

International Association for Identification



September, 2009 – IAI Monthly Update

FYI, this update is sent each month to all IAI board members, officers, committee chairs, regional representatives, division secretaries, certification board chairs and secretaries, division editors and IAI staff. This update contains information that is of particular interest to these groups. It is also available on the “Members’ Area” of the IAI’s website. Please see the last page of *Identification News* for login and password information.

Hello again from the IAI office.

Tampa Conference

The 94th Annual International Conference is now history and will be remembered as one of the best. With 137 lecture sessions and 125 hands-on workshops, attendees were treated to an unparalleled educational experience. There was something for everyone. The session dealing with the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences was very interesting, informative and to some, controversial but the views expressed are reflective of where the forensic sciences are headed.

We thank outgoing board members Ken Martin, Mike Campbell and John Kilgore for their dedication of time and talent to the board and welcome newly elected board members Koren Colbert, Laura Hutchins and Ken Blue. We congratulate Vici Inlow as she assumes the position of President and also Lesley Hammer, the newly elected Fourth Vice-President of the IAI. We look forward to working with the new board during the upcoming year.

Some highlights from the board of director’s meeting include:

- Approved a change in the investment management firm handling the IAI’s investments
- Awarded Distinguished Membership status to Lesley Hammer and Joseph Polski
- Received a report from Ron Smith, Chair of the Standardization II Committee noting that the work of the committee is approximately 75% complete.
- Approved a name change for the AFIS Committee to the Biometric Information Systems Committee; this to enlarge the scope of the committee to include systems such as iris and facial recognition

A couple of other items are of particular note.

The requirements for Active Membership were modified to remove the requirement that applicants be government employees. For many years, only those who received the salary from a government agency could qualify for Active Membership. Today, there are many forensic practitioners performing analyses in private laboratories or working for companies that supply contract forensic services to the government. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and

the Department of Defense (DoD) are among the largest users of such contractors. In many cases, the individuals performing that work are at least as qualified in their disciplines as those who work in government agencies. The board endorsed and the membership ratified a by-law change removing the above requirement. This will open Active Membership to many individuals who previously would have to apply as Associate Members.

ATTN: Regional Representatives and Discipline Sub-Committee Chairs

The above change will have a major effect on those who must approve membership applications: the discipline sub-committee chairs and the regional representatives. Because government agencies typically require job applicants to undergo a fairly rigorous background investigation, the IAI often relied on that hiring check when considering approval of the applicant. Because the association will now accept Active Membership applications from those outside government, it will be incumbent on those who approve memberships to ensure the applicant is indeed qualified for Active status and does not want to simply credentialize themselves through IAI membership. If anyone has questions regarding approval of membership applications, or this new change, please contact the IAI office.

Certification Program Information

During the Tampa Conference, the Board of Directors endorsed several changes to certification board policies that will affect all boards. All IAI certifications are for five years with a one year “grace period” at the end of those five years during which time certificants may apply for recertification. Certification is technically lapsed during that one year period and if the individual recertifies, the date of recertification is retroactive to the date of expiration.

The board directed the Certification Quality Assurance Committee to make appropriate changes to the Certification Board Policy Manual eliminating that one year grace period. In its place will be a 90 day grace period during which time the applicant may apply for recertification but a service charge of \$50 will be added to the normal recertification fee of \$150. This will take effect after the appropriate changes have been made to the policy manual. In addition, those whose certifications are nearing expiration will be notified approximately one year before that expiration in order to provide ample time to prepare the documents and other materials required for recertification.

Another important change to certification policy will primarily affect those certified in the Crime Scene Program, the Latent Print Program and perhaps a few in the Footwear Program.

In order to meet the standards of the Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB) no grandfathered certificants may be recertified unless they take the current test for the certification level held. There are number of individuals in the Crime Scene and Latent Print programs that are grandfathered. Those individuals will not be allowed to recertify unless they take the examination now in place for their respective certification. Both the Latent Print and Crime Scene programs have a recertification proficiency test in place but that is not what the recertification applicant will need to take. To summarize, any grandfathered individuals who are currently certified will not be able to recertify unless they take the current test for certification. In the case of Crime Scene, that means the test for their respective level of certification.

Brian Rose Fingerprint Identification Case

In 2007, Baltimore County Circuit Court Judge Susan Souder made waves nationwide when she ruled in the homicide case involving Brian Rose that a common technique for fingerprint analysis

was not reliable enough to use at trial. Following her decision, the Baltimore County State's Attorney dropped the charges against Rose and the U.S. Attorney charged him federally.

Yesterday I received the following e-mail from Jack Purcell, the assistant US attorney who prosecuted this case federally:

I am the AUSA in US v Brian Rose, CCB 08 049, a carjacking/murder case. On 9/8/09 the US district court granted the government's motion to allow admission of fingerprint evidence w/o a Daubert hearing. This fingerprint evidence had previously been excluded by a state judge in Baltimore County, MD. Please call with any questions.

This is yet another victory for fingerprint identification and we congratulate Mr. Purcell for his hard work in this matter.

Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing

On September 9th, a hearing regarding the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences forensic committee was held in Washington, DC. The CFSO was represented as well as the law enforcement community, the Innocence Project etc.

The hearing where the CFSO and law enforcement concerns were brought to the attention of the committee went very well. The hearing is available by webcast at: <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

As always, don't hesitate to contact this office if you have any questions.

Joe Polski