professional meetings such as the I.A.I.'s 85th annual seminar. Constructive feedback is solicited and appreciated.

Guidelines available

Currently, SWGFAST has seven completed documents available as guidelines for any law enforcement agency or private entity to use. These documents provide basic concepts and guidelines for agencies to apply to their individual situations. Many of the concepts reflect the current trends in forensic science, i.e., proficiency testing, proper note taking, etc. These documents are not meant to supplant existing agency proce-

dures, but to provide support and guidance for agencies needing to establish or revise their operations. The documents are:

- Guidelines for Professional Conduct
- Minimum Qualifications for Latent Print Examiner Trainees
- Training to Competency for Latent Print Examiners
- Quality Assurance Guidelines for Latent Print Examiners
- Validation of Research and Technology
- Friction Ridge Automation Training Guidelines
- Friction Ridge Digital Imaging Guidelines

Current projects include completing a glossary, developing friction ridge identification standards, and establishing a liaison with a new European Fingerprint Working Group.

The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors – Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB) has established many beneficial standards for the 200 plus accredited laboratories. SWGFAST is attempting to provide specific guidance related to fingerprints for both the accredited laboratories and the latent print sections within the thousands of law enforcement agencies that will never have an accredited crime laboratory.

*Deputy Alan McRoberts is a **retired** thirty year veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (California) and currently serves as chairperson for the Scientific Working Group on Friction Ridge Analysis, Study and Technology. Additional information is available at www.swgfast.org.*

Detection Of Fraudulent Fingerprints

(This article is reprinted from the fall 2001 issue of Examiner, published by the PNWD/IAI.)

By **GARY L. JOHANSEN**
Salt Lake City Police Department

All latent fingerprint examiners throughout the United States are taught, or should be taught early in their training, that latent fingerprint identification is the only exact forensic science. As with any science, the research, documentation, experimentation, and testimony to the validity of that science can, and has been, skewed by people associated with that science, by fraudulently reporting or altering results of experimentation.

While doing research for material to support this project, it was noted that actually very little on the topic has been recorded. Though articles are written about fraudulent, false, fake, forged latent fingerprints, the authors appear to agree that few latent fingerprints are actually forged, but that several instances are confirmed that latent fingerprints are fabricated by personnel in the law enforcement field as a means to "solve" or further a particular case they are involved in.

George C. Bonebreak, former Supervisor of the Latent Fingerprint Section of the FBI, in his address to the 61st Annual Conference, International Association for Identification, held in Asheville, NC, provided two distinct categories of fraudulent latent fingerprints. The first is a forged fingerprint, and the second, a fabricated fingerprint.

Forged fingerprints, according to Mr. Bonebreak, "...has the connotation of an individual committing a crime and then 'planting' the fingerprint of an innocent party to implicate a second individual in the crime."

Fabricated fingerprints, by definition as interpreted from Mr. Bonebreak's presentation by Pat A. Wertheim, Director of Training, Forensic Identification Training Seminars, Ltd., are "a representation of a print that never existed on the surface from which it purportedly came."

Both experts cited above agree that fabrications are far more evident and used in cases submitted for comparison than are forged fingerprints. As a matter of fact, neither expert recalls ever having seen an instance of forged fingerprints. As Mr. Wertheim stated, "...forgery of latent print evidence is virtually nonexistent."

Based on the above, it is highly unlikely that an individual committing a criminal act would fabricate any latent fingerprint evidence. This only leaves the fabrication, then, to dishonest police employees in order to frame someone or to gain notoriety for solving the crime of the century, the reason presumed, stemming from an emotional outburst of frustration at not being able to solve the case by conventional means of fingerprint identification or other evidence.

Since it is most likely that criminal types in our country continuously make attempts to deceive the investigators or throw them off the track so the criminal can pull off the perfect crime, the two terms defined by Mr. Bonebreak and Mr. Wertheim are not all encompassing. Therefore, I choose to utilize the term "fraudulent latent fingerprint" as a more logical explanation of the deceitful tactics perpetrated by not only police personnel, but by the criminal element as well.

Webster's defines fraudulent as the act of fraud which is an act, omission of act or anything meant to deceive. Attempting to alter the friction ridge characteristics or fingerprint pattern in such a manner as to preclude comparison and/or identification of a given latent fingerprint left at a crime scene is to attempt deception. We in the science are somewhat fortunate, however, in that the criminal element does not possess sufficient information about fingerprints and the identification of those prints to completely deceive the identification technician. Often they, the criminals, only alter the center or "core" of the fingerprint and not the surrounding friction ridge detail.

A recent case worked by the Salt Lake City Police Crime Lab, Salt Lake City, Utah, revealed a distinctively different method of altering or creating a fraudulent fingerprint. The case involved the cashing of counterfeit payroll checks. Vietnamese arriving in California would pick up the counterfeit checks, obtain a rental vehicle rented by a female with a New Jersey address, then disperse throughout several western states to cash the checks. Banks and stores that cash payroll checks in Utah, for some time, have required the placement of an inked plain impression fingerprint on the check, especially if one does not have an account at that particular bank. Some of the fingerprints obviously were placed on the checks after the introduction of a foreign substance to the center of the finger prior to inking. It was suspected the substance utilized was super glue or another substance designed to partially or totally fill the furrows between the ridges. Of twenty-one separate checks submitted for comparison, only three identifications were affected. One check contained an inked plain impression fingerprint that, on first examination, appeared to be a "double tap" of placing the finger on the paper, picking it up and placing it down again, but not in exactly the same position. This is commonly called in latent print examiner terminology an "overlay print". A second fingerprint also contained the same characteristics as the one described above.

This author was the primary technician assigned to the case, with Crime Lab Technician II Karen Kido as the verifying technician. When the initial comparison was made, the suspect inked fingerprint card and the check were given to Technician

Kido for her opinion. It was a difficult print to compare, but one thing caught our trained eyes that we questioned. Along the left side of the print was a thin inked line, which resembled a Xerox line from a cut-out piece of paper. Initially, it was thought to have been a latex type material made from a mold of a fingerprint and slipped over the finger. Further examination, computerized enhancement, tracing, and eventually AFIS entry, resulted in the identification of an individual who was not the primary suspect. It was not until a concerted effort and the arrest of two members of this check-cashing scheme in Arizona that we were able to determine how the suspects made the questioned print on the check. It is manufactured by placing a thin coating of clear fingernail polish on the index finger (the finger most commonly used by banks for putting an inked print on the check). Once the polish begins to dry and is still somewhat tacky, another individual places his or her finger against the coated finger, creating a reversed print over the ridge lines of the primary finger. Because of the tackiness, some polish is lifted from the primary finger, thereby allowing ridge lines of the primary finger to be exposed and, when inked, appear on the transfer medium, thus causing the appearance of the overlay print; however, the fraudulent print now appears as both a position and color reversal.

Far too often, when given latent fingerprints to examine, latent print examiners want to make the identification to the extent they allow their emotions to interfere with the exactness of the science. This could account, then, for an erroneous identification, which hopefully is exposed by a verifying technician or supervisor, so that corrections can be made before the report is generated. But just how do technicians, working in understaffed, limited-budget laboratories, with only basic processing techniques available, identify when they are examining a fraudulent latent print?

Technicians need to be aware that the criminal element in our society is usually trying to deceive the law enforcement community, so they can “get by with the crime” they are committing. In a murder trial in Stillwater, Oklahoma, photographs of fingerprints found on pieces of duct tape used to bind the victim were introduced. Defense attorneys alleged that the prints could have been faked or planted by one of seven techniques that have been identified for creating false evidence. The article in the Globe newspaper does not expound on what these seven techniques are, but obviously is alluding to types of techniques, and not individual ways of creating false fingerprint evidence. This author strongly believes that the number of ways to deceive are only left up to the imagination and ingenuity of the individual producing such evidence. Andre A. Moenssens, one of two fingerprint experts to testify in the Richard Speck murder trial, did extensive research into the subject of forged fingerprints and concluded there were three types of so called forgeries. The three types he wrote about are “the stamped print, which is a replication of a fingerprint by a rubber stamp, cast, molding, plate, or die; the transferred print, which is a true perspiration latent lifted from one place and transferred to another where it is left to be discovered as if the latter surface had been touched by the finger leaving the impression; and the transferred powdered lift, which is a

latent developed with powder on one surface, then lifted with Scotch tape and the tape placed onto another incriminating surface.”

Moenssens goes on to state that stamped fingerprints are relatively easy to spot because rubber stamps will likely show uneven, ragged detail. The second method described by Moenssens is more difficult to detect and the third method almost impossible to detect unless certain protocol in developing, lifting, and preserving latent prints is closely adhered to. Bearing this in mind, the technician needs to be suspicious of any latent print that gives the appearance of an abnormality, such as friction ridges that do not seem to match other ridge detail in the print. Awareness of the presence of, or lack of, frequency noise from the item the print was allegedly developed and lifted from, but does not have the same frequency noise that should be present and possibly from the “perfect” latent print found at the scene from an item that was not submitted for laboratory processing should also stir suspicions. This is not to say the technician needs to be suspicious of every latent print that comes across his or her desk for comparison, but only those that tend to appear abnormal.

When a latent print is suspected, it is then that the latent print examiner must consider Level III examination, if not already being done, microscopic examination for frequency noise and/or the presence of foreign material that should not be present, questioning of the individual who developed and lifted the print, obtaining and examining the item the latent print purportedly came from, and possibly contacting other personnel in the science of fingerprints to examine and render an opinion.

Other methods of detection that need consideration are the quality of the print, the relative position of the latent on an item at the scene, position and color reversal, foreign substances or particles on the tape containing the latent print that would normally not be on surface where the latent was located, more than one latent lifted of the same finger that are identical in shape and ridge area, and presence of adhesives on the area where a print was transferred to, among others.

Latent print examiners should make every attempt to peruse as many articles and texts to familiarize themselves with fraudulent latent fingerprints. Experiments should also be conducted in the attempt to recreate fingerprints by various means, so the examiner would be familiar with the three types of forgeries discussed by Moenssens. Since your credibility is on the line every day that you, as a latent print examiner in the science of fingerprints, make comparisons and identifications, you need to make every effort to ensure that if you encounter an abnormal latent print (one that you did not develop and lift), you take every step necessary to call it what it is.

President's Message

It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve as SCAFO's President for 2002. I hope that everyone had a joyous Christmas and a safe New Year. The tragic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have changed all of our lives in one way or another. It has also affected SCAFO in several ways. First, I was elected to the office of President a year early and George Durgin, 1st Vice President, will continue in 2002 as 1st Vice President. George is in the Army Reserves and was called to active duty. By the time this issue is printed, George should be at the American Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. George, we wish you the best. Keep safe and we hope to see you return soon to SCAFO and the good ol' U.S.A. Second, as you all know, we had to cancel our 2001 Seminar. Things can only get better in 2002 for all of us.

I would like to thank the 2001 Executive Board and President Bob Goss for all of the hard work they did in 2001, and I welcome the new Board Members, Tom Washington and Gina Durgin.

The December meeting was attended by approximately 70 members. The meeting took place at Portofino Ristorante Italiano in La Habra. The food was excellent and I think everyone had a great time. We had our Historian, Bill Leo, give a brief power point presentation on SCAFO's history. We also had some entertainment this year. "The Jingle Singers" sang Christmas carols in "Dickens" style costumes. I don't think anyone will soon forget our membership joining them in a special rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas".

I am looking forward to the upcoming year and to putting on our annual training seminar in September. The board will meet in January to begin work on this year's seminar and to plan the meetings for the upcoming year. I would encourage everyone to submit suggestions for this year's seminar or any topic for a meeting. Just contact any board member at anytime or e-mail your suggestions to any board member. The organization is only as good as its members and we need all of you to be involved. I would also ask that you consider running for a board position later this year.

Fraternally,

Steven Tillmann

Message From The Chairman of the Board

2001 has come to a close and another chapter has been added to the history of the Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers. My hope is that you all will enjoy a prosperous and fulfilling New Year.

The Business Meeting/Executive Board Installation on December 15th was a very memorable and special event. Incoming President Steve Tillmann selected an excellent restaurant and Historian Bill Leo did a great job in his power point presentation about the history of SCAFO. What came as a surprise was learning that Bill was a stand-in for the movie "The Man Who Shagged Me." Trust me, you had to be there to understand the slide of Bill.

Congratulations and good luck to the 2002 Executive Board under the leadership of President Steve Tillmann. I know Steve will do an excellent job, as he has strong support from the board and the members of SCAFO. Also, welcome to new directors Gina Russell and Tom Washington. Outgoing Sergeant-At-Arms Marvin Spreyne and Director Rodrigo Viesca, although no longer on the board, will remain valuable assets to our organization.

I would like to thank all of you, executive board and members alike, for the support you have given me as president in 2001. We were able to clear up some minor concerns and make major changes this past year. I could not have done this without a lot of support and suggestions from the board and members. I would like to thank Chairman of the Board Art Coleman. His insight, suggestions, and ability to allow me to use him as a sounding board made my job a lot easier than I thought it would be. Officers of the executive board were always available and willing to offer assistance, suggestions, and support when I needed to make important and necessary changes or decisions that directly affected SCAFO.

It seems that one member was at the forefront in keeping me abreast of changes in our science, pending legislation, and ongoing business of SCAFO. Tom Jones, during my year as president, has challenged, supported, and counseled me. He was a very valued asset this past year.

A very special "Thank You" goes out to the wives, husbands, and significant others who support us as we put our time and energy into something we really enjoy and endeavor to improve.

In closing, let us not forget those who have gone, are going, or will be going in harm's way to protect us and preserve our way of living. Looking forward to seeing you at future meetings.

Fraternally,

Bob Goss

MINUTES OF MEETING

DATE: Saturday, Dec. 15, 2001
LOCATION: Portofino Ristorante Italiano, La Habra
HOST: Steven Tillmann, Second Vice President
SECRETARY: Ed Palma
SPEAKER: None
PROGRAM: Christmas Carolers
Installation 2002 Executive Board

Call to Order at 2130 hours (9:30 P.M.) by President Bob Goss

ATTENDANCE: Past Presidents - Dell Freeman (1973), Alan McRoberts (1991), Jim Lawson (1995), Bill Leo (1996), Tom Lapisto (1999), Art Coleman (2000). Executive Board - All present except George Durgin, Clint Fullen, and Rodrigo Viesca. Members and guests present - 69.

GIFTS: Provided by Bob Goss, Steve Tillmann, Rachel Leo, Bill Leo, and Tony Clark-Stewart

OLD BUSINESS:

Second Reading:

Heather Wigington, Student (Associate)
Motion to Accept: Bill Leo
Second: Alan McRoberts

Swear-Ins:

by Past President Bill Leo
Gil Trujillo, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (Active)
Teri L. Ekland, San Diego Sheriff's Department (Active)
Kia S. Wong, Los Angeles Police Department (Active)

NEW BUSINESS:

First Readings for Active Membership:

Shawn P. Stalker, San Diego Sheriff's Dept.
Recommended by Lynn Collins, S.D.S.D.
Carynn Terrill, Buena Park Police Dept.
Recommended by Mariah O'Donnell, B.P.P.D.

First Readings for Associate Membership:

Valeri R. Dedich, Student
Pamela Towner, L.A. City Airport Police
Recommended by Steve Tillmann, L.A.S.D.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Tony Clark-Stewart announced that registration applications for the California State Division 86th Annual Education Seminar are available. For further information about CSDIAI, visit their website (www.csdi.ai.net).

Tom Lapisto announced that Los Angeles County has selected Cogent System's Automated Identification System as their AFIS vender.

Attendance Drawing: Not won by Bettie Cringle, Carlton Fuller, or John Mc Donnell. No Winners: cash amount still \$50.00!

Door Prizes won by 20 members and guests in attendance.

Motion to Adjourn by: Susan Garcia
Seconded by: Dell Freeman.

Meeting Adjourned at 2230 hours (10:30 P.M.)

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- President Theodore Roosevelt, 1908

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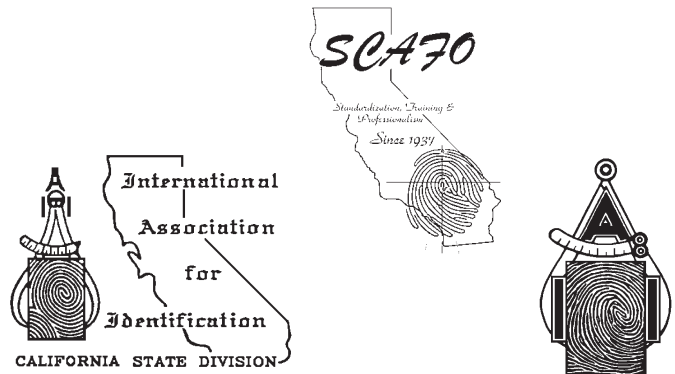
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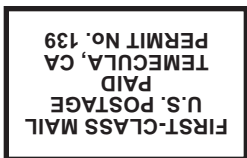
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SCAFO Members
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See instructions on the
website's email page.

-- Upcoming Events/Schools/Seminars--

- January 28 - February 1, 2002 Bloodstain Pattern Interpretation
Scottsdale, AZ
I.A.I. Training
- February 26, 2002 *S.C.A.F.O. Meeting*
Bill Leo
Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
- March 20-22, 2002 Basic Fingerprint Comparison
Scottsdale, AZ
I.A.I. Training
- April 7 - 11, 2002 C.S.D.I.A.I.
Monterey, CA
Host Tony Clark-Stewart
- May 20-24, 2002 Fingerprint Pattern, Interpretation and Identification
Scottsdale, AZ
I.A.I. Training
- August 4 - 10, 2002 International Association for Identification
Las Vegas, Nevada
- July 6 - 11, 2003 International Association for Identification
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers
An Association for Scientific Investigation and Identification Since 1937