

NIST/Noblis Forensic Firearms Examiner Bullet Black Box Study *Requesting Participation*

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the accuracy, repeatability, and reproducibility of bullet comparisons by firearms examiners. The study is being conducted by Noblis and NIST.

Study Overview

Participants will conduct 100 comparisons over a period of approximately 6-7 months. The test will be conducted by sending the physical samples to the participants in 10 packets, each of which contains 10 bullet sets for comparison. The test samples will be a range of bullets that will be collected under ground-truth controlled conditions, attempting to be as broadly representative of casework as practical. Firearms, calibers, and ammunition frequently encountered in casework will be used. Custom web-based software will be used to record examiner responses, and transmit responses back to the test administrators.

Participation

Participation will be open to US firearms examiners who have conducted operational casework in the past year. Participation is contingent upon receipt of a signed consent form. Participants are required to complete an on-line background questionnaire.

Confidentiality

All questionnaire information and test results will be kept separate from personally identifiable information so that results cannot be associated with specific individuals, even for the members of the test administration and data analysis teams.

Individual results

Participants will be given a code that will allow them to access their own results in an appendix to the published report, if they choose to do so.

Reporting

The results will be presented at forensic science conferences and submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Results will be classified by the education, training, and experience categories established in the background questionnaire and aggregated across multiple examiners.

Interested in participating? Email Firearms@noblis.org