

Range of Conclusions for Friction Ridge Examinations

Identification - The decision by an examiner that there are sufficient features in agreement to conclude that two areas of friction ridge impressions originated from the same source. Identification of an impression to one source is the decision that the likelihood the impression was made by another (different) source is so remote that it is considered a practical impossibility.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the latent impression was made by the same source (person) as the known impression.

Exclusion - A determination by a forensic scientist that there is sufficient data and disagreement present within a friction ridge impression to conclude that it was not made by the same source as a set of known exemplars.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the latent impression was not made by the same source (person) as the known impression.

Inconclusive - An identification or exclusion cannot be determined based upon a lack of sufficient data/detail present within a set of known exemplars.

Interpretation: The known impressions were not good enough quality to come to a definitive conclusion.