Laboratory

Since 2001, the FBI Laboratory has grown substantially and embraced key new areas. In 2003, the Laboratory relocated from FBI Headquarters to its 500,000 square foot dedicated forensic science facility in Quantico, Virginia. Today, the Laboratory serves the FBI core missions of counterterrorism and law enforcement.

Operational Response/Weapons of Mass Destruction

- The FBI Laboratory assumed the role as the lead U.S. federal agency over forensic investigations related to weapons of mass destruction.
- The Laboratory has partnered with other government agencies to acquire specialized facilities for handling evidence that has been contaminated with biological, radiological, or chemical agent material.
- The FBI Laboratory pioneered the development and application of microbial forensics for use in the 2001 anthrax mailings case.
- The Evidence Response Teams in all FBI field offices represent the largest collateral duty program in the FBI and set the worldwide standard in evidence collection and triage. Hazardous Materials Response Teams are now established in 28 FBI field offices.
- Robust underwater evidence and forensic canine technical capabilities have been developed to support sophisticated search operations.

Biometrics and Human Identification

- DNA analysis has been brought into active operations in the FBI Laboratory and in the entire international forensic science community, with further development of robotics and software systems for efficient high-throughput DNA analysis.
- The national DNA database—part of the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) that helps solve crimes and identify human remains—has grown to include over 10 million DNA profiles and has aided over 141,000 investigations. Within the last decade, the FBI has also developed a software kinship tool that helps identify victims of mass disasters and missing and unidentified persons.
- Latent fingerprint operations have been transformed, including by creating more robust quality assurance procedures and pioneering comprehensive foundational studies of latent fingerprint examiner reliability.

Forensic Science

- Computer-based tools have been developed that automate and improve the mathematical bases for document reconstruction, handwriting analyses, and cryptographic analyses.
- Unique capabilities have been added in the fields of forensic toxicology and metallurgy.
- Since 2001, more than 150 research papers have been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and more than 400 conference presentations have been made.
- The forensic anthropology program was developed. The Trace Evidence Unit now has two qualified forensic anthropology forensic examiners, so it no longer has to rely on external agencies for support in the discipline.

Counterterrorism and Intelligence

- The Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center (TEDAC) was established in 2003 and has since processed more than 71,000 improvised explosive device (IED) submissions from Iraq, Afghanistan, the U.S., and many other countries. TEDAC is an interagency effort with active participation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; the Department of Homeland Security; the Department of Defense; and other members of the intelligence community.
- Since 2009, more than 2,800 intelligence information reports have been provided to the intelligence community and others.