



National Guidance for Streamlined Forensic Reporting



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Grey shaded sections will denote changes from previous version

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

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Streamlined Forensic Reporting (SFR) has been designed to enable investigators, scientists, prosecutors and the defence to comply with the Criminal Procedure Rules (CrimPR) in the interests of justice.

SFR is a revised case management procedure for producing forensic evidence at court, which seeks to reduce unnecessary costs and delay in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). The process takes a proportionate approach to forensic evidence through the early preparation of a short report that details the key forensic evidence upon which the prosecution intend to rely.

The primary purpose of robust pre-trial management is to narrow down the real issues, including those of a scientific nature, upon which the jury must decide.

The aim is to achieve early agreement with the defence, ideally at the first hearing, on forensic issues but where this cannot be achieved in the first instance, to identify the contested issues prior to trial.

This document provides practitioners in the CJS with National approved guidelines and practical advice on how to progress investigations and prosecutions involving forensic science, fairly and effectively throughout the SFR process. This is aimed to deliver proportional forensic evidence in accordance with the needs of each case.

1.2 ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

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Acronym	Terminology
AFSP	Association of Forensic Service Providers
CAI	Case Assessment and Interpretation
CAID	Child Abuse Image Database
CJA	Criminal Justice Act
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CJU	Criminal Justice Unit
CPIA	Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act
CPD	Criminal Practice Directions
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CrimPR	Criminal Procedure Rules
CSAM	Child Sexual Abuse Material
CSI	Crime Scene Investigation
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DTK	Drug Testing Kit
DTD	Drug Testing Device
EDIT	Evidential Drug Identification Testing
ENFSI	European Network of Forensic Science Institutes
ESD	Electrical Shock Device
EWCA	England and Wales Court of Appeal
EWHC	High Court of England and Wales
FCN	Forensic Capability Network
FDU	Fingerprint Development Unit

FEL	Fingerprint Examination Laboratory
FI	Fire Investigator
FINDS	The Forensic Information Databases Service
FMAT	Forensic Medical Advice Team
FSP	Forensic Service Providers
FSR	Forensic Science Regulator
GMC	General Medical Council
IDPC	Initial Details of the Prosecution Case
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
IIOC	Indecent and Prohibited Images of Children
ILAC	International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
[TEXT DELETED]	[TEXT DELETED]
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KIRAT	Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool
LR	Likelihood Ratio
MG(22)	Manual of Guidance
MSDS	Material Safety Data Sheet
NCA	National Crime Agency
OCF	Open Case File
OIC	Officer in the Case
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PET	Preparation for Effective Trial
PTPH	Pre-Trial Preparation Hearing
SCD	Suspected controlled drug
SFR	Streamlined Forensic Reporting
SGM	Second Generation Multiplex - A DNA test that targets 6 areas of DNA plus a gender marker
SGMPlus	Second Generation Multiplex Plus - A DNA test that 10 areas of DNA plus a gender marker
UKAS	United Kingdom Accreditation Service
UKIAFT	United Kingdom and Ireland Association of Forensic Toxicologists
Definitions	
Can	indicates a possibility or a capability
DNA17	A DNA test that targets 17 areas of DNA plus a gender marker
Friction Ridge Detail	Sometimes referred to as Fingerprints, the detail used for identification purposes, found on the fingers, palms and soles of the feet
May	indicates a permission
Shall	indicates a requirement
Should	indicates a recommendation
The Code	Forensic Science Regulator: Code of Practice
Full Statement	Refers to a s9 (Criminal Justice Act 1967) compliant witness statement which may be given in evidence, as an alternative to an SFR2. Often this is in the form of an MG11.

1.3 SFR GOVERNANCE

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The National SFR Board was established to implement SFR in England & Wales. The Board continues to provide a steer for national issues and consistency, and the development of SFR into new business areas and evidence types.

The Board has cross-agency input and support from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Operations Directorate and the Office of the Senior Presiding Judge. Included is representation from each of the Policing Regions, Forensic Service Providers, CPS, FINDS, the Judicial Office, Defence Instructed Representative and the Legal Aid Agency and reports into the NPCC Forensic Portfolio Board.

The Board is chaired by and has additional representation from the FCN Forensic Science Development Directorate, representatives from the Quality & Performance Directorate and FCN Support Services will attend as required.

In addition, each forensic discipline utilising the SFR process shall have an expert network with an appointed lead attending the Board; new expert networks will be established as part of the Extension to Scope principles.

The Governance Structure and Board membership is detailed in [Appendix A](#).

1.4 SFR OBJECTIVES

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The SFR objectives are:

- To identify the key issues in the case at the earliest opportunity and hence ensure forensic findings addressing these issues, and only these issues, are reported as soon as possible. This facilitates compliance with CrimPR 3.2 and 3.3, which set out the court case management requirements.
- To reduce unnecessary costs, bureaucracy and delays associated with forensic evidence where such evidence adds no value to the administration of justice.

1.5 CRIMINAL PROCEDURE RULES

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Part 1 of the CrimPR set out the overriding objective, which is that “Criminal cases be dealt with justly”. This includes:

- Acquitting the innocent and convicting the guilty.
- Treating all participants with politeness and respect
- Dealing with the prosecution and the defence fairly.
- Recognising the rights of a defendant, particularly those under Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Respecting the interests of witnesses, victims and jurors and keeping them informed of the progress of the case.
- Dealing with the case efficiently and expeditiously.
- Ensuring that appropriate information is available to the court when bail and sentence are considered.

- Dealing with the case in ways that take into account—
 - (i) the gravity of the offence alleged,
 - (ii) the complexity of what is in issue,
 - (iii) the severity of the consequences for the defendant and others affected, and
 - (iv) the needs of other cases.

Part 3.2 of CrimPR sets out the duty of the court to further the overriding objective by actively managing the case, which includes the following:

- The early identification of the real issues.
- Actively assisting in the management of the case without being asked (however at every hearing, including at trial, it is the responsibility of the Magistrate(s) or Judge to actively manage the case).
- The early identification of the needs of witnesses.
- Achieving certainty as to what must be done, by whom, and when, in particular by the early setting of a timetable for the progress of the case.
- Ensuring that evidence, whether disputed or not, is presented in the shortest and clearest way.
- Discouraging delay, dealing with as many aspects of the case as possible on the same occasion, and avoiding unnecessary hearings.
- Monitoring the progress of the case and compliance with directions
- Making use of technology.

Part 3.3 of The CrimPR sets out the duty of all parties to actively assist the court in fulfilling its duty under rule 3.2 which includes:

- Communication establishing, among other things, what is agreed and what is likely to be disputed.

1.6 SFR BENEFITS

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Effective use of SFR has benefits for all parties involved in the CJS, as described below:

- Supports criminal justice initiatives such as Better Case Management, Transforming Summary Justice, and Early Guilty Plea Scheme.
- Allows key forensic evidence to be presented in a streamlined format, which is consistent and easy to understand. Ensures that investigators have accurate, concise information sooner, to support investigations, exclude suspects, make arrests and conduct interviews.
- Presents forensic evidence in a format that facilitates early and informed charging decisions, serving of forensic evidence as part of the prosecution case, case management and the early identification of the real issues in the case.
- Provides information in a format which allows the defence to advise clients accordingly, facilitates agreement of the forensic evidence by way of Section 10 Criminal Justice Act 1967 admissions where applicable, and ensures the appropriate plea is entered at the first hearing.

- Provides an opportunity for early guilty plea where appropriate, resulting in fewer cases coming to trial unnecessarily, helping to ease the pressure of trial dates and associated costs and supports the concept of entering an early guilty plea in order to maximise sentence discount.
- Reduces the number of cases requiring additional forensic evidence, saving time and costs associated with gathering this evidence and enabling forensic science staff to concentrate on cases where there are real issues of dispute. This thereby reduces delays in obtaining additional forensic evidence in those circumstances where it is needed, thus reaching resolution of cases involving forensic evidence much quicker.
- Compatible with digital transmission within the CJS.

1.7 JUDICIAL SUPPORT

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The SFR process has had the full support of the Senior Presiding Judge for England and Wales and the senior judiciary since its introduction in 2012.

The words of support provided by the Senior Presiding Judge can be viewed on the Forensic Capability Network (FCN) website: <https://www.fcn.police.uk/what-we-do/sfr>

1.8 APPROVED FORENSIC EVIDENCE TYPES

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The SFR process is suitable for presenting both evidence of fact and evidence of opinion. Currently approved evidence types are as follows:

[Crime Scene Investigation](#)
[Mark Enhancement - Laboratory \(FDU/FEL\)](#)
[Friction Ridge Detail Comparison](#)
[National DNA Database Match Reports](#)
[Drugs](#)
[Footwear](#)
[Firearms Classification](#)
[Toxicology](#)
[Digital Forensics](#)
[Biology Casework](#)
[Questioned Documents](#)
[Medical SFR Services](#)
[Fire Investigation](#)
[Lachrymatory Substances](#)
[Noxious and Unknown Substances](#)
[EDIT](#)
[Fibres](#)
[CCTV Analysis for the Estimation of Subject Vehicle Speed in Forensic Collision Investigation](#)
[Ignitable Liquids / Fire Accelerants](#)
[Cell Site Analysis for Geolocation](#)

The National SFR Board do not endorse the use of SFR outside of the above specified list of approved disciplines. In addition, organisations should ensure that practitioners are competent and authorised to produce SFR Reports. Authorisation, based on organisational quality management

system processes, should follow training and assessment against objective competency criteria and be supported by evidence.

Consideration will be given to the extended use of SFR to other evidence types. A set of principles has been developed for stakeholders to ensure that, when the SFR process is extended beyond areas recognised as 'Business as Usual', it is done in a consistent and controlled manner, minimising any risk to the Criminal Justice System. Extensions are steered by the National SFR Board and should involve the creation of an 'expert network' made up of forensic practitioners from both commercial and public sector FSP, where appropriate. Consultation should also include CPS, the Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) and other specialist groups.

The principles for extension are as follows. Providers of forensic services (including Forces) will:

1. Ensure that any current SFR processes are demonstrably embedded before extending to other forensic evidence types. This should include, as a minimum, documented quality and performance monitoring and defined processes for the escalation and resolution of local issues through established tripartite working groups or effective lines of communication.
2. Engage with the National SFR Board when considering extension to their scope of SFR, to ensure a nationally coordinated approach is taken, potential risks are recognised and managed and to facilitate the sharing of lessons learned.
3. Undertake appropriate and effective engagement with stakeholders, involving them in proof-of-concept activities and understanding their requirements and impact on service delivery.
4. Produce case examples and SFR products for agreement locally and sharing nationally via the National SFR Board before extending into 'Business as Usual', which will then inform the National SFR Guidance document.
5. Benchmark existing processes so that the value of adopting SFR can be properly measured.

An 'Adoption Plan' aimed at guiding organisations through the required stages of applying for, piloting and gaining approval for, new disciplines is provided at [Appendix E](#). The National SFR Board will continue to engage and direct effective communications across all stakeholder groups, ensuring that the progression of SFR into new disciplines is supported.

Where providers of forensic services are considering an extension to scope that involves development of an existing forensic discipline (for example extension from simple drugs reporting into the complex drugs arena), they should consult the National SFR Board through <https://www.fcn.police.uk/contact> so that a nationally coordinated and consistent approach can be achieved.

1.9 TRAINING VIDEOS

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To assist users in understanding and complying with the SFR process, a series of training videos have been produced.

The first, intended for those new to the SFR process, provides an overview covering the initial sections of this guidance document.

The second, for practitioners producing SFRs, describes the circumstances of use (when, by whom and in what casework situations) of each of the SFR templates and the four SFR Annexes.

The third, for Investigators, Prosecutors, and the Defence details how SFRs should be used in complying with the SFR process and Criminal Procedure Rules. These videos can be found on the FCN Web Site [here](#).

1.10 MG22A FORENSIC INFORMATION REPORT

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A Forensic Information Report can be used to provide a progress report of initial findings that may help an enquiry, interview, strategy or charging decision. It can also be used to provide ongoing updates or provide details of planned work.

All wholly negative or neutral outcomes can also be reported using the MG22A. The MG22A is not intended to be used as part of prosecution evidence but will be available for investigating officers to make them aware of information that may be required for disclosure purposes. It should be noted that, on some occasions, the absence of forensic findings may be of significance to the investigation. If in doubt, practitioners should check the required format of report with the investigation or prosecution team. All findings of significance, including those that provide support for the defence version of events should be reported using the MG22B.

In circumstances where there are findings of significance, and the MG22B format is being used to report these, additional negative or neutral aspects of the same case can be included on the 'status' page.

Where the MG22A format is being used to provide regular progress updates in complex cases, it will often be necessary, at the conclusion of the forensic testing, to provide an overarching full statement which takes into consideration the forensic findings as a whole.

1.11 REQUESTS FOR AUTHORS OF MG22A TO GIVE EVIDENCE

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It is vital to note that the MG22A is not a witness statement; it is an information report and may be compiled by a person other than the one who undertook the forensic analysis. As such, the author of an MG22A should not be added to the trial list and/or warned to give evidence at court as a witness unless they are also the author of an MG22C/D (SFR2) or full statement.

In cases where the author of an MG22A has been warned as a trial witness, CPS should be made aware of this error at the earliest opportunity by submitting the appropriate 'Case Management Risk Form':

Case Management Risk Forms can be found on the SFR Template page [here](#).

1.12 THE SFR STAGE 1 (SFR1) PROCESS

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The MG22B (SFR1) report is a summary of the forensic findings and is neither a witness statement nor an expert's report of a type that needs to comply with CrimPR 19.4. However, where applicable, it can be used to inform charging decisions and for court case management hearings.

The MG22B (SFR1) should use **clear, succinct language** that enables the parties to understand the significance of the findings. If there is more than one type of forensic evidence being reported e.g., friction ridge detail comparison and DNA, a separate MG22B (SFR1) report may be

completed for each type of evidence, as well as each defendant. This allows for multiple evidence types/defendants to be agreed/disputed independently.

It is recommended that any activity level conclusion, which has taken into account any, or all exhibits examined in the case, should be put in a separate paragraph within the results section to the source or sub-source level conclusion(s) (e.g., the DNA match information). This not only ensures clarity for the reader but allows for a source level conclusion to be admitted as fact, and the interpretation of those findings to be challenged. The FSR recognises this as good reporting practice from a CAI perspective¹

If possible and to ensure that the case is prepared for trial without undue delay, the MG22B (SFR1) should be served by the prosecution as part of the Initial Details of the Prosecution Case (IDPC) at the first hearing in the Magistrates Court and/or when serving its case in the Crown Court.

Once the prosecution states its intention to rely on the result of the analysis set out in the MG22B (SFR1), there is a requirement on the Defence to comply with their duties under CrimPR 3.2(a); to identify the issues in the case as early as possible.

There are only two possible responses required of the Defence when it is provided with the MG22B (SFR1):

- That the Defence respond within 10 working days, or as soon as is reasonably practicable (for example at a case management hearing), by identifying the issues, thus instigating production of an MG22C/D (SFR2) by the prosecution team, which should be in Section 9 Criminal Justice Act 1967 format.
- That the defence sign (or provide written agreement that they will sign) an admission pursuant to Section 10 Criminal Justice Act 1967 to the general effect that the exhibit/s listed were forensically examined and the examination produced the results / opinions described therein.

Where a case has been sent to the Crown Court pursuant to Section 51 Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Regulation 2 of the Crime and Disorder Act (Service of Prosecution Evidence) Regulations 2005 provides that copies of documents containing the evidence upon which the charges are based can be included in the bundle. This does not preclude the inclusion of an MG22B (SFR1), the admissibility of which will need to be addressed at the Plea and Trial Preparation Hearing or other first hearing in the Crown Court (in accordance with CrimPR 19.3(2)) when the Defence should be invited to indicate whether they can agree the content of the MG22B (SFR1) by way of Section 10 admission.

The MG22B (SFR1) states that, should there be a real issue in relation to the forensic evidence, such that the admission cannot be made, the prosecution should ask that the defence identify the issue at the earliest possible stage in proceedings. This requirement upon the Defence does not expect them to identify a technical or scientific issue with the conclusions in the MG22B (SFR1), as it is accepted that at this point they will not have the benefit of their own expert opinion. The requirement is simply that the Defence identifies a reason why the defendant does not accept the conclusions in the MG22B (SFR1), for example:

¹ Guidance: Forensic Science Activities - Interpretation and communication
(FSR-GUI-0004 Version 1 clause 4. 6.34)

A defendant in a rape case accepts that the DNA found on the victim is his, but that it has not been deposited as a result of sexual contact. This should generate an MG22C (SFR2) report addressing the issue of DNA transfer and/or persistence rather than the source of the DNA.

Any failure to respond to the MG22B (SFR1) in accordance with CrimPR, will be cited by the Prosecution in any application that is made by the Defence for further reports to be obtained, especially where such an application will result in delay in the proceedings. [TEXT DELETED]

The basis for seeking an admission or early identification of the real issues by the defence:

A substantial body of case law provides support for the requirement for all parties to engage in active case management. For example: R v Chorley Justices 2006 EWHC 1795, ‘...the days of ambushing and taking last minute technical points are gone. They are not consistent with the overriding objective of deciding cases justly, acquitting the innocent and convicting the guilty’ and Balogun v DPP [2010] EWHC 799, ‘...the spirit or letter of the CrimPR’s is [not] complied with by asserting that the Crown is put to “strict proof...”’.

There are restrictions on a defendant’s ability to assert a positive case if the prosecution are put to proof on forensic or any other issues. And, in an exceptional case, where a party manifestly does not comply with the rules, the prosecution may apply for the SFR to be admitted in the interests of justice under s114 CJA 2003. R v Ishmael Adams [2007] EWCA Crim 3025: ‘...otherwise D would escape on purely technical grounds’. This doesn’t reverse the burden of proof: ‘...the question is not whether it is for the Crown to prove possession but how the Crown shall be permitted to prove it’.

If, following the production of an MG22A or MG22B, the prosecution requests further points of clarification, amendments, or additional work before presenting the findings to the defence, this should usually be responded to using an additional MG22A or MG22B. This will allow for the process to be followed; any further information supplied can be considered alongside the original findings and submitted to the defence for their agreement (or otherwise) in line with the SFR Principles. However, it is accepted that there will be occasions where it is appropriate to respond to these matters on an MG22C or D, for example:

- When a defence statement has been issued, and the prosecution are requesting the opinion of, and a response from, the organisation who has produced the MG22A/B.
- At the direction of the judge.
- When the timescales to trial leave insufficient time for the standard procedures to be followed.

It may be more appropriate, in these specific circumstances, to provide a full statement rather than the SFR2.

1.13 REQUESTS FOR AUTHORS OF MG22B (SFR1) TO GIVE EVIDENCE

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It is vital to note that the MG22B (SFR1) is not a witness statement; it is a summary of tests conducted and conclusions drawn and may be compiled by a person other than the one who undertook the forensic analysis. As such, the author of an MG22B (SFR1) should not be added to the trial list and/or warned to give evidence at court as a witness unless they are also the author of an MG22C/D (SFR2) or full statement.

In cases where the author of an MG22B (SFR1) has been warned as a trial witness, CPS should be made aware of this error at the earliest opportunity by submitting the appropriate 'Case Management Risk Form':

Case Management Risk Forms for Experts and Non-Experts can be found [here](#).

1.14 THE SFR STAGE 2 (SFR2) PROCESS

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There are two template forms for providing SFR2 evidence; the MG22C is for expert opinion and the MG22D is for non-expert factual information such as continuity or production of photographs.

The MG22C and MG22D (SFR2) reports are used to provide evidence on identified and/or disputed forensic issues emanating from the MG22B (SFR1) court case management process. SFR2 forensic evidence is provided in a Section 9 format and is more focused and relevant to the specific case issues that have been raised.

Note: The SFR2 report (MG22C/D) is not defined as a full statement but is specific to dealing with real case issues. The MG22C is designed to elucidate evaluative evidence specific to the individual circumstances of the case. However, if the evidence is complex or there are multi-disciplinary issues, it may be more appropriate to report this evidence by way of a full statement.

1.15 DEFENCE ENGAGEMENT

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All parties to criminal proceedings, including the defence, must actively assist the court in managing cases under part 3 of the CrimPR. This includes the early identification of the real issues in the case (CrimPR 3.2(2)a). Active assistance includes communication between the defence and the prosecution at the first available opportunity and in any event no later than the beginning of the day of the first hearing (CrimPR 3.3(2)a).

At or before the first hearing the defence will receive the IDPC which will include any MG22B (SFR1) available. CrimPR 19.3(2) requires that the defence respond to any MG22B SFR1 (referred to as a summary of an expert's conclusions in the Rules) by setting out which, if any, of the expert's conclusions are admitted as fact and where not admitted, what are the disputed issues. The Rules do not provide a set form for that response, but the case management forms completed by defence, prosecution and court when a not guilty plea is entered contain questions about expert evidence, what can be agreed and what is in dispute. In magistrates' court cases this is the PET (Preparation for Effective Trial) form and in the Crown Court, it is the PTPH (Pre-Trial Preparation Hearing) questionnaire.

Any issues raised by the Defence do not have to be scientific or technical in nature, but it would assist the process if some context as to the nature of the disagreement were provided. This will allow a more appropriate and targeted response to the issues raised.

Where the defence do not identify any specific issue(s) with the forensic evidence but the prosecution wish to emphasise the probative value of the scientific findings by having the evidence presented to the jury by the expert witness attending the trial in person, it WILL be necessary to produce the findings outlined on the MG22B (SFR1) by way of an MG22C/D (SFR2) such that the evidence can be presented at trial. Alternatively, this information could be presented using the full statement format. See [Section 24- Full Statements](#) for additional information.

1.16 UNREPRESENTED DEFENDANTS

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Where unrepresented defendants are participating in the SFR process, care should be taken to ensure they understand what it is they are being asked to agree or provide a response to. Where appropriate, advice and assistance should be sought from the court or appointed legal representative.

1.17 SFR TEMPLATE FORMS

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Please see [Appendix B](#) for an overview of the 'SFR Workflow', which describes the responsibilities of role-holders within the CJS.

The SFR forms and guidance are available to all via the FCN website at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-forms>.

In order to promote national consistency, these templates have been designed to accommodate the specific requirements for reporting many different evidence types. **Users should maintain the format as set out in the series of national templates.** This ensures that forensic reports/statements entering the CJS are standardised and easily recognised by police officers and staff, judiciary, magistracy and legal representatives. Whilst the body of the report can be configured to suit the evidence type and case, local amendments to headers/footers and overall structure should not be made as these are standardised and document-controlled forms. Should there be a requirement to change any of these forms for operational reasons, a proposal should be made to the National SFR Board via the appropriate representative through the [FCN Website Contact Form](#).

Where any SFR document (including a template) is updated it is allocated a new version number using the following criteria:

- For a significant change or a rewrite, the document will be numbered x.0
- For a minor change the amended document will be numbered x.1,2,3 etc

Significant changes will be made when there are fundamental updates to correct deficiencies, changes in requirements from rules/regulations or to reflect new statutory obligations. It is strongly recommended that users update their held documents when significant changes or rewrites are issued.

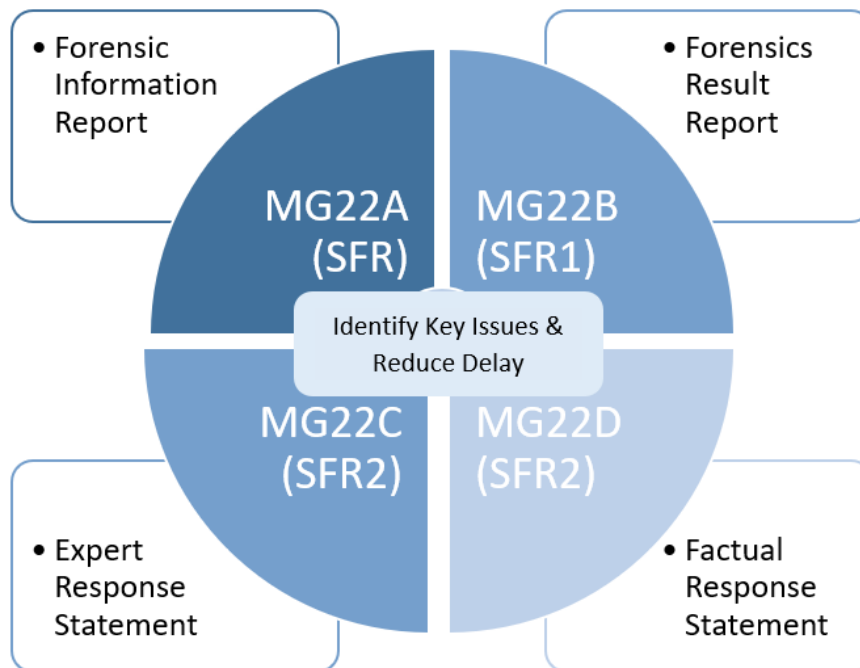
Minor changes will include small changes to improve the use or understanding of the document. A document may undergo multiple minor revisions during its lifespan. Details of the revision will be included in the document listing and the change log on the FCN website. While we recommend adopting updated documents with minor revisions it is for individual organisations/users to determine whether to update their held documents to the latest versions

The version on the website will always be the latest published version. Immediate notification will be issued via email to the National SFR Board membership for significant changes. Awareness of minor changes will be via a standing agenda item at quarterly Board meetings.

As information is added to SFRs, it is the responsibility of the author to ensure the relevant Government Security Classification is used to ensure sensitive information is protected.

Users should refer to their organisation's classification and handling policy for further guidance.

Within the SFR process there are four report/statement types, each having its own MG22 form:



Specific guidance is provided later for each type of form and each forensic discipline.

1.18 OPTIONAL USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN SFR

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Experience of SFR has shown that crime scene/exhibit photographs embedded within the suite of SFR forms can assist in conveying the scientific findings by adding context and pictorially expressing evidential value, thus greatly assisting the CPS in reaching charging decisions and the courts in managing cases.

The photographs assist the interpretation of why the SFR forensic information is important and relevant. For example, in moveable object cases, photography may be used to demonstrate not only the forensic link to the exhibit but also the relationship of the exhibit to the scene.

Photographs allow CPS to see the relevance of the evidence in a pictorial way and puts the defence in a more informed position by allowing them to see the relevance of the forensic evidence at the earliest opportunity. This ensures that the appropriate plea can be entered, and that the defendant receives the appropriate sentence discount for an early guilty plea.

Crime scene photographs showing the relevance and positioning of the SFR evidence at the crime scene assists in allowing the courts and juries to visualise the forensic evidence and enables that evidence to be presented in a short and clear way.

Photographs can also assist the judge and magistrates by providing additional context and therefore, in some circumstances, giving a better understanding of the nature of the offence, enabling them to decide on the most appropriate sentence.

Disclosure is not an adjunct to an investigation. It is an essential part of the investigation, and there is a requirement for all parties to consider their obligations at the earliest stage. In 2020, the Attorney General's Guidelines on Disclosure, the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CPIA), Code of Practice, Director's Guidance on Charging and the National File Standard were updated. However, it has now been confirmed that no changes are required to the SFR process and/or templates in order to fully comply with current guidelines.

Note: SFR forms do not deal with disclosure (by way of unused material) responsibilities. Unused material relevant to the investigation must be revealed by the police through completion of the MG6 form (or equivalent) regardless of reporting format employed within a case.

The disclosure of unused material is governed by the CPIA and by "common-law" disclosure in circumstances where the CPIA does not apply. The obligation to disclose undermining unused material and unused material that may assist the defence under CPIA applies after a not guilty plea has been entered (in magistrates' court cases) or after a case has been sent to the Crown Court (s.1 CPIA). An MG22B (SFR1) is prepared and served before plea or sending. At that early stage of proceedings, the CPIA does not apply, but "common-law" disclosure, as defined in R v DPP ex parte Lee [1999] 2 All ER 737, does apply. This provides that information that would assist the accused in the preparation of the defence case, including the making of a bail application, must be disclosed by the investigator to the prosecutor, who will immediately disclose it to the defence if they consider it meets the test for disclosure. Examples of what should be disclosed are:

- Any previous convictions of the victim or a key witness if that information could reasonably be expected to assist the accused when applying for bail.
- Material which might enable an accused to make an early application to stay the proceedings as an abuse of process.
- Material which might enable an accused to make representations about trial venue on a lesser charge; or
- Material which would enable an accused to prepare for trial which may be significantly less effective if disclosure is delayed (e.g., names of eyewitnesses whom the prosecution do not intend to use).

This list is not exhaustive and disclosure prior to the statutory duty under CPIA arising will not exceed the disclosure which would be required under the CPIA.

The investigator or disclosure officer must also reveal to the prosecutor any material that is relevant to sentence (for example, information which might mitigate the seriousness of the offence or assist the accused in laying some blame upon a co-accused or another).

The purpose of an MG22B (SFR1) is to provide a summary of an expert's conclusions, addressing the key issues in a case concisely and accurately. In cases where those preparing the MG22B are aware of further information that might meet the test for "common-law" disclosure set out above, that information should be communicated to the investigator and by the investigator to the prosecutor using form MG6 (or its equivalent).



Section 2: SFR Templates/Reporting

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2.1 SFR FORENSIC INFORMATION REPORT (MG22A)

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The template for the MG22A form is available at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-forms>

A Forensic Information Report can be used when there is a request for an initial examination of scenes or forensic exhibits that may help an enquiry, interview or strategy. The purpose of the MG22A is to communicate:

- Intelligence findings or conclusions generated prior to a suspect being identified (for example, the outcome of one-off speculative searches of the National DNA Database).
- Forensic results that can only be used for intelligence purposes.
- A proposed, agreed or future strategy, including key timescales.
- Scene examination results.
- Embedded spreadsheets of summary information in complex, ongoing investigations.
- Interim findings (for example to inform an interview strategy or charging decision) that may previously have been communicated by a letter or short report.
- Anything that might have previously been sent via e-mail (e.g., requests for additional information).
- Any information that may not be suitable to be presented on an MG22B (for example, urgent work that has not yet been subjected to quality assurance processes).
- Wholly negative or neutral outcomes, where the package of work provides no information on which the prosecution will seek to rely. It should be noted that, on some occasions, the absence of forensic findings may be of significance to the investigation. If in doubt, practitioners should check the required format of report with the investigation or prosecution team.

The MG22A is not intended to be used as evidence but will be available for investigating officers to make them aware of information that may be required for disclosure purposes.

In some cases, the findings expressed in the MG22A will contain opinions and interpretations. In these instances, it may be applicable to include an explanation of this (see [Section 2.3.1](#) for more details). If the findings are of a factual nature, there is no requirement to include such a declaration.

All MG22A reports will need to be accompanied by the relevant annexes. See [Section 2.5](#)

2.2 SFR FORENSIC RESULT REPORT (MG22B SFR1)

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The template for the MG22B form is available at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-forms>

The MG22B (SFR1) is used to report a forensic result. It is intended to be used as follows:

- It provides forensic information at the earliest opportunity to the investigation and the courts.
- It is a summary of the forensic findings that the Prosecution may seek to rely on at trial.
- It enables a mechanism for early engagement with the defence.
- It requires the Defence to comply with their duties under CrimPR 3.2(a) to identify the issues in the case as early as possible.
- It can also be employed to provide an outline of evidence of fact to the defence.

It is important to note that:

- It is neither a statement nor an expert's report of a type that needs to comply with CrimPR 19.4.
- It cannot be used as evidence other than as agreed fact.
- The person who prepares this report need not be the person whose views are summarised within it or who would provide an additional statement (e.g., involving expert opinion) on the same matter if later required.

It is good practice and crucial to provide training and awareness of the SFR process to case builders and other support staff involved in court case management procedures to ensure understanding and avoid introducing unnecessary delays to the process.

This is to prevent individuals being incorrectly warned to attend court on production of an MG22B (SFR1). However, some forensic disciplines/organisations have adopted an approach whereby the MG22B (SFR1) does not include the name of the author in the 'Report provided by' section and instead states the forensic unit or author's role within the organisation. Identifying the person authorising the report is a requirement of ISO/IEC 17025 in clause 7.8.2.1). However, in accordance with clause 7.8.1.3, results can be reported in a simplified way when agreed with the customer. All information that is not reported shall still be readily available. 'Evidence of this agreement with all customers is likely to be required to satisfy UKAS assessment. 'Customers' should be considered to include all criminal justice stakeholders.

The Forensic Science Regulator has given their support for the omission of author names on an MG22B where this is considered to be appropriate. Section 31.3.4 of the Code states:

'An SFR1 is not a witness statement so an organisational declaration is appropriate, the name may be included, however the contact details should be sufficient to be traceable back to the unit such as by role title (e.g. Fingerprint Bureau Manager at FPBureau@*****).'

However, if an individual name is included as the author of the MG22B, then a personal declaration is appropriate.

The first section of the report ('results') presents the forensic information upon which the prosecution may seek to rely in the shortest and clearest way in a similar way to a summary/conclusion section of a full statement.

The second section of the report ('status') presents an opportunity to provide further detail of those exhibits described in the results section, provide details of exhibits that have been created during the course of the examination, explain the status of other related exhibits and/or provide any further information which may undermine the prosecution case or assist the defence. However, the 'status' section of the report does not deal with disclosure, which remains the responsibility of the investigator/disclosure officer and prosecutor.

2.3 EXPERT RESPONSE STATEMENT MG22C (SFR2)

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The template for the MG22C form is available at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-forms>

The purpose of this statement is:

- For the relevant expert or forensic practitioner to respond to issue(s) raised by the defence.
- To provide the response in a Section 9 format in order that it can be used in court.
- To assist with ensuring that forensic issue(s) are effectively managed before trial.

This template should be used when the author, either in the statement or in testimony at court, will provide evidence of opinion.

The signature on the MG22C does not have to be created by physically signing the statement using ink. Electronic signatures are acceptable, but the signature must be added by, or on the authority of, the person making the statement.

An MG22C must comply with the provisions of Rule 19.4 CrimPR and the relevant sections of Part 19 of the Criminal Practice Directions (CPD). This includes a requirement to apply appropriate declarations and duties of revelation that are not included within the template MG22C. A series of additional annex templates have been developed for this purpose, and FSPs may wish to adopt these as part of their local quality management procedures.

See [Section 2.5](#) for more details.

2.3.1 Opinions and Interpretations

In some cases, the findings expressed in the MG22B (SFR1) will contain opinions and interpretations. In these instances, the expert has an obligation to set out clearly their assessment of the likely range of opinion. It may be applicable to include an explanation of this. The below is an example but this may vary slightly depending on the evidence type. If the report contains only factual communication of observations without any inference or contextualisation applied [TEXT DELETED], there is no requirement to include such an explanation².

The findings expressed in this Streamlined Forensic Report are matters of opinion, not statements of fact. However, evaluation of forensic evidence such as this is supported by study and experience, applying specialist knowledge and skills to forge reliable opinions and interpretations, which are subjected to peer review (as defined within the organisation's Quality Management System) before final reporting. The decision-making process may be supported and evidenced through the use of working notes.

If there is a range of expert opinion on the matter in question, the report should state where in the range the expert's own opinion lies. In addition, if the laboratory's accreditation does not cover opinions and interpretations, this must be considered when making a declaration of compliance or non-compliance with the Code.

All MG22B reports will need to be accompanied by the relevant annexes. See [Section 2.5](#)

2.4 FACTUAL RESPONSE STATEMENT MG22D (SFR2)

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The template for the MG22D form is available at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-forms>

² FSR-GUI-0004 Guidance- Forensic Science Activities- Interpretation and Communication- Version 2 Section 4.9 Factual communication

The purpose of this statement is:

- To respond to non-expert technical/factual matters raised by the defence, such as contextual information and continuity.
- To introduce photographs into evidence.
- To provide the response in a Section 9 format in order that it can be used in court.
- To assist with ensuring forensic issue(s) are effectively managed before trial.

Forensic practitioners, whether expert or not, can use the MG22D to provide 'statements of fact', that do not contain any opinion. It is important to recognise what amounts to opinion and ensure that if the statement contains opinion, or if it is likely that opinion evidence will be asked for at court, the MG22C is used, so as to comply with the provisions for production of expert evidence. The signature on the MG22D does not have to be created by physically signing the statement using ink. Electronic signatures are acceptable, but the signature must be added by, or on the authority of, the person making the statement.

All MG22D reports will need to be accompanied by the relevant annexes. See [Section 2.5](#)

2.5 SFR ANNEX TEMPLATES

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The templates for the SFR Annexes are available at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-forms>

2.5.1 Annex A Expert Witness Declaration

Annex A is an expert's declaration to the court that they recognise and will act in accordance with their duty to the court overriding any obligation to the instructing party in the case in accordance with CrimPr Rule 19 and Section 7.2 of the Criminal Practice Directions as amended. This annex shall be provided where the declaration has not been included within the expert's statement.

Included within the Annex A is the **Forensic Examination Record** which shall form part of the declaration where an expert has based an opinion or inference on a representation of fact or opinion made by another person. The Forensic Examination Record will detail their name, their relevant qualifications and experience and any applicable accreditation/regulatory status. It should also include, where applicable, details of their actions and the impact this had on the opinion(s) being offered within the report.

By signing Annex A, the expert certifies that the person had personal knowledge of the matters stated in that representation. You must ensure you read the declarations on the Annex A and that they are correct to you. Where other documents are referenced, ensure these have been read.

2.5.2 Annex B Mitigation Table

Annex B is a mitigation table that shall be used when declaring the method as an infrequently used method that is not within the schedule of accreditation or when declaring non-compliance with the FSR Code of Conduct. Annex B should be used for all reports that include a declaration of non-compliance with the FSR Code of Conduct.

2.5.3 Annex C Expert Witness Self Certification

Annex C is a self-certificate that an expert should submit to the prosecution alongside their statement confirming that they are aware of their responsibilities as an expert witness to reveal to the prosecution team any information that might undermine their evidence or assist the defence.

As such, an expert witness might disclose, within reason, to the commissioning party (prosecution or defence) everything that could possibly be thought to potentially bring into question their suitability to act as an expert and then leave it to the commissioning party to decide what to withhold from others. Ultimately it is for the Court to decide on what is relevant to a case so erring on the side of caution and informing the commissioning party at an early stage may be advisable.

2.5.4 Annex D Disclosure Schedule

Annex D is a disclosure schedule submitted to the prosecution identifying material in possession of the practitioner. The schedule should confirm the description of all non-sensitive material relevant to the case, material that has not been examined and the location of this material. This Schedule is produced in addition to the MG6C supplied by the Disclosure Officer.

2.6 FULL STATEMENTS

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There may be occasions when a full statement is the most appropriate reporting format. These will be dependent on case circumstances and complexity, and full statements may be best used when more detailed explanation or interpretation of complex findings is required. Such instances may include complex cases with multiple exhibits and/or co-defendants. The FSP, in consultation with the authorising Police Force, will have discretion to determine the most appropriate output for each case, on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind their obligation to assist the courts to actively manage the case in the most streamlined and cost-effective way.

Where specific issues are not raised in response to an MG22B (SFR1) but the evidence is nevertheless contested, a full statement could be prepared instead of an MG22C (SFR2). In addition, where the prosecution requires demonstration of findings at court despite them being accepted by the defence a full statement could be prepared.

2.7 EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE

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General requirements for the reporting of results are set out at Section 31 of the FSR Code, which also sets out specific requirements when considering evaluative opinion at 31.4.6-9.

The SFR process is aligned with the ENFSI (European Network of Forensic Science Institutes) Guideline for Evaluative Reporting recommendations.³ These guidelines build on the Association of Forensic Service Providers (AFSP) Standards for the formulation of evaluative forensic science opinion.⁴

ENFSI's objectives include aims to improve and standardise the evaluation of forensic laboratory findings and to improve the quality standards underpinning forensic reports across European forensic science laboratories. The SFR process goes hand-in-hand with these objectives:

- Enabling the identification of the key issues of contention at the earliest stage.
- Allowing rapid progression to the evaluation phase of those key issues in a streamlined and structured manner.

³ ENFSI Guideline for Evaluative Reporting In Forensic Science; Strengthening the evaluation of forensic results across Europe, Approved Version 3.0 Available from: https://enfsi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/m1_guideline.pdf [Accessed 21st October 2024]

⁴ Willis, S, Association of Forensic Science Providers (2010) Standards for the formulation of evaluative forensic science expert opinion. Sci Justice. 2010 Mar;50(1):49. doi: 10.1016/j.scijus.2009.11.004.

- Providing the stakeholders in the CJS with the forensic expert's considered opinion addressing specifically the issues relevant to the case at the appropriate level, whether that be the source of a questioned material or the manner or mechanism by which it was deposited.
- Capturing the value of the laboratory findings expressed in a manner that is understandable to a wide range of users.

The Forensic Science Regulator's Guidance relating to interpretation and communication (FSR-GUI-0004 v2) further describes how experts should be clear about the level of issue that they are addressing (for example, activity, source or sub-source level) and that interpretations should be balanced, robust, transparent and logical. Mutually exclusive pairs of propositions representing opposing (typically prosecution and defence) viewpoints should be determined at the level which will provide the most effective assistance with resolving the issues facing stakeholders in the CJS. This will most often involve the expert addressing propositions at activity level.

The Forensic Science Regulator's Guidance (FSR-GUI-0004 v2) goes on to confirm that evaluative activity level reporting can be addressed in any form of written output including SFR (clause 4.6.33).

SFR should not compromise the value that forensic science can bring to the CJS, in fact, the process, if properly supported by effective case management, should ensure that experts are provided with detailed pairs of propositions to facilitate a full and thorough expert evaluation of the evidence at activity level, wherever possible.

To comply with the 'clear and concise' nature of the MG22B format, further details of activity level propositions can be included on the status page, in support of the conclusions as set out on the results page. However, they should be included in the main body of an MG22C in the same way that they would be presented when detailing an interpretation in a full statement.

2.8 REFERENCE TO FSR CODE COMPLIANCE

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Where a specific discipline includes a Forensic Science Activity (FSA) that is subject to the requirements of the Forensic Science Regulator: Code of Practice, compliance or non-compliance with the Code must be declared within all statements/reports for all FSAs being reported on. This includes SFR1 (MG22B) and SFR2 (MG22C and D) reports. Please refer to separate guidance issued by the Forensic Science Regulator:

2.8.1 Declaring Compliance with the Code of Practice (FSR-GUI-0001)

Since the SFR1 is not a witness statement, it is appropriate for the declaration to be made at organisational level, so long as there is traceability back to the forensic unit that undertook the FSA ([see Section 2.2](#)).

Where the MG22A is being used to provide initial/interim forensic outcomes, to support an enquiry, interview or strategy, it does not require a declaration of compliance or non-compliance with the FSR Code. However, a declaration can be included where it may assist the intended recipient (e.g. investigator, commissioning party).



Section 3: Guidance for Specific Forensic Science Activities

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Section 1.8 states the forensic disciplines that have been approved to use the SFR process as the primary mechanism for communicating results and findings. Further guidance is provided for each of these disciplines below. These disciplines pre-date the introduction of 'Forensic Science Activities' by the Forensic Science Regulator as part of the statutory Code of Practice in 2023. However, [Appendix G](#) describes the FSAs that have been approved to use the SFR process for each discipline. Regardless of the type of report being used to communicate information to other parties in the CJS, organisations must demonstrate that practitioners are competent to report at the appropriate level (Section 22.2) and ensure that the content of all reports complies with the requirements laid out in Section 31 of the FSR Code.

3.1 CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION - SCENE EXAMINATION

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The use of the MG22 forms and templates may vary between Police Forces depending upon Standard Operating Procedures, IT systems available and other established methods for recording information but all CSI reporting must achieve compliance with the FSR Code regardless of form. Sections 90.4 to 90.10 detail the specific requirements for scene examination records (including contemporaneous notes, continuity, risk management, and retention of information).

3.1.1 Crime Scene Investigation - Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A for crime scene examination can be used in various ways to provide information regarding the crime scene examination.

Examination report and this could include but is not limited to:

- Circumstances of the incident
- Forensic strategy and action plan
- Risk assessment
- Record of equipment used
- Information, observation: the examination notes
- Exhibits recovered
- Scene Images
- Continuity of exhibits
- Handovers of the scene
- Communication of information
- Coordination of others at the scene

Photographic report (if not included in above)

Information report - to provide information at that specific point in time that would be considered relevant to the investigating officer and the CPS to allow them to make an informed decision regarding the case, this could include but is not limited to:

- Status of other related exhibits from a scene examination not subject to analysis and therefore not summarised in an additional report.
- Staged examination strategy, articulating decisions for non-examination.
- Identified risk such as cases of compromised exhibit packaging.

The completed MG22A or a combination of those listed provides the Investigating Officer with all the relevant information to help inform their investigative strategy and summarise relevant information supporting disclosure requirements.

This report will be based on the information available at the time.

Where further work or analysis of the recovered exhibits is required, this will be produced in subsequent information reports and/or MG22B - SFR1s.

3.1.2 Crime Scene Investigation – Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

This document is a statement and can be used to provide an **expert** opinion when requested which answers the disputed issue raised⁵.

Care should be taken when offering an opinion and the use of this form, will be subject to your force operation procedures. However, it is suggested that the following information should be included within your MG22C:

- Number of years employed as a Forensic Practitioner
- Training / experience including an approximate number of the type of scenes you have examined (as per case type the opinion is being offered on)
- Why are you being asked and by whom
- What your opinion is based on – memory / notes / combination of both
- What your opinion is derived from i.e. experience and the facts of the examination (e.g.: dust removal on a surface, which were finger shaped and patterned)

Note:

You must ensure you read the declarations on the Annex A and that they are correct to you. Where other documents are referenced, ensure these have been read.

You must record if anyone assisted in your examination and highlight their actions and if applicable reference their impact to the opinion you are offering.

If deemed necessary, a full statement offering the full details of the examination can be completed.

Practitioners should question the rationale of any statement request ensuring that the production of the MG22C or D will assist the court and answer any disputes raised, as on occasion requests are made to CSI practitioners when in fact the issue or dispute raised should be directed to and answered by a scientist. Failure to recognise this at an early stage may cause risk, delays and challenges to the case during the court process.

3.1.3 Crime Scene Investigation - Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This document is a statement and should be used when challenged to answer a disputed issue.

It can also be used by any other support staff and forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any **expert** opinion⁶.

⁵ FSA-INC 100 Incident Scene Examination ‘investigative opinion’ will be covered in future guidance issued by the Forensic Science Regulator

⁶ *ibid*

When using the MG22D to answer a disputed issue raised by defence:

- Ensure the below sections are completed to detail the specific dispute your MG22D factual response will answer.
- Full examination / retrieval information that would be included in a full statement would not be required just the information to answer the disputed issue.

Statement provided by:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Organisation:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date of Statement:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Annexes Included with this Statement:	Choose from List
1.	[state issue and respond here]		
2.	[state issue and respond here]		

If and when necessary, a full statement offering the full details of the examination could instead be produced.

3.2 MARK ENHANCEMENT – LABORATORY (FDU/FEL)

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There will only be a requirement to produce an MG22A or an MG22D in this area and forces will need to consider their own internal Standard Operation Procedures when deciding on how they adopt SFR, considering the reference on how to report sequential examinations which is contained within the FCN's 'FSR Declaration Guidance FAQs' which can be found on the [FCN website library](#).

See also [Section 2.8](#) Reference to Accreditation.

3.2.1 Mark Enhancement - Forensic Information Report - MG22A

If an organisation's approach is to provide a report for each forensic unit involved in the processing of an item, then Mark Enhancement should initially be reported using the MG22A. This allows for all the relevant information to be presented to the Investigator.

It is important to remember that any information within an MG22A report cannot be used for evidential purposes. However, it can be used to provide the following:

- Examination strategy including any staged examination strategy, articulating decisions for non-examination.
- Items examined.
- Examination techniques used.
- Results.
- Status of other related exhibits from a scene examination not subject to analysis and therefore not summarised in an additional report.
- Identified risk such as cases of compromised exhibit packaging.

An MG22A report is based on the information available at the time. Where further work or analysis of recovered exhibits is required, this will be produced in subsequent MG22A's and/or MG22D's (SFR2) if the information is required in an evidential format.

3.2.2 Mark Enhancement - Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

An MG22D (SFR2) is a statement and can be used by staff to respond to specific challenges relating to the process of mark enhancement. It can also be used to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion or for production of photographic images/albums or to provide statements of continuity.

An MG22D (SFR2) should always be seen as the next step in the reporting process before considering the provision of a full statement, however, it is at the discretion of the practitioner to determine if MG22C or full statement is the most appropriate format.

3.3 FRICTION RIDGE DETAIL COMPARISON

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For the purposes of this guidance, the term 'friction ridge detail' refers to all ridge detail comparisons including fingers, palms and plantar areas, howsoever made and presented. The results of any examinations conducted (search or magnified comparison) to evaluate whether they are from the same or different sources, are formed based on the interpretation and opinion of the examiner and this should always be made clear when utilising any report within the SFR framework.

The FSR Code of Practice defines the sub-activities of FRD comparison as:

- a. Search of FRD
- b. Identity check
- c. Scene linking
- d. Direct comparisons of persons of interest

[Text deleted]

3.3.1 Friction Ridge Detail Comparison - Forensic Information Report - MG22A

In the context of friction ridge detail comparison, this should be considered as a report to:

- Introduce general information pertaining to a case.
- Provide clarification of procedure/definitions or additional information that may assist in the interpretation of the results disclosed within an MG22B (for example, define what is meant by 'Variance of Opinion').
- Give additional information regarding negative results on certain exhibits.
- Provide initial and/or unverified results.

3.3.2 Friction Ridge Detail Comparison - Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B is used to report a result from the initial analysis / comparison(s) and may report the result of a search against the National Fingerprint Database or a direct comparison with a nominated individual. It allows for defence and prosecution to consider their level of agreement with the findings. It is not in a format admissible as evidence. The report should be seen by the recipients as reflecting the findings of the issuing laboratory/Bureaux and not an individual examiner, therefore, depending on Bureaux policy, it can be anonymised to avoid courts erroneously calling the producing examiner as an expert witness.

The information here should be source level only (declaring the results of the analysis only, not the reasoning or foundation of those results). For friction ridge detail identifications, it should declare that findings are based on interpretation and opinion (UKAS LAB 13). An agreed wording exists (see [Section 2.2](#)) however, a more discipline specific wording that incorporates ACE-V, may be more appropriate e.g:

Reporting outcomes of insufficient, inconclusive, identified and excluded are matters of opinion, not statements of fact. That opinion is reached following Analysis, comparison and evaluation of areas of friction ridge detail. The conclusions of fingerprint practitioners are supported by study and experience, applying specialist knowledge and skills to forge reliable opinions and interpretations. The decision-making process is supported and evidenced through the use of working notes.

Findings relating to more than one suspect should be presented as separate reports allowing each defendant to accept or identify an issue independently.

Photographic representations can be included for information purposes only, to illustrate the pertinent findings. If necessary, these can be added as an appendix to the MG22B, provided they are referenced within the results section of the report.

The status section of the report contains information that informs prosecution and defence of the status of other exhibits that were included with the submission. The FSR defines three further possible outcomes as:

- **Exclusion** - The opinion that two areas of ridge detail were not made by the same person,
- **Insufficient** - The opinion that an area of ridge detail is of such poor or low quality as to render any comparison as unreliable or not suitable,
- **Inconclusive** - The opinion that the level of agreement and/or disagreement is such that it is not possible either to conclude that the areas of friction ridge detail originate from the same donor, or to exclude the particular individual as a source for the unknown impression.

Should the identification be made on a sample/interim basis, other outcomes such as 'not compared' or 'eliminated' may be reported (wording will depend upon individual Bureaux practices).

The status page may contain important information regarding the other exhibits/photos from the same submission so, if clarity regarding wording or further comparison of the exhibits/photos listed in the status section is required, the relevant Bureaux should be contacted at the earliest opportunity. Failure to do so may pose a judicial risk to the case.

Additional information pertinent to the case may also be added, should it assist in clarifying any results declared within.

3.3.3 Friction Ridge Detail Comparison - Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

Further to the previous submission of an MG22B, the SFR2 would be used to answer queries from the Court or challenges from Defence that result in non-acceptance of the SFR1. This may include:

- Source level clarification (who left the ridge detail) e.g., an identification is fundamentally challenged by defence and requires a full declaration of the grounds for declaring it.

- Activity level clarification (how the ridge detail was left) e.g., whether the friction ridge detail marks could have been made whilst performing a certain action. This may constitute interpretive opinion which would need to be considered in respect of the organisation's accreditation status, and appropriate declarations made, where applicable.

An MG22C should always be seen as the 'next step' in the reporting process before considering the provision of a full statement, however, it is at the discretion of the practitioner to determine if MG22C or full statement is the most appropriate format.

The name, experience and qualifications of the submitting expert must be declared. The expert completing the MG22C (SFR2) can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested in the case. As such, the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert by means of declaration under Criminal Procedure Rules 19.4.

3.3.4 Friction Ridge Detail Comparison - Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity or by forensic examiners/laboratory staff (including those working in finger mark enhancement laboratories) to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion. Although not regularly used by fingerprint staff, it may be of use in rare circumstances.

3.4 Prüm Fingerprints

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The Prüm Treaty, signed in 2005, is a law enforcement treaty aimed at enhancing cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and serious cross-border crime, by facilitating the exchange of information, including biometric data like DNA and fingerprints, among participating EU member states.

These guidance notes are intended to be used as a supplement to assist in the production of an MG22A Forensic Information Report, such that identifications from any UK Fingerprint Bureaux can be reported in consistent manner to all UKLEAs.

Furthermore, detailed information can be found within the Home Office Prüm FP Guidance document.

Matches as a result of a Prüm Search will always be reported as intelligence on an MG22A.

3.4.1 Prüm Searching: Crime Scene Data

Prüm crime scene data searches should be performed as forces and/or bureau practitioners see fit and as part of your Bureaux own documented procedures. A decision must be made by the relevant force IOs/SIOs/SPOCs and bureau practitioners whether to perform Prüm FP searches.

The requesting of a search allocation is performed via an Automated Gatekeeper application managed by the NCA. The Automated Gatekeeper displays a running total of the availability of searches and staff can request search authorisation for IDENT1 searches using this application.

Bureaux practitioners should be mindful of low quota countries (e.g. Belgium, France, etc.). For such countries, give priority to urgent cases and not to routine type speculative searches.

Tip! For low quota countries consider launching non-priority searches close to the end of the day if quotas are still available.

3.4.2 Outcomes

Unidentified:

If no identifications are established following a search against a EUMS AFIS, this can be reported using your Bureaux standard reporting mechanisms.

Identified:

If an identification is established following a search against a EUMS AFIS, a Prüm Step 1 Identification verification should be completed. This will then allow the NCA to provide the Bureaux with the Step 2 data (including the Tenprint set of the identified person). Once these have been received, the identification can be processed and reported. See [3.4.6 Speculative Searches](#) below.

3.4.3 Subject Profiles

LEA fingerprint bureaux (and the LEA Prüm contact) will receive the EUMS Subject Data Profile along with any retention rules specified by the sending Member State.

Fingerprint Bureaux can use the EUMS subject fingerprint record to compare to fingerprint images relating to the offence the hit relates to. The EUMS fingerprint record should also be used to speculatively search against UK fingerprint databases they have access to for law enforcement purposes – IDENT1, IABS, or CT databases – to establish if the person has a fingerprint record in the UK at that point in time or is linked to other scenes of crime.

3.4.4 EUMS subject fingerprint records cannot currently be loaded into the IDENT1 Unified Tenprint Collection.

Once the required fingerprint search and comparisons are complete fingerprint bureaux will report matches to the investigating officer. Note: the subject is unlikely to have a record on PNC and IDENT1 so the nominal information provided in the EUMS Subject data Profile is referenced.

For reporting, see [3.4.6 Speculative Searches](#) below.

3.4.5 Retention

For as long as the data is required within the UK for the investigation or prevention of crime it can be retained and used according to UK law and processes.

Once the data has served its purpose the data must be deleted.

3.4.6 Speculative Searches

Speculative searches refer to the scenario where a ten print search is run against UKLE fingerprint databases, following a Step 2 Prüm DNA response that contains fingerprint images.

The intelligence package that is received from a EUMS after a Prüm DNA match has been made and the intelligence has been applied for, may contain fingerprint images. The Forensic Information Databases Service (FINDS) policy (FINDS-P-073) states that the subject ten-print record shared by the EUMS can be used to compare against any finger mark images that relate to the offence under investigation in the UK. Additionally, as per policy, fingerprint images should be used to speculative search against IDENT1 and IABS.

The JICC Prüm team will send out a Step 2 Prüm DNA email containing the intelligence package that is received from the relevant EUMS. Recipients are the Step 2 requestors – investigating officers with a legitimate Policing interest in the subject of the match – and copied in are also the relevant fingerprint bureau practitioners to undertake the above searches.

The purpose of a speculative search is to establish if a person has a fingerprint record in the UK and at the point of arrest, this person may have given different nominal details that are known by the Member State. Moreover, the individual can be identified against unidentified marks taken from any UK crime scene.

3.4.7 Reporting

When a positive result is obtained (e.g. a match against a hit of an unidentified crime mark, an IDENT1 ten-print record or an IABS record) the fingerprint bureau will need to complete an MG22A Forensic Information Report, also referred to as 'Intelligence Lead' and send to relevant recipient(s).

If the IDENT1 subject match or the mark is owned within the force, please forward the MG22A report to the relevant officer in the case. If the mark was identified outside of your force, please forward the MG22A report to that specific force. Finally, if the mark is an IABS record, please forward the MG22A report to an officer with the relevant contact details for the immigration department to obtain more information.

Please always copy in the JICC Prüm team (jiccprum@nca.gov.uk) to allow follow up with the relevant force and to ensure actions have been taken.

Please be aware. Results shared are for intelligence only purpose. They are an evidential lead to pursue, not to be used for judicial proceedings.

Please find a copy of the MG22A Forensic Information Report [here](#).

3.4.8 How to Fill in an MG22A Report

Field	Explanation
FORENSIC INFORMATION REPORT - [INSERT DISCIPLINE]	Add the relevant discipline (e.g. Fingerprint)
Relates to (person):	Add the name supplied in the Step 2 email. It is the name of the person associated to the subject match in a particular country.
Crime/Occ. No:	Relates to the original subject match case in the Step 2 email. This could be an operational name if a crime reference is not provided.
Location:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.
Force Forensic Ref:	This is a reference number generated by the NCA and it is included in the Step 2 email. It starts with CP- (e.g. CP-xxxxxxxxxx-24).
Date of Offence/Incident:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.
Forensic Provider Ref:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.
Other Ref 1:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.
Other Ref 2:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.

Report provided by:	Add the details of the person compiling the MG22A report.
Organisation:	The name of the organisation the person compiling the report belongs to.
Date of report:	Date of when the report is filled in.
Annexes Included with this Report:	Please add 'none', if this field is not relevant.

Information / Findings / Result / Strategy	
CRO Match	We have received the Ten-print fingerprint record of the subject associated with this DNA match and they have been searched against UK fingerprint databases. IDENT1 reports a match against the following record: PNC Name + CRO xxxxx/24x For further information, please contact the [organisation] at [relevant mailbox or phone number]

3.4.9 Example MG22A

+

OFFICIAL (SENSITIVE WHEN COMPLETE)

This is not a witness statement

Streamlined Forensic Reporting (SFR)		MG22A	
FORENSIC INFORMATION REPORT – [INSERT DISCIPLINE]			
Relates to (person):	Add the name supplied in the Step 2 email. It's the name of the person associated to the subject match in a particular country.	Crime/Occ. No:	Relates to the original subject match case in the Step 2 email. This could be an operational name if a crime reference is not provided.
Location:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.	Force Forensic Ref:	Reference number generated by the NCA and included in Step 2 email, e.g. CP-xxxxxxxxxx-25.
Date of Offence/Incident:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.	Forensic Provider Ref:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.
Other Ref 1:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.	Other Ref 2:	Please add 'not applicable', if this field is not relevant.
Report provided by:	Details of the person compiling the MG22A report.	Organisation:	Name of the organisation the person reporting, belongs to.
Date of report:	Date of when the report is filled in..	Annexes Included with this Report:	Choose from List

3.5 NATIONAL DNA DATABASE MATCH REPORTS

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The National DNA Database contains profiles from individuals and crime scenes that have been analysed using either SGM, SGMPlus or DNA17 tests. Upon loading of an unsolved crime scene profile or a profile from a named individual, this can create a match that is then communicated to the Force via a 'match report'. This match report can be converted into either an MG22A or an MG22B by trained personnel within Force Scientific Support Units; the type of form used will be dependent on the nature of the match.

When a report is issued with just the results of a DNA match from the NDNAD, the FSA concerned in the report is FSA CDM 200. Version 2 of the Code does not apply to this FSA and therefore there is no requirement to declare compliance or non-compliance. However, practitioners should, for the benefit of the Court, declare that the Code does not apply in these circumstances. This does not infer compliance with the Code, just that the Code does not apply.

[TEXT DELETED]

3.5.1 National DNA Database Match - Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A form can be used to provide forensic information for intelligence purposes, where:

- A potential DNA link has been identified between two (or more) crime scenes, or
- A potential DNA match has been identified between a crime scene and an individual, but the individual has been sampled using a CJ (Criminal Justice) or 'pre-PACE' DNA Sampling kit. In this case, the 8-digit subject barcode will commence with a '95' or below.
- A potential DNA match has been identified between a crime scene and an individual, but the crime scene profile is mixed (i.e., contains DNA from more than one person) and the match report indicates that the profile has been classified by the FSP as 'complex', or
- A potential DNA match has been identified between a crime scene and an individual, where the match report indicates that the crime scene profile is single source but partial (i.e., incomplete) and the number of overlapping alleles is 12 or less.

In these circumstances, no estimate as to the evidential weight of the DNA match (in the form of a 'Likelihood Ratio' (LR) – see below) is provided.

In addition to providing details of the match, the MG22A should contain a clear explanation of the limitations of the match and the action that needs to be taken by the investigator, should the result be considered of significance. Several examples of appropriate wording to use in various different scenarios are provided on the [National DNA Database Match Reports Hub](#).

3.5.2 National DNA Database Match - Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B form can be used to report the results of a DNA match between a crime scene DNA profile and a subject DNA profile, where the subject has been sampled using a PACE DNA Sampling kit. In these cases, the 8-digit barcode of the subject sample will commence with either '96' and above, or '31' and above.

The production of the MG22B is an automated process that does not involve a direct comparison between the crime scene DNA profile and the subject DNA profile. However, the MG22B can be used where the DNA match report indicates that:

- The crime scene profile is single source and full / complete, or
- The crime scene profile is single source but partial (incomplete) and the number of overlapping alleles is 13 or more, or
- The crime scene profile is mixed (i.e., contains DNA from more than one person) and the profile has been classified by the FSP as 'clear and complete'.

This will then inform the author of the MG22B (SFR1) as to the appropriate 'LR' that can be included within the report to express the evidential weight of the DNA match as an illustrative figure. A LR is a numerical expression of the weight of evidence and is provided in certain

circumstances as a provisional estimate. The LR is dependent on the nature of the DNA profiles, for example, the number of components shared between the two profiles and the complexity of the crime scene profile. Further details are provided within the DNA Good Practice Manual (FCN-MGT-GUI-0006).

For the avoidance of doubt, in the case of mixed crime scene DNA profiles, illustrative figures are only provided within the SFR1 report where the FSP has indicated that the profile is a clear, complete, major profile that has been unambiguously derived from the mixture.

In addition, illustrative figures are valid only under clear assumptions regarding propositions. These are:

- For single source profiles: the defence case is that the DNA profile originated from an individual unrelated to the suspect.
- For mixed profiles: (a) the match is between a clear and complete major contributor to the profile and the suspect; and (b) the defence case is that that major contributor originated from an individual unrelated to the suspect.

In addition to providing details of the match and an estimate of the LR, the MG22B should contain a clear explanation of the nature of the crime scene stain and any limitations of the match. Specific wording has been agreed to describe partial (incomplete) crime scene profiles and clear, complete mixed crime scene profiles. Several examples are provided on the [National DNA Database Match Reports Hub](#) covering various different scenarios.

3.5.3 Identification of Body Fluid Type

In December 2023, The Home Office Forensic Information Databases Service (FINDS) issued guidance to Forensic Service Providers (FSPs) on the presumptive testing of body fluids prior to comparison of DNA profiles against the National DNA Database (NDNAD). The instruction to FSPs was that, when assigning a sample type to a DNA submission for loading onto the NDNAD, the specific sample type should only be applied if a positive presumptive test has been obtained for that body fluid, using a validated method. Otherwise, the default option should be to use 'cellular material', from the following list of sample type options for unsolved crime stains:

- Blood stain
- Liquid blood
- Saliva stain
- Semen stain
- Hair roots
- Other tissue
- Cellular material

This memo was issued due to concerns expressed by the Forensic Science Regulator that investigators or the courts may infer that the matching DNA came from a specific body fluid, and this could have unintended consequences on individual cases, if body fluid attribution had been an assumption rather than the result of a positive presumptive test using a validated method.

With effect from 28th June 2024, all FSPs within the private sector marketplace delivering DNA services to policing, agreed to implement this change. It is therefore important that the sample type identified in field 6 of the National DNA Database Match Report is transcribed onto the SFR template 'scene sample material' box unaltered.

It is vital to note that the MG22B (SFR1) for DNA match reports is compiled by a member of trained personnel within a Force Scientific Support Unit based on information provided in the report issued by the National DNA Database. The author of the MG22B (SFR1) is not the scientist who undertook the DNA analysis within an FSP and, as such, this individual should not be added to the trial list and/or warned to give evidence at court as a witness.

Should the DNA results be challenged at the SFR1 stage, this should be addressed using an SFR2, which should be provided by the FSP responsible for generation of the crime scene DNA profile. This will then follow the SFR principles described in the 'Biology Casework' section below.

3.6 DRUGS

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The use of the SFR process for reporting the results of drugs casework has been in place since 2013.

3.6.1 Drugs – Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

Whilst the majority of these reports will be factual, reporting the identifications, weights and purities of substances, opinion-based work which can encompass the estimation of yields for cannabis plants and comparisons of both substances and packaging materials are also reported using the MG22B (SFR1). The layout of the 'Results/Findings' section table has some flexibility, but should convey all the salient information:

- Exhibit reference and seal,
- Contents description and amount,
- Analytical outcome.

The Evidence Type Technical Information section can include additional explanatory footnotes to clarify at the earliest available opportunity specific points around the interpreted classification of a specific drug types (i.e., exceptions for certain medications).

The final ('status') page of the SFR1 is utilised to list any additional exhibits created as part of the examination, which are typically packaging separately to facilitate subsequent fingerprint and/or DNA examinations.

3.6.2 Drugs – Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used to provide:

- Statements of continuity or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.
- Additional detail on the construction and packaging layers of drugs items, which will feed into the examination of packaging materials for fingerprint and DNA recovery/examination.
- To answer specific questions, challenges or queries in order to aid the Court in understanding the evidence.

MG22Ds must be issued with the required annexes A to D as appropriate, Annex B being of particular use when dealing with the mitigation of non-accredited outcomes.

3.7 FOOTWEAR

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The use of the SFR process for footwear was agreed by a footwear expert network and was implemented in 2014.

The SFR process can be applied to the reporting of footwear information, intelligence and evidence at each of the three key stages of footwear analysis, in line with the College of Policing licensed training, namely Coding, Screening and Evidential Reporting.

For all levels of footwear examination undertaken, the activity should only be undertaken by staff who have received appropriate training and have been deemed competent; the level of training and competence must not be overstepped. The extent and limitations of the examination or comparison conducted should be clearly stated in the SFR without diluting the value of the information.

3.7.1 Footwear – Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A should be used for all stated facts regarding the identification of a pattern and for intelligence, including potential linking of scenes with other scenes or footwear. Any work that is not peer reviewed should be reported as intelligence on the MG22A; the MG22A may be used as an initial report to support charging decisions or to inform a decision of whether to submit scene marks and footwear for further, more detailed examination and comparison. An initial visual assessment of exhibits, such as that which may be carried out without removing the footwear from the bag should be considered as intelligence and reported using the MG22A. Exclusions can also be reported on an MG22A; consideration should be made as to whether the circumstances of the case and the nature of the exclusion would warrant the use of an MG22B and whether or not a peer review is required for the exclusion. It should be noted that peer review of exclusions is required for accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025:2017.

3.7.2 Footwear – Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B can be used to report comparison findings; this can be for any degree of scrutiny from an initial visual screen to a full evidential examination. Findings relating to more than one suspect should be presented as separate reports, allowing each defendant to independently accept or identify an issue. It is however acknowledged that there are some situations where it may be more appropriate to include more than one suspect on the same report, for example, in the case of two suspects being arrested together for the same offence where both sets of footwear match marks at the scene.

Any findings or opinions reported on the MG22B must be peer reviewed prior to issue of the report; if this is not possible, the findings should be reported on an MG22A.

Photographic representations can be included for information purposes only, to illustrate the pertinent findings; if necessary, these can be added as an appendix to the MG22B, provided they are referenced within the Results/Findings section of the report.

It is recommended that any activity level conclusion which has taken into account any or all exhibits examined in the case should be put in a separate paragraph to the conclusion relating to the footwear match information. This not only ensures clarity for the reader but also allows for the match conclusion to be admitted as fact whilst allowing the interpretation of those findings to be subject to challenge.

'The Evidence Type Supporting/Technical Information' section can be used to provide additional information, if relevant, such as the details of any databases or reference collections used.

The Status Section can be used to:

- Provide details of exhibits that have been created during the examination(s) – fibre tapings, DNA swabs etc.
- Inform prosecution and defence of the status of other exhibits that were included with the submission. It may be that certain exhibits have not been examined at that stage, or that tests have been carried out with a negative or neutral outcome. It is designed to give a balanced view of related evidence type information.
- Detail any discrepancies, for example, compromised or inappropriate packaging, discrepancies in the spelling of a suspect or complainant name etc.

3.7.3 Footwear – Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

The expert completing the MG22C (SFR2) can be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested in the case. As such, the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert and include any non-compliance against the Code.

3.7.4 Footwear – Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

3.8 FIREARMS CLASSIFICATION

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The use of SFRs for reporting the classification of firearms has been approved since 2009, and since then practitioners have gradually extended their use to include reporting of examinations relating to the discharge of firearms ('shots fired' casework) and the results of Open Case File (OCF) checks.

Although their use is well embedded, experience has highlighted the need for a flexible approach to reporting with SFR in firearms classification cases. Defendants may be unable to easily agree the contents of an MG22B (SFR1) owing to the technical and complex nature of firearms legislation; this is particularly true of cases with large numbers of diverse exhibits. In addition, firearms examinations, including test-firing, necessarily take place after all requested trace evidence examinations have been completed, even though the results of the firearms examination can be the primary evidence needed to confirm the correct charges have been made on indictments, particularly in the case of early guilty pleas. For these reasons, firearms scientists will sometimes need to discuss the use of SFRs or statements with the OIC. It may be necessary to provide a full statement for complex cases, or when there is an urgent requirement for information in an evidential form in situations where the normal SFR timescale has expired or where the trial date is imminent.

Much of this will be dictated by individual FSPs as demand and capacity can vary greatly.

Currently, the SFR is widely used in firearms evidence types as below, although the approach to SFR use may vary between individual FSPs.

3.8.1 Firearms – Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A is used in the following situations:

- Non-evidential triage assessment of items to provide early information to the investigation and to assist the decision-making process with regard to considering the need to send exhibits to an accredited FSP for a classification report.
- Non-evidential, pre-charge assessment of items for the purpose of charging decisions or remand applications; such reports are often referred to as 'remand reports', 'holding statements' or 'counter statements'. The remand report is a preliminary assessment, the findings of which are subject to a full evidential examination at a later date. The author of a remand report should NOT be warned for court based on that document, as they will not necessarily be responsible for the main evidential work in that case.
- Straightforward firearms classification and firearms discharge cases where no suspect is attached. If a suspect is later identified, the report can be converted to an MG22B (SFR1) or statement as appropriate. These reports will contain information identifying the items submitted and where applicable, classifying them under firearms legislation. This may include information that has intelligence value only, for example the manufacturer of ammunition or a firearm serial number, as well as information that informs the classification, for example firearm mechanism or dimensions.
- The results of Open Case File (OCF) checks. These are typically presented in MG22A format, although they may also be reported in MG22B (SFR1) or in an MG11 statement depending on factors such as the case type or circumstances, and whether the results are likely to form part of the prosecution or defence case.

3.8.2 Firearms – Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

Where a suspect is attached, the following evidence types will be reported in MG22B (SFR1) format as the issues are generally less contentious and can be set out briefly. However, the scientist will assess each case and where necessary liaise with the OIC as to the best format. The author of the MG22B (SFR1) will be responsible for addressing any issues via an MG22C (SFR2) / statement as appropriate, and, following that, may be warned for Court if the case proceeds to trial.

The following list is by no means exhaustive but is representative of the most commonly encountered evidence types:

- Weapons using propellant-based cartridges where antiquity and function are not an issue.
- Electric shock devices (ESDs) and noxious sprays. This could include 'disguised' ESDs with photographs added to the SFR for context.
- Air weapons, converted blank/gas-firing guns and reactivated weapons where experience would suggest that the issue of muzzle energy / weapon lethality is unlikely to be disputed.
- Imitation firearms such as very low powered air guns, 'air soft' guns and blank-firing guns.
- Unfired 'live' ammunition.
- Fired ammunition components recovered from shooting incidents, such as fired cartridge cases and bullets.

Typically, the following evidence types will be reported in MG22B (SFR1) format. However, where the case is likely to be contentious or is otherwise potentially complex, the scientist may use their discretion and discuss the report format options with the OIC:

- Guns that require range of fire, mechanical function testing and/or unintentional discharge testing.
- Firearms where antiquity is likely to be in issue.
- Air guns, converted blank/gas-firing guns, and reactivated weapons where experience would suggest that issues surrounding muzzle energy or lethality may arise.
- Imitation firearms deemed 'readily convertible' into a firearm.
- Forward-venting blank/gas/signal guns.
- Still and video image interpretation (to identify a firearm).
- Serial number restoration.

These reports will contain information identifying the items submitted and where applicable, classifying them under firearms legislation. This may include information that has intelligence value only, for example the manufacturer of ammunition or a firearm serial number, as well as information that informs the classification, for example firearm mechanism or dimensions.

3.8.3 Firearms – Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

Where timescales allow for it, any technical issues raised by the Defence in response to the MG22B (SFR1) should be clearly identified within the recommended timescales and will be addressed in a MG22C (SFR2) report. In firearms cases, it is reasonable to expect the author of the MG22B (SFR1) report to carry out the MG22C (SFR2) response and appear at trial if necessary. As stated above, some FSPs may adapt their approach owing to internal supply chain protocols.

3.8.4 Firearms – Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

Any factual issues raised by the Defence in response to the MG22B (SFR1) should be clearly identified within the recommended timescales and will be addressed in a MG22D (SFR2) report.

3.8.5 Firearms – Full Statement – MG11

The following types of casework may be more appropriately reported in a full statement:

- Laboratory-based gunshot damage examination.
- Crime scene gunshot damage examination.
- Crime scene reconstruction, including using assessment of gunshot damage and/or still and video imagery.
- Gunshot injury interpretation, including post-mortem examinations.
- Cases investigated by the counter terrorism teams.
- Complex classification examinations, for example involving numerous items or complicated technical issues.

3.9 TOXICOLOGY

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Reporting complex toxicology results in the SFR process may be challenging however with concise interpretation of the results this is able to sit well within the SFR process. In order to do this, it is sometimes necessary to extend the body of the interpretation so that the reader can have a full understanding of what the results may mean and to exclude any ambiguity.

Whilst the majority of toxicology casework will fit in well with the SFR process, should the expert/author of the SFR feel that the case may be open to misinterpretation if reported in an SFR format, for example, if the findings are particularly complex or if the interpretation or conclusion requires detailed explanations in order to be well understood, then the full statement format should be considered as an alternative.

3.9.1 Toxicology – Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A can be used to report preliminary results before all toxicology testing is complete, particularly in certain urgent cases. [TEXT DELETED]. This report should contain confirmed results, although unconfirmed results that are subject to verification may be reported, provided a clear disclosure outlining their status accompanies such results.

The report should also include a statement that testing is incomplete, and where appropriate, that subsequent results may affect the final report and its interpretation.

For Road Traffic cases only – The MG22A can be used to report final results that are negative or below the specified / legal limits for Section 4, Section 5 and Section 5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for England and Wales or other jurisdictions where agreed.

3.9.2 Toxicology – Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B can be used to report results from the analysis of one or more exhibits and to provide expert interpretation based on the results and case information available at the time of writing. The level of interpretation provided should be of sufficient detail to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the value of the laboratory findings by the reader. Findings relating to more than one suspect should be presented as separate reports, allowing each defendant to accept, or identify an issue, independently.

‘Results/Findings’ section can be used to:

- List the exhibits that were examined or analysed.
- Present the results of the examination or analyses with a separate sub-section for each exhibit.
- Make clear where results have been reported as estimated values.
- Make clear the units used for each value.
- Make clear where drugs have been detected in their ‘free’ and/or ‘conjugated’ form, if applicable.
- For Casework Toxicology cases only - State the date (and time) the exhibits were produced, taken or seized.
- For Road Traffic Toxicology cases only - Denote which Section(s) of the Road Traffic Act the results are applicable to.
- For Road Traffic Toxicology cases only – Make clear whether results are above or below per se alcohol or drug limits.

‘Conclusions’ section can be used to:

- Provide interpretation of the presence or absence of substances pertinent to the case and any inference that may be drawn from the detected concentrations, in the context of the available case information.
- Provide an opinion, in the form of conclusions that were drawn from the results in conjunction with the case information.

'Supporting/Technical Information' section (or other sections if deemed more appropriate) can be used to:

- Detail any discrepancies, for example, compromised or inappropriate packaging, discrepancies in the spelling of a suspect or complainant name etc.
- Provide additional information regarding the analyses undertaken, to include a list of the substances tested for (for each exhibit).
- State the limitation of the analyses conducted and why an analysis was not conducted.
- State if the exhibit was used up in the analyses i.e., none remains for the defence to use if required.
- For Casework Toxicology cases only – Make clear the time to which the results relate (e.g., time of the incident, time of sampling, time of death etc).
- For Casework Toxicology cases only – State the factors that may affect the interpretation of the results (e.g., post-mortem redistribution, time interval etc).
- For Casework Toxicology cases only – Expand on reasoning for opinion or conclusion (e.g., state the case details and information provided to make an inference).
- For Casework Toxicology cases only – Define non-routine exhibits and make clear their characteristics which may affect interpretation (e.g., vitreous, muscle, brain etc).
- For Road Traffic Toxicology cases only – If any Section 5/5A results have been included in the report, include a comment regarding the appropriate deduction made from the arithmetic mean of the analytical results.
- For Road Traffic Toxicology cases only – the SFR1 should reference the 'Supplementary Technical Notes for Road Traffic Toxicology SFR' document which can be found at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-technical-notes-and-guidance> These guidance notes provide general technical information to ensure that the SFR1 remains as clear and succinct as possible, whilst providing access to additional, relevant information to enable all parties to fully understand the significance of the findings and assist with efficient case management.

'Status' section can be used to:

- Inform prosecution and defence of the status of other exhibits that were included with the submission. It is often the case that certain exhibits have not been examined or analysed at the stage of reporting.
- Provide details of sub-exhibits that have been created during the course of the examination(s) – e.g., noxious liquid sub-samples.

3.9.3 Toxicology – SFR2 Requests

The proportion of Road Traffic Toxicology SFR1s for which there is no Section 10 admission by the defence remains high compared with other evidence types. In order to encourage a robust process for local engagement between all parties when responding to requests for SFR2 and data-packs, a 'Gatekeeper Guidance for Road Traffic Toxicology SFR2 Requests' document has been produced. This guidance, which can be found at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-technical-notes-and-guidance>, complements the [Supplementary Technical Notes for Road Traffic Toxicology SFR](#) document and provides useful information to assist investigating officers, case builders, CPS, defence, forensic services and FSPs, to support appropriate management of all SFR 2 requests.

3.9.4 Toxicology – Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

The expert completing the MG22C (SFR2) can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested or those that require clarification in the case. As such,

the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert, include any non-compliance against the Code, and that the MG22C SFR2 complies with CrimPR 19.4.

3.9.5 Toxicology – Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity, or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

3.10 DIGITAL FORENSICS

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There are no specific restrictions on the use of SFR for reporting the outcomes of digital device examinations. However, as with other forensic disciplines, it is recognised that not all digital casework will be suitable for reporting via the SFR framework, due to challenges of complexity and the dynamic changes within digital forensics.

Forces should ensure that local CPS, Case Management Teams and Courts are engaged in the decisions making process around scope to ensure there is full understanding of how SFR will be used in digital forensic cases. See [Section 1.8](#) for SFR extension to scope principles.

3.10.1 Digital Forensics - Use of the SFR Process for Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)

The [CPS guidance on Indecent and Prohibited Images of Children | The Crown Prosecution Service \(cps.gov.uk\)](#) refers to a “streamlined approach to low-risk offenders”. For the avoidance of doubt, the CPS have confirmed that this is different from Streamlined Forensic Reporting, although SFRs may well be used as part of that streamlined approach.

For digital CSAM/IIOC casework the MG22B (SFR1) can be used to report factual results based on the case information available at the time of writing. In complex CSAM/IIOC investigations or technical reporting of CSAM/IIOC, the use of **a full statement** or local technical reporting policies and procedures would apply.

The national CPS guidance states that the streamlined approach can only be used when the following three factors apply:

- The CSAM/IIOC suspect is assessed by investigators to pose a low risk in relation to children. The assessment is carried out using the KIRAT (Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool).
- The investigation is limited to offences relation to the possession, distribution or production (in the limited sense) of CSAM/IIOC. The scope of the investigation may be determined by what is found on the initial searches of devices, other evidence obtained or intelligence.
- All relevant digital storage devices have been subject to 'triage' by the Child Abuse Image Database (CAID). Note that the triage process may not identify a device that contained only first-generation images of contact abuse.

Each MG22B (SFR1) relating to CSAM/IIOC digital casework should include the following in relation to content:

- A table of content giving the total number of CAID recognised images in each category using ALL software across ALL devices interrogated - individual tables can be added for each exhibit/item within the report.

- Each count should have an 'explanation' of what the count represents following the particulars, for example:
- [This count represents the total number of Category A still and moving images found on Exhibits JDW/1, and JDW/2]
- In accordance with national CPS guidance select three representative image examples from each category and include a sufficient-detailed description of each in the MG22B (SFR1). These descriptions should include any factor relevant to sentence, for example: (1) the apparent age of the victim, (2) whether there is discernible pain or suffering, and (3) whether the child appears intoxicated or drugged. Where possible the image reference number should be included to allow for any cross-referencing, or to view the selected image should there be any point taken by the defence about the officer's descriptions.
- Ensure that the most important aggravating and mitigating features with potential application to more than one offence or class of offences.
- Guidance around terminology, processes used, referring to sampled images, certain file types can be included in the 'Evidence Type Supporting/Technical information' of the report. It is important to note that the MG22B (SFR1) is a factual report and should allow prosecutors to make charging decisions based on the results of the initial CAID analysis.

It has been acknowledged that individual forces will structure their report content in accordance with their local policies and procedures; the MG22B (SFR1) template allows for this. The template has 'fixed' content, which should not be changed to ensure that a national standardised approach is adopted. Adoption of the MG22B (SFR1) reporting process can considerably reduce the timescales for production of technical reports and, in combination with the streamlined approach, should meet the high volume of suspects being investigated by the police in CSAM/IIOC offences.

3.11 BIOLOGY CASEWORK

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The introduction of SFR for reporting evaluative biology casework in 2015, brought a new set of challenges to the SFR process; conveying the true strength of a complex set of scientific tests, each test with its own limitations and caveats, in the context of each case and at the most appropriate level in a simple yet accurate way, without being left open to misinterpretation by the reader. There is also the challenge of how certain biological tests might impinge upon or compromise other tests, necessitating continued high-quality Case Assessment and Interpretation ('CAI'), taking the needs of each individual case into account at the earliest opportunity to ensure the most appropriate tests are carried out at key stages in the case.

It is recognised that not all Biology Casework will fit into the SFR process, for example multiple suspect cases or some complex murder cases. The FSP, in consultation with the authorising Police Force, will have discretion to determine the most appropriate output for each case, on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind their obligation to assist the courts to actively manage the case in the most streamlined and cost-effective way.

Should the expert feel that the case may be open to misinterpretation if reported in an SFR format, for example if the findings are particularly complex or if the interpretation or conclusion requires detailed explanations in order to be well understood, then a full statement should be considered as an alternative.

3.11.1 Biology Casework – Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The findings and/or opinions presented in the MG22A can include the author's interpretation of the findings and are based on the information available at the time. Further work and/or evaluation may be performed in context with additional findings or accounts and be produced in subsequent information reports.

3.11.2 Biology Casework – Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B can be used to report a result from the initial analysis/comparison and/or to provide expert opinion in the form of either an investigative or an evaluative conclusion, based on the case information available at the time of writing. The overall conclusion should be at the level that the expert deems most appropriate to the case (i.e., whether that be source or activity level), to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the value of the laboratory findings by the reader. Findings relating to more than one suspect should be presented as separate reports, allowing each defendant to accept, or identify an issue, independently.

The report will not contain significant amounts of technical or supporting information, or detailed explanations/rationale concerning how the conclusion was formed. General technical information is provided as a set of agreed national (discipline specific) technical notes that the author may reference within the results section. For example, if different DNA profiling systems have been used in the case, this can be disclosed within the status section of the report and a reference made to the relevant content within the supporting technical information.

The Supplementary Technical Notes for Biology Casework SFR can be found at [here](#)

Photographic representations can be included for information purposes only, to illustrate the pertinent findings. If these are necessary, they can be added as an appendix to the MG22B, provided they are referenced within the results section of the report.

It is recommended that any activity level conclusion, which has taken into account any, or all exhibits examined in the case, should be put in a separate paragraph within the results section to the source or sub-source level conclusion(s) (i.e., the DNA match information). This not only ensures clarity for the reader but allows for a source level conclusion to be admitted as fact, and the interpretation of those findings to be challenged.

The status section can be used to:

- Provide additional information regarding the examinations undertaken. For example, if relevant, the nature of a reaction to a presumptive chemical test (i.e., strong or weak) and/or brief details of any DNA mixtures, i.e., the likelihood ratio/strength of the DNA match should be reported in the results section, but the presence of non-matching DNA in the mixture can be detailed in the status section. If any findings limit or undermine the prosecution case, or assist the defence, they should be listed in the status section (for example inclusion of a caveat to state that it is not possible to determine when any DNA detected has been deposited).
- Provide details of exhibits that have been created during the course of the examination(s) – fibre tapings, DNA swabs etc.
- Inform prosecution and defence of the status of other exhibits that were included with the submission. It may be that certain exhibits have not been examined at that stage, or that tests have been carried out with a negative or neutral outcome. It is designed to give a balanced view of related evidence type information.

- Include results considered in developing the forensic strategy or information used in forming the overall section one conclusion. For example, the provision of detail around the basis on which an evaluative level conclusion has been provided.
- Detail any discrepancies, for example, compromised or inappropriate packaging, discrepancies in the spelling of a suspect or complainant name etc.

3.11.3 Biology Casework – Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

The expert completing the MG22C (SFR2) can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested in the case. As such, the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert.

3.11.4 Biology Casework – Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity, or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

3.12 QUESTIONED DOCUMENTS

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The use of the SFR process for reporting the results of Questioned Documents casework has been in place since 2014.

Many of the cases reported will be handwriting or signature comparison cases.

Whilst most Questioned Documents cases will fit in well with the SFR process, some may not be suitable for this type of reporting. For example, if the expert considers that the restrictions of an SFR report mean that it could be open to misinterpretation then the MG11 (Full Statement) format should be considered as an alternative. This will usually be where a case is particularly complex or otherwise requires a more detailed explanation. As an example, handwriting cases with multiple suspects may be unsuitable for the SFR reporting procedure.

Where evaluative opinion levels are expressed, the different FSPs in this discipline may use slightly different expressions of support. Therefore, where such opinions are expressed in an SFR (MG22B or C), the expert will normally indicate the scale of opinion levels used by that FSP within the “Evidence Type Supporting/Technical Information” section.

3.12.1 Questioned Documents – Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A format can be used in the following situations:

- Examinations to provide intelligence or to support future comparisons where no suspect has been identified. For example:
- Examination of handwritings and/or signatures for possible future comparisons.
- Examination of indented impressions of writing.
- Examination of obliterated, faded or altered entries.
- Examination of QD materials for possible future comparisons (printing features, paper features, manufacturing marks, inks etc.).
- Examination of QD materials for investigative information (printing features, paper features, manufacturing marks, inks etc.).

- Comparison of QD materials amongst themselves with no reference material for comparison (printing features, paper features, manufacturing marks, inks etc.).
- Comparison of handwritings/signatures amongst themselves (grouping) where no reference handwritings/signatures are provided for comparison. Note: the investigators should first check that this is a worthwhile exercise for the investigation. Normally comparison with reference writings/signatures of a named individual(s) would be a more meaningful examination.
- Preliminary findings where further material is requested or likely to be submitted.
- Results of examinations that provide no useful information to either the prosecution or the defence. Examples may include:
 - Indented impressions examinations that provide no decipherable impressions.
 - Examination of obliterated, faded or altered writing or text where no meaningful interpretation can be made.
 - An examination where no comparison was possible for technical reasons.
 - A handwriting/signature comparison where the outcome is inconclusive.

However, if it is believed that the result of any examination provides or could provide some useful evidence to the court then this should be reported on an MG22B (SFR1).

3.12.2 Questioned Documents – Forensic Results Report - MG22B (SFR1)

An MG22B (SFR1) should be used where reference material associated with a named individual(s) (suspect or other subject in an investigation) is provided for comparison and findings/opinions may aid a court in its deliberations regarding a suspect(s).

Typical examples of the use of the MG22B (SFR1) report are given below:

- The results of comparisons of questioned handwriting(s)/signature(s) with reference handwritings/signatures of a named individual(s) where the outcome(s) may aid a court in its deliberations.
- Indented impressions examinations where meaningful decipherable impressions are found.
- Examinations of obliterated, erased or altered writing or text that provide meaningful interpretations of the original/altered entries.
- QD materials comparisons where a link is found between questioned materials and reference materials. For example, links between:
 - Indented impressions and other submitted writings.
 - Paper and a paper supply.
 - Printing and a printer.
 - An envelope and a supply of envelopes.

The author of the MG22B (SFR1) will be responsible for addressing any issues or defence challenges via an MG22C (SFR2) or an MG11 (full statement).

3.12.3 Questioned Documents – Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

Specific issues raised by the Defence in response to the MG22B (SFR1) should be clearly identified within the recommended timescales and can be addressed in a MG22C (SFR2). In Questioned Documents cases, it is reasonable to expect that the author of the MG22B (SFR1) will also produce the MG22C (SFR2) response and appear at trial if necessary.

Where specific issues are not raised in response to an MG22B (SFR1) but the evidence is nevertheless contended an MG11 (full statement) could be requested instead of an MG22C (SFR2). In addition, where the prosecution requires demonstration of findings at court despite them being accepted by the defence an MG11 (full statement) could be requested.

It is the responsibility of the investigation team/CPS to ensure that instructions for an MG22C (SFR2) or an MG11 (full statement) are made in good time prior to a scientist being called to court. Please also note that in many Questioned Documents cases, for the benefit of the court and in accordance with best practice, the scientist will need to create a demonstration chart that will facilitate efficient and meaningful evidence to be given in court.

3.12.4 Questioned Documents – Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

3.13 MEDICAL SFR SERVICES

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The provision of medical evidence using the SFR Process delivered by a Third-Party Provider is becoming business as usual for many forces. Where an organisation wishes to use the services of a Third Party Provider for Medical SFR Reports, there is a national Specification and Service Level Agreement, which includes the technical and quality requirements, available from Blue Light Commercial (BLC).

The compliant route to market is via G-Cloud 14 (LOT 2) and the award of a Call-Off Contract for the Provision of Medical SFR Services.

BLC operate a 'Medical SFR National User Group' for local/regional Force practitioners working in operations, procurement and finance. In the first instance, enquiries should be directed to:

forensics@bluelight.police.uk

A specific Medical SFR Process Flow is included at [Appendix D](#) and should be used to supplement the general SFR workflow provided in [Appendix B](#) below.

Guidance on using the specific SFR MG22 forms is given below so forces can understand what they can expect from each stage of the process and who will provide reports at SFR1 and SFR2 stages.

There is no requirement for Medical SFR reports to contain an accreditation reference or a Declaration of Compliance with the FSR Code.

3.13.1 Medical – Medical Transcription Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B is used to transcribe and explain medical events in a clear and concise, chronological sequence and addresses the need for information to make a charging decision. The disclosure of the medical records relied on by the medical transcriber will be made on the 'Status of Medical Exhibits' section.

3.13.2 Medical – Expert Response - MG22C and Professional Response - MG22D (SFR2)

The SFR2 response is provided by the most appropriate person to address the specific issue.

3.13.3 Medical – Expert Response - MG22C (SFR2)

The MG22C is used where there is a focused question that needs to be answered by an expert in the related medical field. Although this form can be used for a full expert response, focused responses to issues raised from the MG22B or MG22D can also be addressed in this form.

Where it is necessary for evidence to be referred to a medical expert, forces, in discussion with the provider can refer this request to the Forensic Medical Advice Team (FMAT) at the National Crime Agency (NCA). The FMAT is a free service for major crime investigations, supporting and advising on forensic medical issues and injury and weapon interpretation. The main service provision is to act as the national gateway to independent medical experts who can provide evidential opinions for court. The team have access to over 300 medical experts both in pathology and clinical practice for adults and children. The team provide a level of support for these experts including the monitoring of their workload, retaining their current CVs and terms and conditions (fees and timescales), and making sure that they are aware of their legal obligations and requirements as an expert witness including using the latest approved declarations for their reports, signposting them to the current guidance documents from CPS on disclosure and unused material as well as the Forensic Science Regulator: Code of Practice.

In addition, the team will always discuss any case prior to formal instruction directly with the expert to check on suitability and availability. If the investigation is complex then a scoping meeting will be facilitated by the FMAT with the investigation team and the expert and, on some occasions, including the pathologist and CPS too. This enables the team to build a rapport with the experts when facilitating their instructions. The team are also knowledgeable and experienced when advising investigation teams in a number of forensic medical areas and with the instruction of medical experts. Key to this process is discussing the relevant expertise based on the requirements by the force and CPS and performing basic checks on the expert including operational feedback, General Medical Council (GMC) registration status, criminal court experience and medico-legal reports.

If you require support from the FMAT team, please contact Major Crime Investigative Support on 0345 000 5463 or mcis@nca.police.uk and request a FMAT Proforma.

3.13.4 Professional Response - MG22D (SFR2)

The MG22D is used for factual, professional responses to issues raised from the MG22B or MG22C.

For more information about SFR Medical, visit www.sfrmedical.com or email contact@sfrmedical.com

3.13.5 Hearsay Evidence

The provision of medical SFR reports and statements are normally based upon medical notes (including imagery) made by medical practitioners within medical facilities. The notes are transcribed by Medical Transcribers for MG22Bs, and Medical Experts or Medical Specialists will normally respond to prosecution issues with additional MG22Bs and defence issues with MG22Cs or MG22Ds.

The content of these reports and statements is admissible under s.117 of the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) 2003. Although the provisions of the CJA 2003 are complex s.117 is relevant to medical evidence and means doctors can (usually) provide evidence from other doctors' notes. S.117(4) makes special provision for statements made for criminal proceedings and can cause problems in medical cases because (if it applies) there is a requirement to satisfy the court that the original statement maker "cannot reasonably be expected to have any recollection" of events. That may well be the case but with an SFR 1 we are not asking doctors if they can recollect the events. However, the original treating doctor/paramedic is not making their notes for the purpose of criminal proceedings (but to treat the patient) so 117(4) does not apply and therefore the provision of s117(5) does not apply. Therefore, the provisions of s.117(1) and (2) are the only sections that apply and makes the evidence admissible.

3.14 FIRE INVESTIGATION

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The information reported is based on the interpretation of the Fire Investigator (FI) and established fact and should always be made clear when utilising relevant MG22A, MG22B and MG22C reports within the SFR framework.

The process followed for reporting is for **non-accidental** fires and only when a Tier 2 Fire Investigator is deployed. Tier 1 reports continue to be at a local FRS (Fire and Rescue Service) level and the outcome of Tier 1 investigations are recorded in the national FRS's **Fire and Rescue Data Platform (FaRDaP)**. This process has not been approved for Coronial cases which should still be reported via **a full statement**.

The following forms are applicable for the Fire Investigation SFR Process:

- MG22A – Forensic Information Report (Fire Investigation)
- MG22B – Forensic Result Report (Fire Investigation)
- Disclosure Schedule (locally produced)
- MG22C – Expert Response (Fire Investigation)
- MG22A – Forensic Information Report (Fire Investigation Dog)
- MG22A – Forensic Information Report (External Agencies Report)

3.14.1 Fire Investigation - Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The information below outlines how the MG22A can be utilised under set headings to provide a record of the scene examination:

- Background
- Description of damage
- Area of Origin (seat of fire)
- Determination
- Impact of fire
- Other details

NOTE: This report is routinely submitted within 48 hours from the conclusion of the scene examination or within 24 hours for cases where there is a suspect. If the scene examination continues over several days, an interim MG22A can be submitted, and subsequent additional information added on an additional MG22A as the scene examination progresses to conclusion. The MG22A should be peer reviewed prior to release or stated otherwise in the report.

The same format of MG22A can be utilised to report the findings of a scene examination to **external agencies** such as insurance companies but in these circumstances, all personal or police data such as crime numbers, etc, should be omitted. This standardises the reporting mechanism and is efficient as it contains the same information as the Police/Criminal Justice use of the MG22A.

When there has been attendance at the scene by a **Fire Investigation Dog**, the information below should be provided as a record of the scene examination:

- Background
- Description of area searched
- Findings
- Other details

An MG22A should be completed each time the dog is deployed and regardless of a negative or positive indication. No MG22B will be required to be produced for the use of Fire Investigation Dogs.

The MG22A is an information report, not a witness statement, and is not in a format suitable for court. See [Section 1.11](#) for advice on how to respond to requests for court attendance.

3.14.2 Fire Investigation - Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B is only produced when there is a suspect identified for the offence, or in other rare cases where an MG22B (SFR1) will assist with enquiries A Disclosure Schedule is required to be submitted at the MG22B stage (SFR1) as per local requirements and can be submitted using local or national disclosure forms.

The information below outlines how the MG22B can be utilised under set headings to provide key information:

- Area of origin (seat of fire)
- Determination (explanation of most probable cause)
- Conclusion

The delivery date for the MG22B is agreed between the OIC/CJU and the Fire Investigator subject to local Service Level Agreements.

The MG22B is a results report, not a witness statement, and is not in a format suitable for court. See [Section 1.13](#) for advice on how to respond to requests for court attendance.

3.14.3 Fire Investigation - Expert Response - MG22C (SFR2)

The information contained on the MG22C is set out to address any specific challenge raised by the defence that relates to information provided on the MG22B in relation to the fire investigator's examination of the scene. Any challenges that relate to the findings of other personnel or experts attending the scene and/or recovering evidence should be directed to the appropriate FSP or forensic staff member.

The Expert Witness needs to refer to or be cognisant of the FSR Guidance – Expert Report Guidance FSR-G 200.

See [Appendix C](#) for process flow for Fire Investigation.

3.15 LACHRYMATORY SUBSTANCES

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The use of the SFR process for lachrymatory substances has been universally agreed to by multiple police forces and the CPS and has been in use for many years. It had previously been accepted whilst incorporated into the Toxicology discipline.

The SFR process can be applied to the screening, identification and classification of lachrymatory substances, with regards to both bulk material from canisters and residues on swabs/clothing. Whilst the majority of casework regarding lachrymatory substances will fit in well with the SFR process, should the expert/author of the SFR feel that the case may be open to misinterpretation if reported in an SFR format, for example, if the findings are particularly complex or if the interpretation or conclusion requires detailed explanations in order to be well understood, then the full statement format should be considered as an alternative.

3.15.1 Lachrymatory Substances - Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A can be used to report preliminary results before testing is complete. This report should contain a brief description of the exhibit, and any examination work carried out. If any testing has been completed, then confirmed results should be included, although these may be better suited to an MG22B format. Unconfirmed results that are subject to verification may be reported, provided a clear disclosure outlining their status accompanies such results. The report should also include a statement that testing is incomplete, and where appropriate, that subsequent results may affect the final report and its interpretation. This form can also be used to provide provisional updates that would otherwise be an email, as well as detailing examination strategies.

3.15.2 Lachrymatory Substances – Forensic Result Report – MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B can be used to report results from the analysis of one or more exhibits and to provide expert interpretation based on the results and case information available at the time of writing. The level of interpretation provided should be of sufficient detail to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the value of the laboratory findings by the reader. Findings relating to more than one suspect should be presented as separate reports, allowing each defendant to accept, or identify an issue, independently.

Results/Findings Section can be used to:

- List the exhibits that were examined or analysed, with a separate sub-section for each exhibit.
- State whether fingerprint/DNA precautions were taken during examination.
- Detail how the item has been examined and state the lachrymatory substances that are being searched for during analysis.
- Present the results of the examination or analyses.
- Provide an opinion, in the form of conclusions that were drawn from the results in conjunction with the case information.

Supporting/Technical Information Section can be used to:

- Provide additional information regarding the identified lachrymatory substance(s), including a description of the hazards associated with such a substance.

- Provide a brief summary detailing the testing methods/techniques that have been used, if deemed necessary.

Status Section can be used to:

- Inform prosecution and defence of the status of other exhibits that were included with the submission. It may be the case that certain exhibits have not been examined or analysed at the stage of reporting.
- Provide details of sub-exhibits that have been created during the course of the examination(s) – e.g., retained DNA samples.

3.15.3 Lachrymatory Substances - Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

The expert completing the MG22C (SFR2) can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested or those that require clarification in the case. As such, the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert, include any non-compliance against the Code, and that the MG22C SFR2 adheres to CrimPR 19.4.

3.15.4 Lachrymatory Substances - Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity, or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

3.16 NOXIOUS AND UNKNOWN SUBSTANCES

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The use of the SFR process for Noxious and Unknown substances has been universally agreed to by multiple police forces and the CPS and has been in use for many years.

The SFR process can be applied to the screening and identification of noxious and unknown substances, with regards to both bulk material and residues on swabs/clothing. Whilst the majority of casework regarding noxious and unknown substances will fit in well with the SFR process, should the expert/author of the SFR feel that the case may be open to misinterpretation if reported in an SFR format, for example, if the findings are particularly complex or if the interpretation or conclusion requires detailed explanations in order to be well understood, then the **full statement** format should be considered as an alternative.

3.16.1 Noxious and Unknown Substances - Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The MG22A can be used to report preliminary results before testing is complete. This report should contain a brief description of the exhibit, and any examination work carried out. If any testing has been completed, then confirmed results should be included, although these may be better suited to an MG22B (SFR1) format. Unconfirmed results that are subject to verification may be reported, provided a clear disclosure outlining their status accompanies such results. The report should also include a statement that testing is incomplete, and where appropriate, that subsequent results may affect the final report and its interpretation. This form can also be used to provide provisional updates that would otherwise be an email as well as detailing examination strategies.

3.16.2 Noxious and Unknown Substances - Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B (SFR1) can be used to report results from the analysis of one or more exhibits and to provide expert interpretation based on the results and case information available at the time of writing. The level of interpretation provided should be of sufficient detail to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the value of the laboratory findings by the reader.

Findings relating to more than one subject should be presented as separate reports, allowing each defendant to accept, or identify an issue, independently.

Results/Findings Section can be used to:

- List the exhibits that were examined or analysed, with a separate sub-section for each exhibit.
- State whether fingerprint/DNA precautions were taken during examination.
- Describe the exhibits that have been examined, and a brief description of the testing that has been carried out.
- Present the results of the examination or analyses.
- Provide an opinion, in the form of conclusions that were drawn from the results in conjunction with the case information.

Supporting/Technical Information Section can be used to:

- Provide additional information regarding the suspected/identified substance, including a description of the hazards associated with such a substance. This information should be obtained from a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS), if required.
- Provide a brief summary of technical information detailing the testing methods/techniques that have been used, if deemed necessary.

Status Section can be used to:

- Inform prosecution and defence of the status of other exhibits that were included with the submission. It may be the case that certain exhibits have not been examined or analysed at the stage of reporting.
- Provide details of sub-exhibits that have been created during the course of the examination(s) – e.g., decanted liquid samples.

3.16.3 Noxious and Unknown Substances - Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

The expert completing the MG22C (SFR2) can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested or those that require clarification in the case. As such, the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert, include any non-compliance against the Code, and that the MG22C (SFR2) adheres to CrimPR 19.4.

3.16.4 Noxious and Unknown Substances - Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity, or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

Evidential Drug Identification Testing (EDIT) utilises Home Office approved drug testing kits (DTKs) and Home Office approved drug testing devices (DTDs). Results are issued within the Streamlined Forensic Reporting (SFR) and enables a quick case disposal decision to be made for possession only drug cases. There is no need to release the suspect under investigation pending the submission of suspected controlled drugs (SCDs) to forensic service providers. EDIT is solely for possession only drug cases, whether or not possession of a SCD is admitted by the suspect. In cases where there is a dispute of the identity of the drug, there is a Disputed Test Procedure.)

The Evidential Drug Identification Testing (EDIT) Good Practice Guide is available on the FCN website:

<https://www.fcn.police.uk/publications/fcn-mgt-gui-0028-evidential-drug-identification-testing-edit-good-practice-guide-2023>

3.17.1 EDIT - Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

An MG22B (SFR1) should be used to report all positive EDIT results from DTKs and DTDs. An MG22B is not required for negative outcomes. It should also be used to report all cannabis identifications undertaken by an 'experienced' Police Officer or member of Police Staff who has been authorised by their force where this has been undertaken within the EDIT process. This result is sufficient evidence to allow a charge of possession (or other appropriate disposal). The finalised report should be saved as a PDF and only the PDF version of the report should be issued.

Within EDIT, there is a Disputed Test Procedure. A person charged with the offence of possession of a controlled drug can initiate the Disputed Test Procedure if they think the test result is incorrect. If the Disputed Test Procedure is initiated, the SCD is sent to a forensic service provider. The result of this laboratory analysis will supersede that of the EDIT test. Therefore, there is no need to complete an SFR2 within the EDIT process.

The 'Examined' section should be used to record the exhibit tested including the exhibit reference and any unique references, and a description of the packaging, including number of packages or pills, and contents of that exhibit. This should be in the words of the EDIT Tester as opposed to transcription of the description from the exhibit packaging.

The Results / Findings section should include:

- The DTK or DTD used to carry out the EDIT test.
- In the case of cannabis, confirmation the result is based upon a sight and smell test.
- The result, including a description of the result observed e.g., 'two-lines' or 'purple'.
- The drug indicated.
- The Legal Status of the drug indicated according to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended).
- Weighing of the suspected controlled drug is optional, it is not a requirement of EDIT to weigh.
- Multiple tests can be provided on a single report.

The Evidence Type Supporting / Technical Information section should include:

- A declaration to state 'Testing is in accordance with Home Office Circulars 05/2017, 015/2012 and the Evidential Drug Identification Testing (EDIT) Good Practice Guide 2023'
- Details of the Disputed Test Procedure

The Status of Related Exhibits page can be used to record any other exhibits that form part of the case, but which were not subjected to the EDIT process.

3.18 FIBRES

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The introduction of SFR for reporting fibre casework began as a pilot in 2022 with official implementation in 2024. It is recognised that not all Fibre Casework will fit into the SFR process, for example multiple suspect cases or some complex cases. The FSP, in consultation with the authorising Police Force, will have discretion to determine the most appropriate output for each case, on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind their obligation to assist the courts to actively manage the case in the most streamlined and cost-effective way. Should the expert feel that the case may be open to misinterpretation if reported in an SFR format, for example if the findings are particularly complex or if the interpretation or conclusion requires detailed explanations in order to be well understood, then a full statement should be considered as an alternative.

3.18.1 Fibre Casework – Forensic Information Report - MG22A

The findings and/or opinions presented in the MG22A can include the author's interpretation of the findings and are based on the information available at the time. Further work and/or evaluation may be performed in context with additional findings or accounts and be produced in subsequent information reports.

3.18.2 Fibre Casework – Forensic Result Report - MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B can be used to report a result from the initial analysis/comparison and/or to provide expert opinion in the form of either an investigative or an evaluative conclusion, based on the case information available at the time of writing. The overall conclusion should be at the level that the expert deems most appropriate to the case (i.e., whether that be source or activity level), to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the value of the laboratory findings by the reader. Findings relating to more than one suspect should be presented as separate reports, allowing each defendant to accept, or identify an issue, independently.

The report will not contain significant amounts of technical or supporting information, or detailed explanations/rationale concerning how the conclusion was formed. General technical information is provided as a set of agreed national (discipline specific) technical notes that the author may reference within the results section.

The Supplementary Technical Notes for Fibre Casework SFR can be found at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-technical-notes-and-guidance>

Photographic representations can be included for information purposes only, to illustrate the pertinent findings. If these are necessary, they can be added as an appendix to the MG22B, provided they are referenced within the results section of the report.

It is recommended that any activity level conclusion, which has taken into account any, or all exhibits examined in the case, should be put in a separate paragraph within the results section to the source level conclusion(s). This not only ensures clarity for the reader but allows for a source level conclusion to be admitted as fact, and the interpretation of those findings to be challenged.

The status section can be used to:

- Provide additional information regarding the examinations undertaken. For example, any clothing items not suitable as a source of fibres for further examination, or the presence of non-matching fibres if appropriate
- Provide details of exhibits that have been created during the course of the examination(s) – fibre tapings, DNA samples etc.
- Inform prosecution and defence of the status of other exhibits that were included with the submission. It may be that certain exhibits have not been examined at that stage, or that tests have been carried out with a negative or neutral outcome. It is designed to give a balanced view of related evidence type information. It may also include results considered in developing the forensic strategy or information used in forming the overall section one conclusion.
- Detail any discrepancies, for example, compromised or inappropriate packaging, discrepancies in the spelling of a suspect or complainant name etc.

3.18.3 Fibre Casework – Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

The MG22C can be used to respond to any findings detailed in the MG22B that have been disputed by the defence, providing expert opinion in the form of an evaluative conclusion based on the information available at the time of writing. The expert completing the MG22C can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested in the case. As such, the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert and include any non-compliance against the Code.

3.18.4 Fibre Casework – Factual Response Statement - MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity, or by forensic examiners to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

3.19 CCTV ANALYSIS FOR THE ESTIMATION OF SUBJECT VEHICLE SPEED IN FORENSIC COLLISION INVESTIGATION

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3.19.1 Forensic Collision Investigation - Forensic Information Report - MG22B

In straightforward cases where the Subject Vehicle is clearly visible in the CCTV footage, the reference points for assessing the distance travelled may be unambiguous, the time taken to travel between the reference points in the CCTV footage readily agreed and comparable uncertainty of measurement assessments made. In such cases, only brief and basic descriptions and findings need to be included in the MG22B (SFR1).

Where processes to determine time and distance are particularly involved and complex, sufficient descriptive detail should be added to the SFR1 for recipients to understand methodologies used and to better empower the defence to agree or disagree with the results. Consideration should be given to enhancing descriptive detail by adding some or all of the following:

- Photographs and / or 3D laser scan images identifying the CCTV camera that captured the footage used for the speed analysis,
- 3D laser scan image capture showing lines of sight from the CCTV camera to the specific reference points within the virtual environment against which the subject vehicle's position has been fixed,
- Images captured from CCTV footage showing the subject vehicle aligned with the chosen reference points,
- Orthographic 3D laser scan images showing distance measurements along the carriageway travelled between chosen reference points,
- Images captured from Frame Interval Timer test footage,
- Frame interval timing set out in table form.
- Relevant CCTV metadata,
- Hash values of CCTV footage and images,
- Precise of uncertainty of measurements.

Some or even all of these details may be recorded within an analytical diary, or a workflow report generated by dedicated Forensic Video Analysis software which the investigator may wish to consider asking to be forwarded to the defence to assist in their understanding of the analysis.

While the above material may be normally considered to be non-sensitive unused material to be documented in an MG6C, care should obviously be taken to ensure that nothing held and referred to in the SFR1 may be of a sensitive nature. It may appear counter-intuitive to add enhanced detail to a SFR1 when the principle aim of the process in this subject area is to concisely report subject vehicle speed. However, it was the experience of the Police FCIU Base involved in the four-year trial period to provide proof of concept that providing such additional detail, where necessary, all but negated rejection by CPS and Defence and prevented the instigation of the SFR2 part of the process.

3.19.2 Forensic Collision Investigation - Expert Response Statement - MG22C (SFR2)

On occasions when the Defence do not accept the findings of an SFR1, the evidential SFR2 should contain sufficient detail to encompass what would normally be contained within a dedicated CCTV speed report, albeit more succinctly abridged.

3.19.3 Forensic Collision Investigation – FCI investigation Report

As previously indicated, SFR1s can be used to report vehicle speed expeditiously for the use by senior officers to consider when making custody remand decisions and for CPS when making charging decisions. On occasions, these will be submitted in the knowledge and understanding that they will not be forwarded to the Defence and that the FCI will later be required produce a full forensic collision investigation report. In such instances, as previously indicated, key information can be supplied within very short time scales. Then, as peer review had already taken place to ensure the critical findings reported in the SFR1 were reliable and robust, this subject area would not need to be revisited during the peer review process of the full forensic report.

Note: In circumstances where the analyst has no personal knowledge of the subject vehicle's actual identity, i.e. make, model and particularly the registration number, and there is no satisfactory continuity evidence available, it should not be reported in the SFR.

It may be that the analyst did not attend the collision scene or if they did, the vehicle was not present, and its definitive identity cannot be established from the footage itself.

In such instances, it will be for others to provide evidence of continuity of the vehicle's identity to the Criminal Justice System. If this continuity is not available to the analyst at the time of the SFR submission, they should only identify the subject they are tasked to establish the speed of by reference to specific detail contained within the CCTV footage, such as:

- The time it passed through camera view,
- The direction of travel,
- Its location within the field of view,
- Its characteristics (e.g. Apparent colour, shape, lights),
- Its activity.

Similarly, the speed limit for the carriageway or even the name of the carriageway itself may not be within the direct knowledge of the analyst. Therefore, when reporting subject vehicle speed in the SFR, unless there is evidential continuity that provides confidence of these facts, they should not be referenced.

If continuity of vehicle identity, location and speed limit is provided to the analyst, this should be detailed in the SFR under 'Items Examined' and this information then included in the 'Results/Findings' section./The FCIU the Base that conducted the trial found that, in some cases, Coroners were prepared to accept the information provided on an SFR1, thus avoiding the need for the submitting FCI to attend the inquest to present their expert evidence.

3.20 IGNITABLE LIQUIDS / FIRE ACCELERANT

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The SFR process can be used for standard Ignitable Liquid / Fire Accelerants casework submissions, namely the analysis of fire debris, clothing and other similar items relevant to scenes of fire, and the identification of suspected flammable liquids. This will form the bulk of fire investigation laboratory submissions. However, some results/submissions from these types of work requests may not be suitable for reporting through the SFR format; for example, if the expert considers that the restrictions of an SFR report mean that it could be open to misinterpretation, then a full statement) format should be considered as an alternative - this will usually be where a case is particularly complex or otherwise requires a more detailed explanation.

The SFR process is not suitable / concept has not been proven for the results pertaining to other associated fire investigation laboratory submissions: the examination, relevant testing, and assessment of potential incendiary devices; examination and interpretation of thermal (heat) damage of clothing and flashburning; and assessment and testing of flammability. These types of disciplines should be reported either by a full statement or other appropriate forensic report template.

For reports/results relating to fire scene investigation, including opinion on causality and / or origin of the fire, please see relevant Fire Scene Investigation section. Ignitable Liquids / Fire Accelerants.

3.20.1 Forensic Information Report – MG22A

Typically, results from laboratory analysis for the presence of fire accelerants / ignitable liquid residues will be issued on an MG22B (SFR1). The MG22A format can, however, be used to:

- Outline the case strategy that has been adopted - Provide preliminary results (subject to the inclusion of any relevant disclaimers, where relevant)
- Highlight any part of the strategy that is incomplete or stages of the submission whereby results are pending
- Provide an update on aspects of the submission in which analysis was not undertaken, for example, in scenarios where packaging has not passed quality assurance and analysis was not suitable
- Provide factual information relating to the examination / analysis, for example description of items and provision of photographic records of the items examined.
- Report a wholly negative result

However, if it is believed that the result of any examination provides, or could provide, some useful evidence to the court or intelligence to the investigation teams then these results should be reported on an MG22B (SFR1).

3.20.2 Ignitable Liquids / Fire Accelerants – Forensic Results Report – MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B can be used to report results from the analysis of one or more exhibits or items and to provide expert interpretation based on the results and case information available at the time of writing. The level of interpretation provided should be of sufficient detail to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the value of the laboratory findings by the reader. Findings relating to more than one suspect should be presented as separate reports, allowing each defendant to accept, or identify an issue, independently. However, it is acceptable to portray results relating to both a scene and a suspect on a single MG22B.

The report will not contain significant amounts of technical or supporting information, or detailed explanations/rationale concerning how the conclusion was formed. General technical information can be found in Supplementary Technical Notes for Ignitable Liquid Casework SFR and can be found at <https://www.fcn.police.uk/sfr-technical-notes-and-guidance>

However, if any specific technical or method information is relevant to the case result, it can be referred to in either the Technical Section or, if the author chooses to, referenced in the results section.

The results / findings section can be utilised to provide description of the items received and the results from analysis, including any relevant expert opinion. Results from fire debris recovered from the same scene and items from a single ensemble of clothing recovered from a single person of interest can be grouped for the purpose of reporting.

The status section of the document can be utilised to:

- Provide additional information in relation to the examinations or analysis undertaken, where relevant.
- Outline any child exhibits created, or material retained during the examination(s).
- Depict any items that have not been selected for analysis, or where examination is pending, in accordance with the case strategy.
- Highlight any deficiencies encountered in relation to the packaging of the items or suitability for analysis, or other discrepancies noted, for example in the labelling present on the item.
- Inform the reader of any next stages in the case strategy for the relevant items, for example, progression of DNA examinations under the direction of other scientists.

3.20.3 Ignitable Liquids / Fire Accelerants – Forensic Results Report – MG22C (SFR2)

The MG22C can be used to respond to any findings detailed in the MG22B that have been disputed by the defence, providing expert opinion in the form of an evaluative conclusion based on the information available at the time of writing. The expert completing the MG22C can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested in the case. As such, the author must ensure that they meet all of their obligations as an expert and include the status of compliance to the FSR Code.

3.20.4 Ignitable Liquids / Fire Accelerants – Forensic Results Report – MG22D (SFR2)

This statement can be used, when challenged, to provide factual information. It could be used by support staff to provide statements of continuity, or by fire debris analysts / scientists to provide statements of fact that do not contain any opinion.

3.21 CELL SITE ANALYSIS FOR GEOLOCATION

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The use of the SFR process in cell site analysis for geolocation purposes, was agreed by the cell site expert working group in 2024. The SFR process can be applied when giving an opinion or information to support the formulation of an opinion, as to the geolocation of a device. This is based on cell site analysis and including location based surveys, route based surveys and colocation/non-colocation surveys and analysis. It is not intended that the SFR process is used for non-evidential analysis such as the type deployed in wanted or missing person enquiries.

Whilst the SFR process can be used by non-experts, this should only apply to those reporting on an MG22A, where the practitioner is reporting to support an investigation. For all geolocation analysis types reporting on an MG22B or C, the activity should only be undertaken by individuals **classified as experts** who have received the appropriate training and can demonstrate competence to provide the analysis **and/or opinion** required. **More detail is provided below.**

It is highly recommended that Radio Frequency Propagation Surveys (RFPS) should be used to assist in the formulation of opinions expressed in the MG22B and C documentation. Where this is not possible due to time elapsed, cells being decommissioned, spectrum being re-farmed etcetera, then this should be clearly documented to allow full assessment of the strength of opinion made.

Prior to adoption it is important that preparatory steps are made internally and with partners in the Criminal Justice System to aid successful adoption of Streamlined Forensic Reporting in this discipline. An Adoption Plan and a flow process chart has been created for this purpose and can be found in [Appendix E](#).

3.21.1 Analysis of network communication data. Forensic information report – MG22A

Cell site analysis for geolocation purposes (forensic science activity DIG 200) is currently classified as being opinion-based evidence only. An MG22A is not suitable to provide opinion-based evidence, however competent and approved individuals can inform an investigation using an MG22A. This can be used to provide a progress report of initial findings, which may assist the investigation team to make decisions on how to progress an enquiry, or assist in identifying areas of the investigative hypothesis which needs to be tested in an evaluative manner (e.g. by an independent expert). It can also be used for factual purposes under forensic science activity DIG101 (analysis of communications network data). DIG101 encapsulates some of the

preparatory work for evaluative analysis, under which cell site analysis for geolocation (DIG-200) is practiced. The scope under which this would apply and for which an MG22A can be utilised would be to provide an investigation progress report of initial findings. The details which will be provided include:

- Address or location surveyed
- Type of equipment used
- Radius surveyed
- Cells surveyed as providing serving coverage to that location, including technology, MNO and Cell ID.
- Information to support an investigation, such as a summary of initial findings in comparison to an investigative hypotheses.
- Overt assessment in regards to what hypothesis need to be tested evaluatively and what ones are not worth progressing

An MG22A can also be used to furnish the investigation with the measured coverage area (footprint) of a cell site.

No evaluative opinion or analysis will be provided on this document. Should an evidential submission be required then this should be completed using independent and suitably qualified expert witnesses using an MG22B/C as detailed below. If further investigative hypothesis becomes apparent throughout an investigation, then an interim MG22A can be provided and subsequent MG22A reports can be provided. Even though the content of the MG22A report should contain no evaluative opinion or analysis, it should be peer reviewed or stated otherwise in the report. An MG22A will not be placed into evidence but should provide investigation teams with the basis on which to formulate and test investigative hypothesis.

MG22A reports containing this can be used and shared outside of the reporting organisation. Should this be the case then the case details should be redacted as necessary.

3.21.2 Cell Site analysis for geolocation purposes. Forensic result report – MG22B (SFR1)

The MG22B is only produced when the investigative analytical work has been completed. Evidential cell site analysis for geolocation purposes can only be issued by expert witnesses in the field. Cell site analysis is covered by DIG200 in the Forensic Science Regulators Code. The declarations of compliance are a requirement and shall be issued with, if necessary, mitigations for non-compliance. MG22Bs under this discipline should therefore only be utilised by individuals **classified as experts** who have received the required training and be able to demonstrate competence to provide the level of analysis **and/or opinion** required. The purpose of the MG22B is to provide the investigation and the court a summary of findings in relation to the tasking identified that the Prosecution may seek to rely on at trial. It is highly recommended that opinions formulated in the MG22B are done so with the assistance of Radio Frequency Propagation Surveys (RFPS). This also gives the Criminal Justice System a greater level of surety on the validation of opinions expressed. Where this is not possible to achieve then the reasons why RFPS have not been completed must be documented to allow clear and transparent assessment of the opinion presented.

The information below outlines how the MG22B can be utilised to provide opinions on the following themes – a) the likely location of a device using the cellular network b) attribution of a device to an individual and c) possible location or non-colocation of devices. Examples of propositions would include:

- Is the call data of a type to be expected if phone A:
 - ❖ Was in an area including the home address of the suspect, moved to an area including the offence location during the period of criminality and then returned to an area including the home address of the suspect? (Prosecution proposition)
 - ❖ Was in an area including the home address of the suspect and remained there throughout the period of criminality” (Defence proposition).
- Is the call data of a type to be expected if Phone A:
 - ❖ Was in use by the suspect.
 - ❖ Is in conflict with the position that it was in use by the suspect.
- Is the call data of a type to be expected if phone A and B:
 - ❖ Were collocating at a particular location at a particular time.
 - ❖ In conflict with the position that the devices were collocating in a particular location at a particular time.

It is important that practitioners giving an evaluative opinion should interpret the evidence in light of the propositions set out by all parties. As a result, any summary report should be balanced and consider one or more alternative propositions. In the absence of a stated or obvious defence position (e.g. home address), a null proposition (e.g. whether there is data in conflict with the prosecution proposition) may be adopted.

The delivery date for the MG22B is agreed between the individual compiling the report and the OIC. This is subject to local agreements and policies.

3.21.3 Cell Site analysis for geolocation purposes. Expert response to issues identified – MG22C (SFR2)

The MG22C would only be used by an expert witness to address specific issues addressed by defence or other expert following their review of the MG22B. Any challenge should be made in writing and to the expert or unit which compiled the MG22B.

The expert completing the MG22C can be expected to be called to attend court to give evidence on the issues contested. As a result, the author must ensure they have met their obligations as an expert under Crim PR 19.4. Any report should be accompanied with the relevant annex documents.

3.21.4 Cell Site analysis for geolocation purposes. Factual Response Statement – MG22D (SFR2)

It is not anticipated that MG22Ds will be widely used in this discipline. However, an MG22D can be used, when challenged to provide factual information. This could include but is not exhaustive of information relating to survey equipment and data processing version numbers, dates when surveys were conducted for example. They can also be used to provide statements of continuity.



Section 4: Additional

4.1	Supporting Documentation	68
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4.1 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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List of all supporting documentation referred to within this document. Latest versions can be found on the [FCN Website](#):

Document name	Document reference
MG22A	SFR MG22A
MG22B	SFR MG22B
MG22C	SFR MG22C
MG22D	SFR MG22D
SFR Annex A	SFR2 Expert Witness Declaration
SFR Annex B	SFR2 Mitigation Table
SFR Annex C	SFR2 Expert Witness Self-Certification
SFR Annex D	SFR2 Disclosure Schedule
[TEXT DELETED]	[TEXT DELETED]
Case Management Risk Form - Expert	SFR Case Management Risk Form
Case Management Risk Form – Non-Expert	SFR Case Management Risk Form
Supplementary Technical Notes for Biology Casework SFR	FCN-MGT-GUI-0004
Supplementary Technical Notes for Road Traffic Toxicology SFR	FCN-MGT-GUI-0011
Gatekeeper Guidance for Road Traffic Toxicology SFR2 Requests	FCN-MGT-GUI-0012
Guidance for Evidential Drug Identification Testing (EDIT) in Police Stations	FCN-MGT-GUI-0028

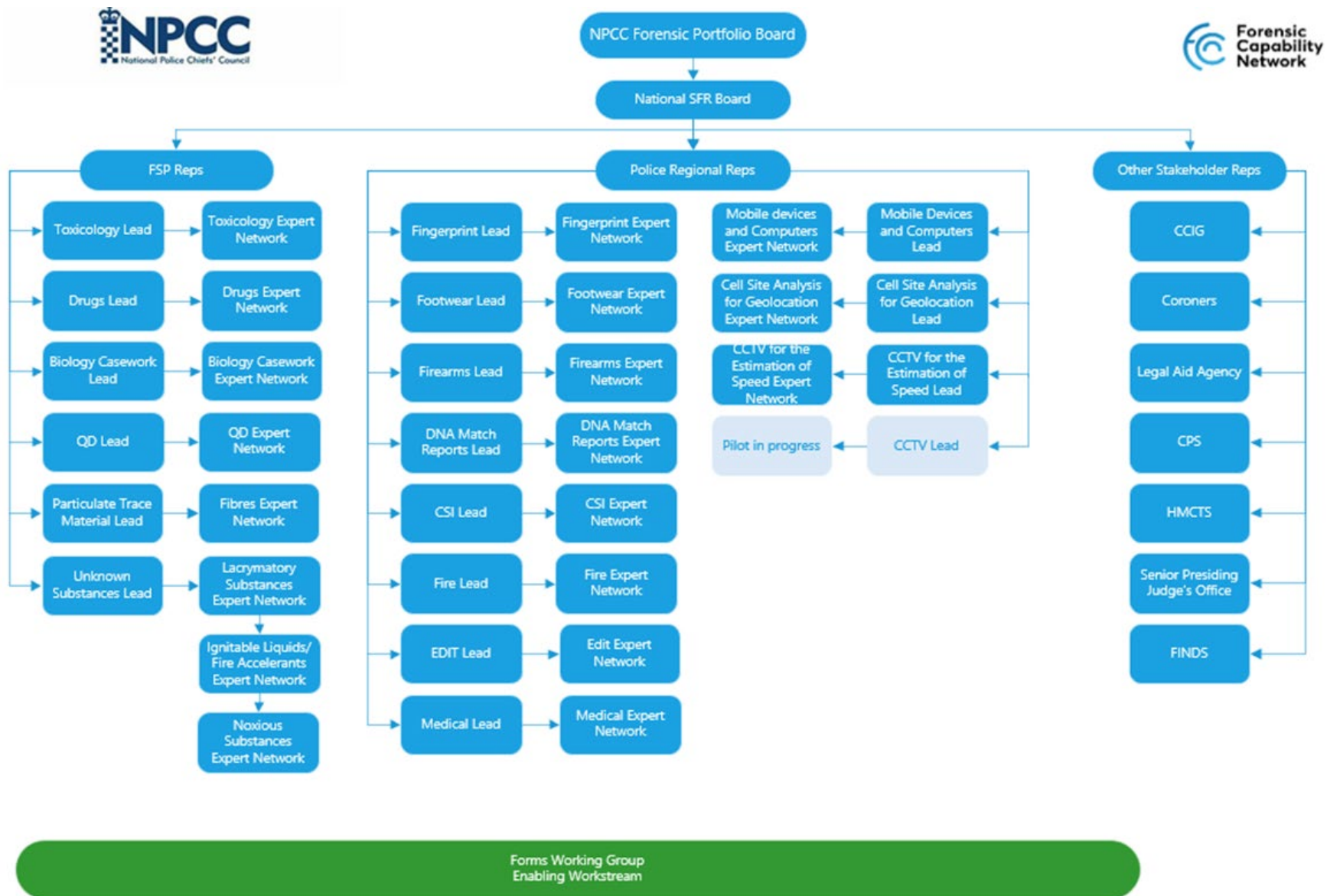
4.2 REFERENCES

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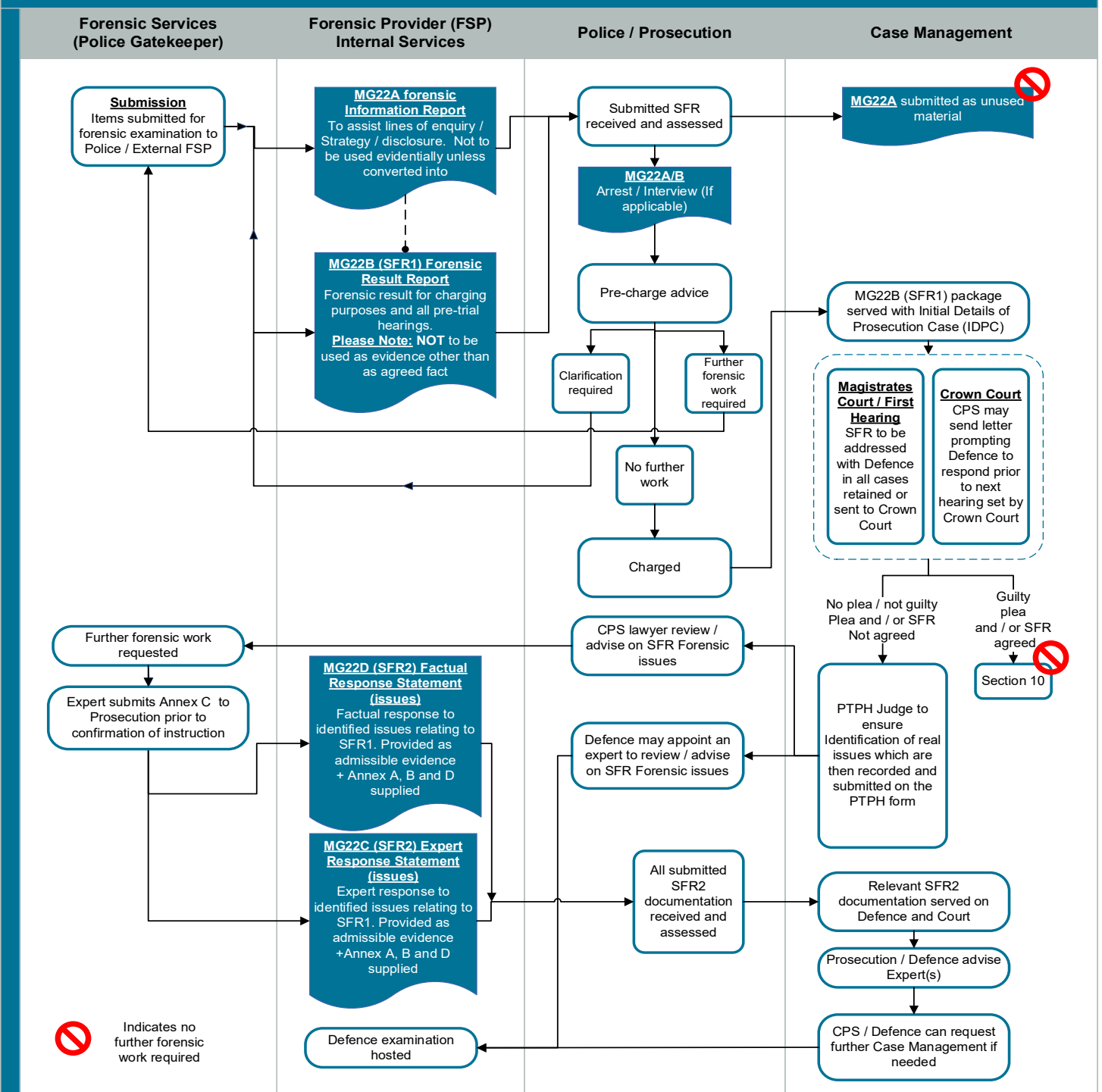
List of all cited material within this document:

Document name	Document Reference	Responsible Organisation
The Criminal Procedure Rules 2025	2025 No. 909 (L. 7)	The Criminal Procedure Rule Committee
Government Security Classifications May 2018		Cabinet Office
Forensic Science Regulator Expert Report Guidance	FSR-G-200	Forensic Science Regulator
Forensic Science Regulator: Code of Practice	Version 2	Forensic Science Regulator
Forensic Science Regulator's Non-Expert Technical Statement Guidance	FSR-G-225	Forensic Science Regulator
The DNA Good Practice Manual	FCN-MGT-GUI-0006	FCN/NPCC
Declaring compliance with the code of practice	FSR-GUI-0001	Forensic Science Regulator
Guidance: Forensic Science Activities - Interpretation and communication	FSR-GUI-0004	Forensic Science Regulator
BS EN ISO/IEC 17025:2017 General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories	BS EN ISO IEC 17025_2017	The British Standards Institution
Criminal Justice Act (CJA) 2003	2003 CHAPTER 44	www.legislation.gov.uk
Criminal Justice Act (CJA) 1967	1967 CHAPTER 80	www.legislation.gov.uk
ILAC-G19:06/2022 Modules in a Forensic Science Process	ILAC-G19:06/2022	ILAC
RG201 Accreditation of Bodies Carrying out Scene of Crime Examination	RG201	UKAS
Crime and Disorder Act 1988	1998 CHAPTER 37	www.legislation.gov.uk
FCN-SP-MGT-GUI-0005 SFR - Frequently Asked Questions v2.0		
ENFSI Guideline for Evaluative Reporting recommendations		ENFSI

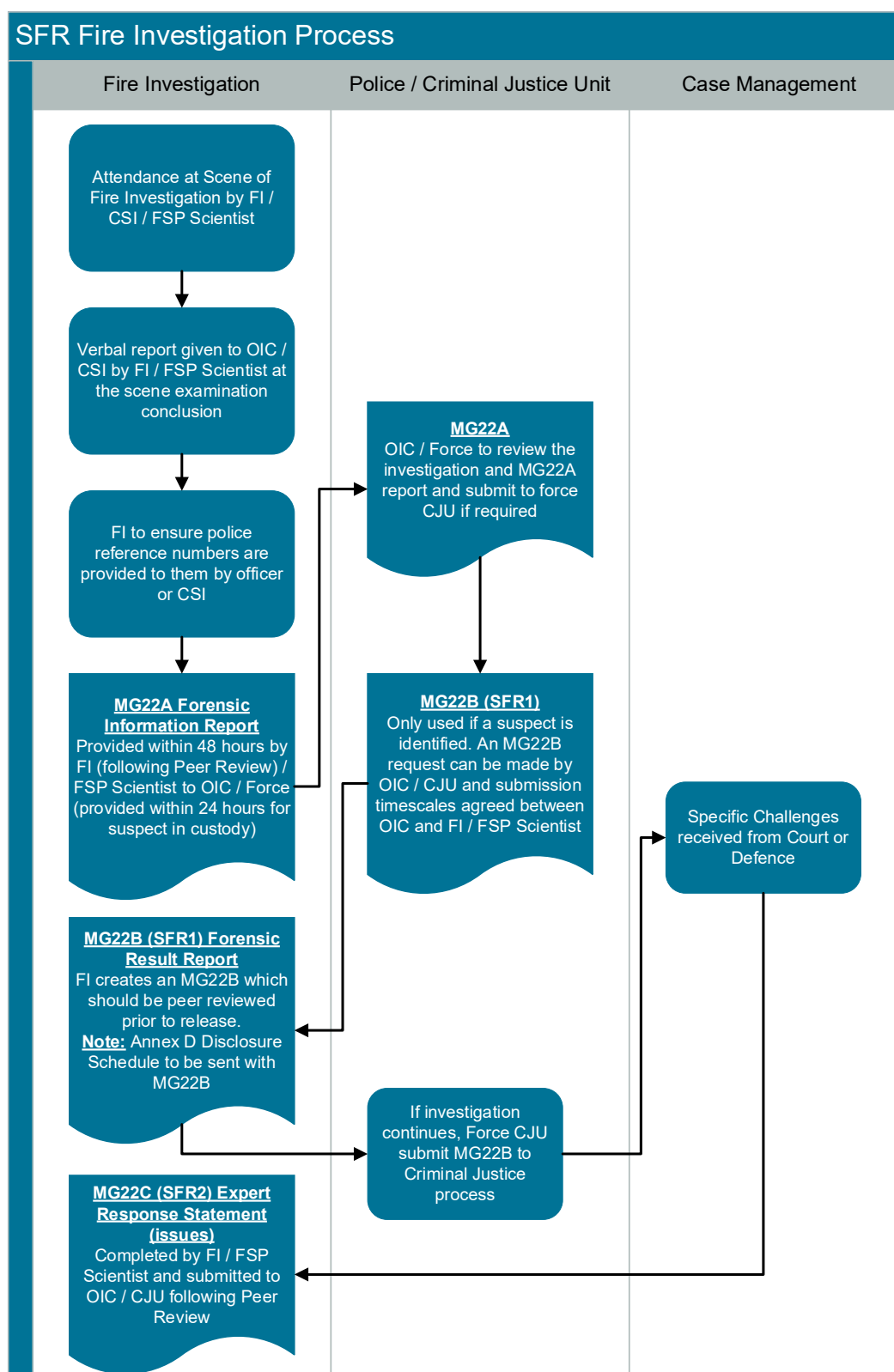
APPENDIX A - NATIONAL SFR BOARD GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

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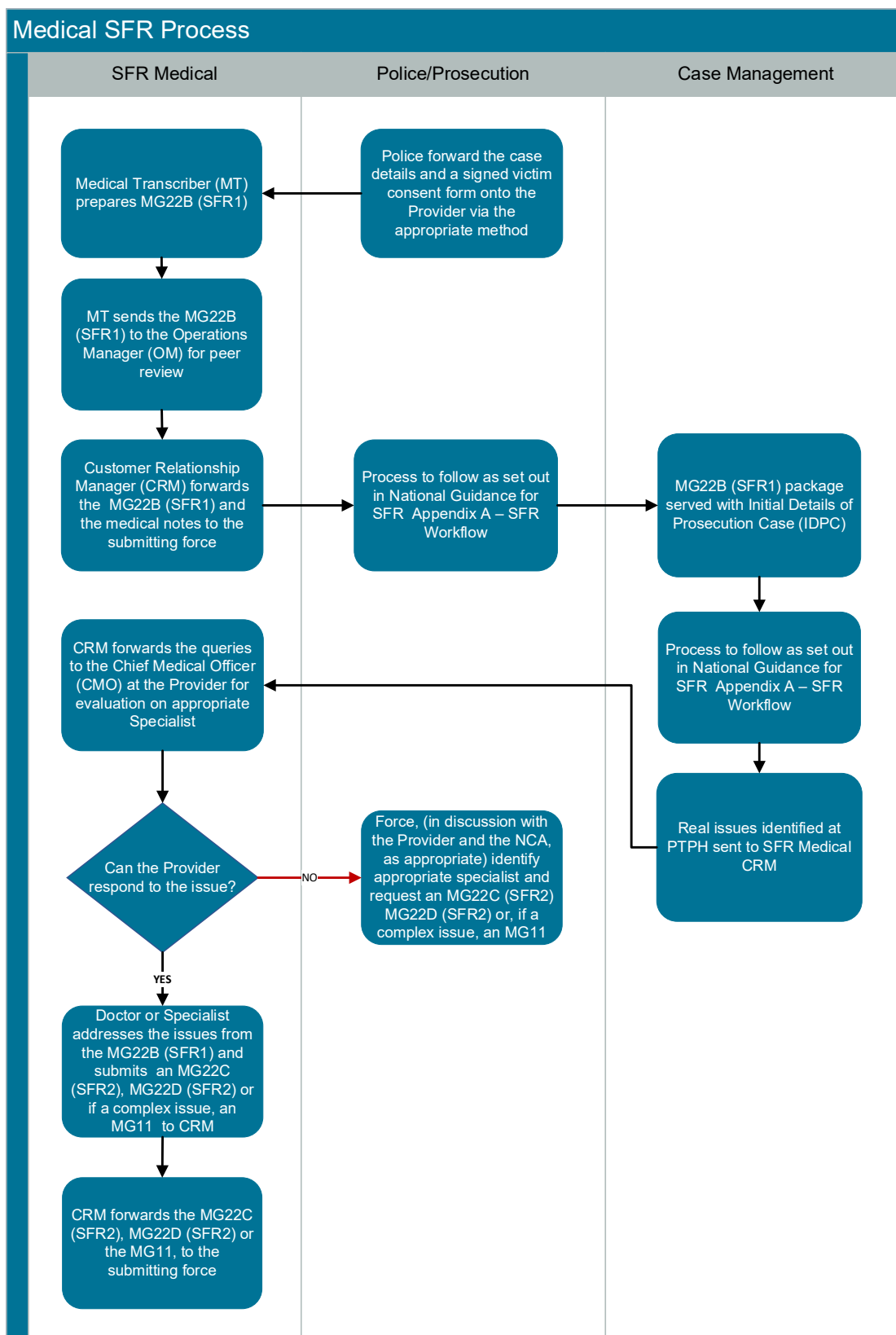
SFR Workflow



IMPORTANT: The MG22B SFR1 Forensic Result Reporting is a tool for enabling compliance with Criminal Procedure Rules 3.2 and 3.3 by either eliciting an admission from the defence in relation to the content of the Report (Criminal Justice Act 1967, s10) or causing them to identify an issue concerning that content thereby initiating the completion of an SFR2 Response Statement MG22C or MG22D. The SFR2 response is provided by the most appropriate person to address the specified issue.



IMPORTANT: This flow chart should be used in conjunction with the chart in Appendix B which contains further detail of the criminal justice processes to be followed.



IMPORTANT: This flow chart should be used in conjunction with the chart in Appendix B which contains further detail of the criminal justice processes to be followed.

Plan for Internal adoption and use of SFR

To supplement the National Streamlined Forensic Reporting (SFR) Guidance, this document will explain the steps each organisation needs to take prior to full adoption. A flow chart of the steps is included at the end of this document.

Familiarisation

Each organisation should ensure that staff involved in the adoption of SFR are familiar with the SFR process utilising resources available via the Forensic Capability Network (FCN) Web Site SFR Pages and other internal forensic disciplines who already use SFR. A full understanding of the process and how each template should be used will make adoption simpler and more effective.

Suitability

Each organisation should ensure they assess the suitability of SFR for reporting in specialist units locally.

Training

Unit leads should ensure that internal staff training takes place on the use of SFR including reference to the FCN Web Site, the National SFR Guidance document and SFR Templates.

Engagement

Local stakeholder engagement is critical to the successful implementation of SFR. This engagement includes the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Investigators who rely on reports from discipline specialists and the force Criminal Justice Units (CJU).

Procedures

Local Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) should be adapted to include the use of SFR

Baselining

The National SFR Board is developing a performance Framework. To support this, a Baselining exercise should be undertaken to establish how many reports are currently produced by the unit (full statement or other report type), average time taken to produce a report and an indicative cost per report (Average). There will be a requirement to carry out this baselining following the adoption of SFR to establish the benefits.

Service Development

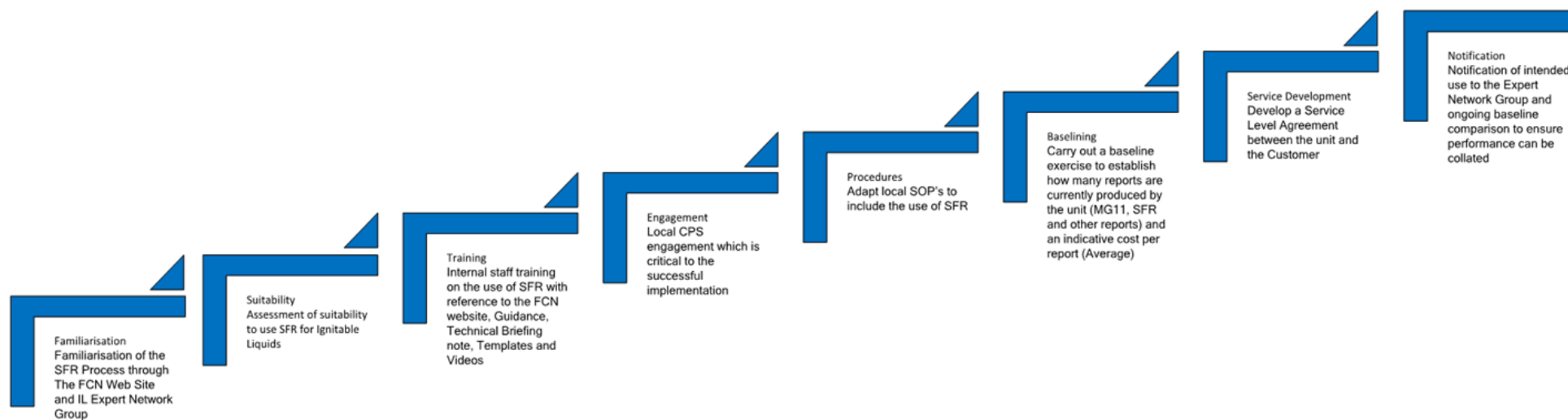
Develop a Service Level Agreement between the Unit and its identified customers.

Notification

Notification of intended use to the expert working group. For a 3 – 6 month period after adoption, baseline the new process to ensure performance can be measured. This should mirror the initial baselining of number of SFR1's produced and number of SFR2's produced including average time taken to produce an SFR1 and SFR 2 and an indicative cost per report (Average). This should be reported to the respective SFR Expert Network Group for submission to the SFR Board.

APPENDIX F - FLOW CHART FOR ADOPTION PLAN

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APPENDIX G – FSA MAPPING

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Approved SFR Discipline	FSA	Current SFR Agreed Scope (Whole FSA or Sub Activity)
Crime Scene Investigation	FSA – INC 100 – Incident scene examination	Whole FSA approved
	FSA – INC 101 – Collision investigation	Not currently approved
Fire Investigation	FSA – INC 102 – Examination of fire scenes	Whole FSA approved
	FSA – INC 103 – Examination of explosion scenes	Not currently approved
	FSA – INC 200 – Forensic examination of witnesses/complainants/suspects	Not currently approved
Biology Casework	FSA – INC 201 – Forensic examination of deceased individuals	Whole FSA approved
Firearms	FSA – INC 201 – Forensic examination of deceased individuals	
Friction Ridge Detail Enhancement	FSA – MTP 100 – Friction ridge detail: visualisation and enhancement	Whole FSA approved
Friction Ridge Detail Comparison	FSA – MTP 101 – Friction ridge detail: comparison	Whole FSA approved
Marks (Footwear)	FSA – MTP 200 – Footwear: coding	Whole FSA approved
Marks (Footwear)	FSA – MTP 201 – Footwear: screening	Whole FSA approved
Marks (Footwear)	FSA – MTP 202 – Footwear mark comparisons	Whole FSA approved
Marks	FSA – MTP 300 – Marks visualisation and enhancement	Whole FSA approved
Marks	FSA – MTP 301 – Marks comparison	Whole FSA approved
Biology Casework	FSA – MTP 400 – Damage and physical fit	Whole FSA approved
Particulate Trace Material (Fibres)	FSA – MTP 500 – Examination and analysis of particulate trace materials	Whole FSA for synthetic and natural fibres (64.4.1c)
Firearms	FSA – MTP 601 – Examination, analysis and classification of firearms, ammunition and associated materials	Whole FSA approved
Firearms	FSA – MTP 602 – Firearms: ballistics	Sub-activities approved: 67.3.1.a, 67.3.1.b, 67.3.1.c, 67.3.1.d, 67.3.1.e, 67.3.1.f, 67.3.1.g
Questioned Documents	FSA – MTP 700 – Document handwriting	Whole FSA approved
Questioned Documents	FSA – MTP 701 – Document authenticity and origin	Whole FSA approved
Toxicology	FSA – DTN 100 – Toxicology: analysis for drug(s), alcohol and/or noxious substances	Whole FSA approved
Toxicology	FSA – DTN 101 – Toxicology: analysis for drugs and/or alcohol under the Road Traffic Act 1988, Transport and Works Act 1992, and Railways and Transport Safety Act 2005	Whole FSA approved
Toxicology	FSA – DTN 102 – Toxicology: analysis for drugs in relation to s5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988	Whole FSA approved
Drugs	FSA – DTN 103 – Examination and analysis to identify and quantify controlled drugs and/or associated materials	Whole FSA approved
	FSA – DTN 104 – Toxicology: alcohol technical calculations (Approved for those cases not covered under the following acts: Road Traffic Act 1988, Transport and Works Act 1992 and Railways and Transport Safety Act 2005)	Whole FSA approved
Drugs	FSA – DTN 105 – Examination and analysis relating to the preparation and production of controlled drugs and/or psychoactive substances	Whole FSA approved
Unknown Substances	FSA – DTN 200 – Examination and analysis of corrosives and/or noxious substances	Whole FSA approved
Unknown Substances	FSA – DTN 300 – Examination and analysis of residues of lubricants used in sexual offences, including oils, greases and lubricants	Not currently approved
Unknown Substances	FSA – DTN 400 – Examination and analysis of ignitable liquids and their residues	Whole FSA approved
Unknown Substances	FSA – DTN 500 – Examination and analysis of chemical and/or biological agents and associated materials	Not currently approved
Unknown Substances	FSA – DTN 501 – Examination and analysis of explosives, explosives precursors and explosive residues	Not currently approved
Unknown Substances	FSA – DTN 502 – Examination and analysis of radioactive material	Not currently approved
Unknown Substances	FSA – DTN 503 – Examination and analysis of suspected explosive devices and associated material	Not currently approved
	FSA – BIO 100 – Forensic Medical Examination of Complainants	Not currently approved
Biology Casework	FSA – BIO 200 – Human biological material examination and testing	Whole FSA approved
Biology Casework	FSA – BIO 201 – Human biological material distribution and interpretation	Whole FSA approved
Biology Casework	FSA – BIO 202 – Human DNA analysis	Whole FSA approved
Biology Casework	FSA – BIO 203 – Human kinship analysis	Whole FSA approved
	FSA – BIO 301 – Non-human biological examination and analysis: vertebrates	Not currently approved
	FSA – BIO 302 – Non-human biological examination and analysis: plants, fungi, diatoms, microbes, and invertebrates	Not currently approved
Biology Casework	FSA – CDM 100 – Case review	Whole FSA approved
Digital Forensics	FSA – DIG 100 – Data capture, processing and analysis from digital storage devices	Whole FSA approved
Digital Forensics (Cell Site Analysis)	FSA – DIG 101 – Analysis of communications network data	Whole FSA approved
	FSA – DIG 102 – Digital network capture and analysis	Not currently approved
Digital Forensics (Cell Site Analysis)	FSA – DIG 200 – Cell site analysis for geolocation	Whole FSA approved
	FSA – DIG 300 – Recovery and processing of footage from closed-circuit television (CCTV)/video surveillance systems (VSS)	Not currently approved
Digital Forensics (Speed Estimation)	FSA – DIG 301 – Specialist video multimedia, recovery, processing and analysis	Sub-activity Approved - Speed estimation from video (73.3.1 c5)
		Remaining activities captured in CCTV pilot - in progress
	FSA – DIG 400 – Audio acquisition, conversion and processing	CCTV Pilot in Progress
	FSA – DIG 401 – Speech and audio analysis	Not currently approved
National DNA Database Match Report	Forensic activity is currently excluded from the FSR Code	N/A
EDIT	Forensic activity is currently excluded from the FSR Code	N/A
Medical SFR	Forensic activity is currently excluded from the FSR Code	N/A