

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.

Association of Class Characteristics – Presence of similar class characteristics and/or correspondence of class characteristics including outsole/tire tread design, outsole/tire tread design elements, physical size (if applicable), and general wear (if applicable). Plus the presence and correspondence of 0 -1 Randomly Acquired Characteristics (RACs). The detail present within the questioned impression is such that a meaningful comparison can be conducted with a known standard. Additionally, no confirmable differences were observed that could exclude the footwear or tire as being within the population of items that could have made the questioned impression.

Association of Class Characteristics may also include questioned impressions that contain significant limiting factors, such as, but not limited to poor outsole/tire tread detail, improper position of scale in the photograph, improper photographic techniques including image being taken not at 90° to the questioned impression, improper digital format (JPG - non-lossless format), visible distortion, and/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.

Note: The examiner shall document in the impression evidence worksheet and the laboratory report all limiting factors visible, if present, within the questioned impression and how they effected the result of the examination.

Interpretation: It is the opinion of the examiner that the known footwear or tire is included in the population of items that could have made the questioned impression. Any known item of footwear, tire, or any other item of non-footwear or tire origin 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) 2-3 Randomly Acquired Characteristics (RACs) 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 4 or more Randomly Acquired Characteristics (RACs) 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.


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