

Range of Conclusions for Impression Evidence Examinations

Elimination/Exclusion – Sufficient data and disagreement were noted during the comparison of class and/or individual characteristics between the questioned impression and the known standard. The known standard was eliminated/excluded as having made the questioned impression.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the known standard was not the source of, and did not make, the impression.

Limited Association of Class Characteristics – Some similar class characteristics were present, however, there were significant limiting factors in the questioned impression that did not permit a stronger association between the questioned impression and the known standard. These limitations may include, but are not limited to: minimal outsole elements present, lack of scale in the photograph, improper position of scale in the photograph, improper photographic techniques, improper digital format (JPG - non-lossless format), distortion or significant length in time between the capturing of the impression and the collection of the known standards resulting in potentially significant changes in general wear.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the known footwear or tire could not be excluded as the source of the questioned impression. Any known item of footwear or tire with the same class characteristics is also included in the population of items that could have been the source of the impression.

Could Have Made – Correspondence of class characteristics, physical size (if applicable), and general wear (if applicable). The detail present within the questioned impression is such that a meaningful comparison can be conducted with a known standard.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the known footwear or tire could have made the questioned impression. Any known item of footwear or tire with the same class characteristics, physical size (if applicable), and general wear (if applicable) is also included in the population of items that could have been the source of the impression.

High Degree of Association – The questioned footwear or tire impression correspond in class characteristics, physical size, and general wear. For this degree of association to exist there must also be present: (1) wear that, by virtue of its specific location or degree and orientation make it unusual and/or (2) one or more corresponding individual characteristics that are present in both the questioned impression and the known standard. The class and individual characteristics observed exhibit a strong association between the questioned impression and the known standard; however, the quality and/or quantity is insufficient for an identification.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the class and individual characteristics observed exhibit a strong association between the questioned impression and the known standard, however, the quality and/or quantity is insufficient for an identification. Other known standards exhibiting the same class characteristics, physical size, general wear, and presence and corresponding location of individual characteristics may be included in the population that could be the source of the impression.

Identification – The questioned impression and the known standard share the same class characteristics, to include outsole/tread design, physical size, general wear, and correspond in the presence and location of individual characteristics of sufficient quality and quantity.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the known standard was the source of the questioned impression. Another known item being the source of the impression is considered a practical impossibility.