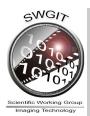## Disclaimer:

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Section 6

Guidelines and Recommendations for Training in Imaging Technology in the Criminal Justice System

Objective

The scope of this document is to provide personnel or laboratories with guidance regarding imaging training in disciplines that are not performing Image Analysis or Video Analysis. Information for personnel or laboratories conducting, Image Analysis and Video Analysis should refer to the SWGDE/SWGIT "*Guidelines & Recommendations for Training in Digital & Multimedia Evidence.*"

The consistent and reliable use of silver-based, video, and digital imaging technologies in the criminal justice system requires the competent and appropriate training of personnel. The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines and recommendations for such training.

It should be recognized that some agencies may choose to provide training other than what is recommended in this section. In such circumstances, those agencies should demonstrate and document that the training selected is adequate to meet their anticipated needs.

Introduction

Personnel in the criminal justice system who work with images must be aware of the capabilities and limitations of specific imaging technologies. Those engaged in the production or the use of images should be aware of the procedures commonly followed within the law enforcement community and should strive to meet or exceed these recommendations. In support of these goals, the following recommendations are offered to personnel engaged in the production of images:

> ➢ Maintain awareness of new developments.

> ➢ Define and employ quality assurance programs to ensure the implementation of valid and reliable procedures for the task.

> ➢ Pursue continuing education courses in imaging technology.

> ➢ Maintain awareness of legal developments relating to the use of imaging technologies in the criminal justice system.

Definitions of Categories

Several categories of imaging technology training relevant to the criminal justice system as well as the categories of the system users who would benefit from the training are identified and defined as follows:

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Categories of Training

➢ Awareness: Training designed to provide the non-imaging personnel who utilize images (e.g. lawyers, judges, and managers) with a general knowledge of the major elements of a given imaging technology including specific product capabilities.

➢ Skills and techniques: Training designed to provide competency in specific imaging equipment, as defined by their job requirements.

➢ Knowledge of processes and relationships: Training designed to provide the individual with an understanding of imaging technology and the ability to apply that technology to various applications as defined by their job requirements.

➢ Court procedures: witness testimony: Training designed to provide the individual with the ability to present reliable imaging technology based testimony in court.

➢ Court procedures: case preparation: Training designed to provide the individual with the ability to prepare and review accurate and reliable imaging technology based evidence.

➢ Continuing education: Training designed to provide the individual with additional and updated training in imaging technologies as defined by their job requirements.

Categories of Users

➢ Management: Includes personnel who are responsible for setting agency policies and/or making budget decisions

➢ Command/Supervision: Includes personnel who supervise and/or direct personnel engaged in the use of imaging technology

➢ Law Enforcement Officer: Includes personnel who use imaging technology as a minor component of their routine duties. If the person is routinely involved in the basic photographic documentation of crime scenes, then this person would fall into the crime scene technician category

➢ Crime Scene Technician/Investigator: Includes personnel for whom imaging is a major component of their routine duties.

➢ Photographer/Videographer: Includes personnel for whom imaging is the major component of their routine duties

➢ Lawyer: Includes prosecutors and defense attorneys

➢ Judge: Includes personnel who are responsible for the acceptance or rejection of imaging technology-based evidence in court proceedings

- ➢ Legal Assistant: Includes personnel who are responsible for preparing materials that will be offered in court proceedings

- ➢ Trainer: Includes personnel who are responsible for providing instruction to others in imaging technology-related areas

Recommended Training Levels

The level of training appropriate for any given position should be determined by the particular agency. In some instances, for instance, a managerial position may require only familiarity with the processes involved, while in others, managers who make tactical decisions may need practical proficiency. An examiner would need to demonstrate competency in the area of his or her duties, but a general knowledge of areas that do not directly impinge upon his or her area of expertise. Training should include continuing education to maintain currency.

Topical Areas for Focused Training

The following section delineates specific topical areas in which user groups should receive focused training to effectively fulfill their imaging technology related duties.

Managers, Commanders/Supervisors, Lawyers, and Judges (awareness and issues training)

- ➢ Status of imaging technology

  - ➢ Legal issues

  - ➢ Extent of use and who are the users

  - ➢ Industry and market trends

- ➢ Description of current technologies

  - ➢ Overview of digital imaging

  - ➢ Overview of video imaging (analog and digital)

  - ➢ Life cycle-cost comparisons and limitations

- ➢ Strategic alternatives for the agency

  - ➢ Determination of imaging needs

  - ➢ Sequence of equipment/software acquisitions

  - ➢ Actions to avoid or lessons learned

  - ➢ References/information sources

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Legal Assistants (basic levels of skill for recording images)

- ➢ Working knowledge of the basic fundamentals of photography and/or videography

- ➢ Working knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of equipment

- ➢ Selection and operation of the appropriate cameras (digital, video, or film) and accessories

- ➢ Preparation of court presentations including images

Law Enforcement Officers (first responder)

- ➢ Operation of cameras with an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the equipment assigned as a part of their routine duties

- ➢ Selection, framing, and composition of appropriate images

- ➢ Procedures for recording quality images in various situations

- ➢ Proper collection and preservation of the recording media
- ➢ Creation and maintenance of the chain of custody

Crime Scene Technicians

- ➢ Knowledge of, and experience in forensic photography techniques, such as

    - ➢ Retrieving impression evidence such as fingerprints and/or blood spatter

    - ➢ Selecting the appropriate media and equipment based on knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of the various aspects of imaging

    - ➢ Solving difficult non-routine imaging problems

- ➢ Awareness of image processing options

- ➢ Videography techniques

- ➢ Knowledge of how to use the most common image processing tools and techniques

Trainers

- ➢ Classroom techniques

- ➢ Development of lesson plans

- ➢ Preparation of audio-visual materials

4 Recommendations for Training in Imaging Technologies in the Criminal Justice System

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➢ Development of student exercises

➢ Selection of text books and reference materials

➢ Development of course exams

➢ Development of proficiency exams

➢ Development of course evaluation processes

Areas to Consider When Addressing Training Needs
A number of issues should be considered when addressing an agency's training needs. The following section provides guidance for selecting training venues and addressing continuing education and testimony training needs.

On the Job Training
Experience is a critical training tool. Personnel who train under a competent practitioner gain valuable experience, as well as, knowledge and improved skills. However, managers should be aware that there is a potential limitation based on the trainer's knowledge of the state of the art and experience.

Continuing Education
Continuing education should be obtained annually from training conferences, trade shows, professional organizational memberships, professional publications, current literature and specialized courses. This training should address updates and the use of new technologies as it relates to:

➢ Hardware and equipment

➢ Software techniques

➢ Techniques, procedures and methods

Testimony Training
This training should include:

➢ Lecture-type presentation relevant to court testimony

➢ Moot court

➢ Court monitoring

Certifications
If applicable, a relevant test based certification can enhance the credibility of a witness.

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Higher Education

The possession and type of a degree may be dictated by the forensic discipline, the accreditation status of the agency, or the requirements of the agency.

Training Documentation

To demonstrate compliance with training:

> ➢ Develop a written training program.
>
> ➢ Provide a training syllabus.
>
> ➢ Document performance.
>
> ➢ Establish a formal means of recognition of successful completion of the training such as a certificate, letter, or memorandum.

The retention of training documentation is left to the discretion of the agency.

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Selecting a Training Provider

Course	Instructor	Equipment
Is a course outline provided?	What is the background and training of the instructor?	Does the training provider supply equipment for the training or must the students provide their own?
Is the course outline followed?	Is the training up to date? How has the instructor maintained proficiency in the field?	Is the course equipment offered by the provider sufficient to meet the agency's course objectives?
Does the course description include reference texts and other materials?	Can the instructor provide references?	Who provides the facilities, the agency or the training provider?
Does the trainer provide course evaluation forms, and are past evaluations available for review?	Is the training affiliated with professional, technical, or educational organizations?	Who provides the audio-visual equipment?
Is a course manual provided?	What is the instructor-to-student ratio?	Are course supplies provided by the training provider?
Does the provider offer certificates of completion?	What field expertise does the instructor have in the topical area?	
Can the course be customized to meet agency-specific needs?		
Does the class involve any testing?		
Are continuing education units offered?		
Can the training program travel or must the students travel to the instructor?		
For whom is the course intended?		
Course objectives		
Prerequisites		
Current courses		

Competency and Proficiency

Competency testing is designed to verify that an individual is able to conduct a specific task prior to its use in independent casework. Agency policy and user category determine which skills are required for competency.

Proficiency testing is the continual evaluation of agency personnel in the performance of tasks relating to their discipline.

Competency Testing

Competency testing can be conducted either at the end of training or in a modular format throughout the course of training.

> ➢ Required levels of skill and knowledge for a job category should be identified by the agency.

> ➢ A curriculum should be designed by the agency to provide the skills and information necessary for the agency's personnel to attain competency in those skills.

Proficiency Testing

Annual discipline specific proficiency testing is a means to confirm that a trained user is qualified to continue performing their assigned duties.

> ➢ This should be documented and confirmed with annual proficiency testing in the relevant subject matter.

> ➢ Discipline and job specific topics should be included in proficiency tests.

> ➢ There should be a mechanism for remediation if proficiency is not demonstrated.