

IAI RESOLUTION 2010-18

Passed July 16, 2010

WHEREAS, the members of the International Association for Identification assembled at their 95th International Educational Conference in Spokane, Washington on July 16, 2010 wish to change the official position of the Association related to Friction Ridge Examinations based on advances in the science and scientific research, **and**

WHEREAS, the members wish to acknowledge the need for continual research on new and innovative methods and the application thereof, **and**

WHEREAS, The Standardization II Review Committee was created and had been charged with the responsibility of reviewing Resolution 1979-7 and of 1980-5. The IAI recognizes that the testimony and reporting restrictions which had been enacted in good faith in Resolution 1979-7 and 1980-5 are not consistent with advancements since their passage.

They read in part as follows:

Resolution 1979-7:

“THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that any member, officer or certified latent print examiner who provides oral or written reports, or gives testimony of possible, probable or likely friction ridge identification shall be deemed to be engaged in conduct unbecoming such member, officer or certified latent print examiner as described in Article XVII, Section 5, of the constitution of the International Association for Identification, and charges may be brought under such conditions set forth in Article XVI, Section 5, of the constitution. If such member be a certified latent print examiner, his conduct and status shall be reconsidered by the Latent Print Certification Board....”

Resolution 1980-5: (Amending Resolution 1979-7)

“THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that any member, officer or certified latent print examiner who **initiates or volunteers** oral or written reports, **or testimony** of possible, probable or likely friction ridge identification, **or who, when required in a judicial proceeding to provide such reports or testimony, does not qualify it with a statement that the print in question could be that of someone else**, shall be deemed to be engaged in conduct unbecoming such member,....”

Therefore be it

RESOLVED that, based upon the results of a multi-year study by the Standardization II Review Committee, the IAI hereby recognizes the following:

1. For over a century, the examination and comparison of human friction ridge skin impressions have been used to determine the specific source of those impressions.

2. The practice of this form of comparative analysis by trained and competent examiners has been shown, through experience and study, to be reliable with rare occurrences of error.
3. This reliability and extremely low occurrences of error have afforded friction ridge skin evidence a high degree of value and importance when used in the forensic arena.
4. It is the responsibility of forensic experts to offer a clear and unambiguous presentation of their conclusions.
5. Friction ridge skin impressions can display varying levels of commonality (pattern type, ridge flow) in appearance with other impressions which do not derive from the same source.
6. Friction ridge skin impressions can share class characteristics (pattern type, ridge flow) and any associations based on these criteria require, ethically and professionally, that the examiner clearly state any limitations of their conclusions.
7. The use of mathematically based models to assess the associative value of the evidence may provide a scientifically sound basis for supporting the examiner's opinion. Examiners shall only use mathematically based models that have been accepted as valid by the IAI in partnership with the relevant scientific community and in which they have been trained to competency.
8. Mathematically based models may not be used as the sole determinant when concluding that friction ridge impressions share a common source. The use of mathematically based models does not relieve the examiner of responsibility for their expert opinion.

Due in part to the aforementioned statements recognized by the IAI, ***Therefore,***

be it further

RESOLVED, that Resolution 1979-7 and Resolution 1980-5 are hereby rescinded.

and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be published in the Association's official publication.