

## STATEMENT OF THE AAFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) Board of Directors strongly supports the work of the NIST-OSAC in providing technical leadership necessary to facilitate the development and promulgation of voluntary consensus standards, best practices, and guidelines for forensic science practitioners, enforcement personnel, and laboratories; and promoting the use of these standards, best practices, and guidelines by accreditation and certification bodies. As the National Academy of Sciences noted in its 2009 report:

Standards provide the foundation against which performance, reliability, and validity can be assessed. Adherence to standards reduces bias, improves consistency, and enhances the validity and reliability of results.<sup>1</sup>

Scientific evidence is a powerful tool in the search for the truth and the pursuit of justice. As forensic scientists, we have a duty to ensure our results and opinions are valid and reliable. Standardization is necessary to assure the courts and the public of high-quality results.

The leadership and work of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC), supported and promoted by the AAFS Standards Board and the individual efforts of AAFS members, has provided a crucial foundation for the development of essential standards and guidelines. Whatever management structure is adopted for OSAC 2.0, AAFS is committed to the development of standards and to assisting NIST in strengthening forensic science.

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on Identifying the Needs of the Forensic Science Community, National Research Council of the National Academies, *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*, The National Academies Press: Washington D.C., 2009, at p. 201.