

Strategic Plan
(2012-2014 Version 1)

Department of Forensic Science (778)
Agency Plan

Mission Statement

The Department of Forensic Science's mission is to protect the public's safety, support law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and advance the growth and understanding of forensic science.

Vision Statement

We envision the Department of Forensic Science (DFS) will maintain its status as a nationally-recognized leader in the field that supports the criminal justice system and transportation safety while improving the public's understanding of forensic science.

Information Technology

Current Operational IT Investments

DFS is substantially transformed to the Commonwealth of Virginia (COV) Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure Partnership managed services contract. Network transformation will be complete once building control equipment and scientific instrument computers are placed on separate networks. One other major transformation activity still pending completion is Security Integration.

The building control equipment and scientific instrument computers have been approved by Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) to remain out of scope to the managed services contract; therefore, the DFS IT staff will provide maintenance for these computers once vendor provided warranties expire.

Although the transformation plan did not include phones, DFS has also transitioned to the COV IT Infrastructure Partnership's Unified Communication as a Service (UCaaS) system. The UCaaS system replaced the VOIP system at all DFS locations.

Factors Impacting the Current Agency IT

DFS' legacy Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) application will require DFS to continue to use a paper based case analysis process and will increase the time necessary to complete forensic case work to meet its internal quality assurance standards and new accreditation requirements.

Proposed IT Solutions

DFS plans to upgrade its Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) to take advantage of the operational efficiencies that are offered on more current LIMS systems. Efficiencies that could be gained as a result of upgrading to a more current LIMS system include better integration between scientific instruments and MS Office productivity tools. The newer LIMS systems can also help the agency meet its internal quality assurance standards and accreditation-related field traceability requirements as DFS transitions to a higher degree of electronic case documentation. Additional efficiencies that are anticipated include: remote requests for laboratory examinations (RFLE) entry by submitting agencies to expedite service requests; reduced paper file content (through electronic storage of scientific documents); improved efficiency in the capture of examination documentation and the resultant Certificate of Analysis report generation; and electronic delivery of Certificates of Analysis to investigating agencies and Commonwealth's Attorneys.

Financial Overview

DFS is primarily a general fund agency although some federal grant funds are obtained to fund expenses or federal initiatives for which state funding is not available. Overall, the DFS budget is allocated in the following manner:

65% Personnel expenses – salaries and fringe benefit costs;

14% Laboratory expenses – all items directly related to performing scientific analysis such as gases, chemicals, supplies and equipment;

14% Facilities expenses – direct costs such as utilities, repairs, service contracts, equipment and supplies for operating and maintaining the laboratory buildings;

5% Administrative expenses – costs such as information technology, office supplies, postage, and other necessary items that are not directly related to scientific analysis; and

2% Travel expenses – primarily costs related to court travel and some mandatory training.

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	34,252,602	1,505,984	34,252,602	1,505,984
Changes to Base	2,282,115	1,001,012	1,981,914	1,001,012
Total	36,534,717	2,506,996	36,234,516	2,506,996

Agency Goals

- Ensure that Virginia law enforcement agencies and others entitled by law receive accurate and timely forensic services.

Goal Summary and Alignment

This goal addresses the analysis of evidentiary materials submitted by law enforcement agencies and others that can result in valuable investigative information. The results of the analysis may also be used as evidence in court proceedings to show the guilt or innocence of an accused individual. The timeliness of analysis is important to avoid delayed investigations, continuances of court cases, or even dismissed cases if the speedy trial provisions in §19.2-243 of the Code of Virginia are not met. Similarly an innocent individual may remain under a cloud of suspicion or even be incarcerated until the forensic testing that would ultimately exonerate them is forthcoming. This goal directly supports DFS's mission to protect the public's safety and its mission to support law enforcement and the criminal justice system. This goal also directly supports the Commonwealth's long term goals of protecting the public's safety and security and ensuring a fair and effective system of justice.

Long Term Goal

Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.
Societal Indicator: Crime

- Enhance the quality and use of forensic evidence to improve public safety through fair and effective court proceedings.

Goal Summary and Alignment

This goal addresses the training provided by DFS to law enforcement officers, attorneys, judges, first responders, sexual assault nurse examiners, forensic nurses, medical examiners, and students of forensic science. This goal also addresses the breath alcohol equipment, supplies, and laboratory support provided to local, state, and federal authorities. Finally, this goal addresses the evidence collection kits provided to law enforcement officers, first responders, hospitals, and medical examiners and the evidence testing kits provided to law enforcement. The training provided by DFS facilitates the ability of law enforcement to properly locate, recognize, document, collect, preserve, package, and submit physical evidence for analysis. DFS training also facilitates the ability of first responders and medical personnel to properly recognize, collect and preserve biological evidence. By facilitating this knowledge, the quality of objective evidence from which to determine guilt or innocence of criminal suspects is enhanced. This goal directly supports all three aspects of the Department's mission: protecting the public's safety, supporting law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and advancing the growth and understanding of forensic science. This goal directly supports the Commonwealth's long term goals of protecting the public's safety and security and ensuring a fair and effective system of justice. This goal also directly supports the Commonwealth's long term goal of ensuring that Virginia has a transportation system that is safe by improving the quality of evidence and equipment used to remove persons using drugs and alcohol from Virginia's roadways.

Long Term Goal

Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.
Societal Indicator: Crime

- Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.

Goal Summary and Alignment

This goal directly supports meeting the agency's fiduciary responsibility when using State funds and resources, as well as ensuring DFS is able to fulfill its mission. The goal deals with developing and maintaining appropriate human resources, following responsible procurement and sound financial management practices, and prudent use of technology all in support of the specific processes for carrying out the Department's mission. This goal aligns with both Commonwealth long term goals and Enterprise strategic priorities.

Long Term Goal

Be recognized as the best-managed state in the nation.
Societal Indicator: Government Operations

Programs and Service Areas for Agency

- 30901: Biological Analysis Services
- 30902: Chemical Analysis Services
- 30904: Physical Evidence Services
- 30905: Training and Standards Services
- 30906: Administrative Services

Customers

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Sheriff's offices and police departments	310	310	Stable
State Agency(s),	State and federal law enforcement agencies	50	50	Stable
State Agency(s),	Office of the Chief Medical Examiner	4	4	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Offices of Commonwealth's Attorneys	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government	Circuit courts (in 31 circuits)	120	120	Stable

Authorities				
Local or Regional Government Authorities	General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relations Courts (in 32 districts)	201	202	Stable

Key Risk Factors

The primary risk factor that could prevent the Department from fulfilling its mission is the ability to maintain a sufficient number of scientific personnel.

In September 2007 DFS reached its peak employment level of 301 classified employees. However, In October 2007 DFS submitted the first of several budget reduction strategies that would be implemented over the next four years, which included holding open vacant scientist positions. As additional budget reductions were implemented, the number of classified employees continued to drop until we reached a low point of 264 classified employees in March 2010 (a 12% reduction in staff over 2.5 years). Although most of the decline has been the result of DFS budget reduction strategies, some of the decline is the result of the length of time it takes to fill a vacant position, which can range from months to years.

As of August 2013, approximately 5% of DFS' funded positions are vacant and in the process of being filled. Also, approximately 12% of current employees are either eligible now or will be eligible to retire within five years.

In its effort to maintain the appropriate level of scientific personnel in each of its disciplines, DFS has implemented multiple strategies, including (1) hiring and training individuals with the necessary educational credentials but without the practical experience; (2) transferring scientific personnel with appropriate skill sets to related disciplines that are understaffed; (3) using overtime; and (4) utilizing a compensation plan developed in conjunction with the Department of Human Resource Management in order to develop and retain scientific personnel.

Products and Services

Many DFS products and services are specifically required by the Code of Virginia. This list offers a general description of those products and services and also includes some items not specifically required by Code.

- * Perform accurate, relevant, reliable, thorough and timely analyses and examinations of evidence.
- * Convey the results of analyses and examinations through clear, objective, balanced, and easily understood reports, consultations and testimony.
- * Maintain a DNA testing program and data bank of DNA profiles.
- * Provide training to law enforcement and medical personnel in the recognition, collection and preservation of evidence during the investigation of crimes.
- * Provide kits to law enforcement and medical personnel for the collection and submission of evidence to DFS for laboratory examination.
- * Train and license all law enforcement personnel who administer breath tests and provide calibrated and certified instruments and related supplies to law enforcement for breath testing to determine breath alcohol content.
- * Provide facilities to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner within each DFS laboratory.

Trends

Rankings & Customer Trends

The DFS customer base is dictated by the following sections in the Code of Virginia:

§ 9.1-1101 – Provide forensic laboratory services to law enforcement agencies throughout the Commonwealth in any criminal matter and provide laboratory services, research, and scientific investigations for agencies of the Commonwealth as needed.

§ 9.1-1104 – Perform court ordered testing requested by the defense.

Trend Name	Trend Area
Subpoenas Received	Increase
Cases Received	Increase
Scientific Equipment Costs	Increase

Performance Highlights: Service Performance & Productivity Initiatives

An important measure of how DFS is meeting its obligations to the criminal justice system and the Commonwealth's citizens is the turnaround time (TAT) from receipt of evidence to issuance of the case examination report (Certificate of Analysis). When Certificates of Analysis are not available in a timely manner, investigations may be delayed; court cases may have to be continued; and cases may even be dismissed if the speedy trial provisions in §19.2-243 of the Code of Virginia are not met. Further, an innocent individual may remain under a cloud of suspicion or even be incarcerated until the forensic testing that would ultimately exonerate him or her is forthcoming.

DFS has implemented a number of strategies to optimize our ability to process cases in a timely fashion. Some of these strategies have included:

- * Testing a limited number of specimens submitted in each controlled substances case;
- * Creating a specialized team of scientist to focus solely on clandestine methamphetamine laboratory cases. As these cases take an average of 12 times longer to process

than other controlled substances cases, assigning them to a dedicated group has increased the overall productivity and case throughput.

- * Requiring scientists to work extensive overtime;

- * Strategically implementing the use of new laboratory instrumentation that has proven to increase case productivity; and

- * Working on the implementation of a new, efficient Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) that, when fully implemented, should reduce the amount of time scientists spend on report writing and other administrative tasks, thereby freeing up more of their time for analytical work.

Despite implementation of the above strategies, the increases in caseload now exceed the Department's ability to complete forensic analyses within current turnaround time (TAT) goals.

Management Discussion & Analysis

Future Direction, Expectations, and Priorities

DFS' focus is on maintaining its status as a nationally-recognized leader in the field that supports the criminal justice system and transportation safety while improving the public's understanding of forensic science. DFS continues to pursue new technologies that can provide cost beneficial advances in case processing time and new types of analysis needed by the criminal justice system.

The value provided by DFS is enhanced when law enforcement officers are able to properly locate, recognize, collect and submit items of physical evidence from crime scenes that have probative value. In order to facilitate this ability, DFS operates the Virginia Forensic Science Academy, which offers an intensive nine-week training program, as well as short courses that range in length from a single day to two weeks. The nine-week Academy session is designed to give law enforcement officers the training necessary to enable them to fully utilize the expertise of the entire DFS laboratory system. It provides classroom instruction by qualified forensic experts, evidence collection demonstrations and numerous practical exercises in simulated crime scenes. The academy session is a rigorous academic program, and the students are evaluated on their class performance, tests, application of recovery techniques, and homework assignments. The short courses provide training in specific areas and allow DFS to reach a greater number of law enforcement officers and jurisdictions.

In addition to the Forensic Science Academy, DFS has made an effort to reach out to law enforcement, attorneys, judges, and the public to provide information about the Department and to address questions or concerns by these groups. DFS continues to see positive results in the awareness of the use and understanding of forensic science in supporting the criminal justice system from this outreach effort.

30901: Biological Analysis Services

Description

This service area provides body fluid identification and DNA analysis of evidence for state and local law enforcement agencies, reporting of the results, and, as required, providing testimony in courts of law. Additional services include maintaining Virginia's DNA databank and storing biological evidence as ordered by the court.

Mission Alignment and Authority

The Department of Forensic Science's mission is to protect the public's safety, support law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and advance the growth and understanding of forensic science. This service area supports the Department's mission by doing the following:

- Perform accurate, relevant, reliable, thorough and timely analyses and examinations of evidence
- Convey the results of analyses and examinations through clear, objective, balanced, and easily understood reports, consultations and testimony
- Train law enforcement, attorneys, judges and the public in the use and understanding of forensic science
- Develop, provide and maintain evidence collection resources

Customers for this Service Area

Anticipated Changes to Customers Base

Current Customer Base

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Offices of Commonwealth's Attorneys	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Other law enforcement agencies and state agencies (statewide)	50	50	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Circuit courts (in 31 circuits)	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relations Courts (32 districts)	201	202	Stable
State Agency(s),	Office of the Chief Medical Examiner	4	4	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Sheriff's offices and police departments	310	310	Stable

Partners for this Service Area

Partner	Description
<i>No partners currently entered in plan</i>	

Products and Services

Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services

The Forensic Biology Section is in the process of making procedural changes to address national recommendations for DNA interpretations. The change will result in a more uniform interpretation of DNA evidence from state to state and across the country.

The Forensic Biology Section is evaluating automation processes, including but not limited to, Robotics to reduce DNA isolation times; and Expert Computer Software systems which can review DNA typing results taking the place of a human review. It is expected that emerging processes can make DNA analysis more efficient and thus further increase the annual percentage of cases complete.

Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services

None anticipated.

Listing of Products and / or Services

Analysis and examination of submitted evidence

Providing Certificates of Analysis (the results)

Consultation on investigative information and interpretation of reports with investigators

Pre-trial consultations with Commonwealth's and defense attorneys

Expert witness testimony in courts of law

Analysis and examination of evidence as requested by the defense and ordered by the courts

Training on recognition, collection and preservation of biological evidence to crime scene investigators, first responders, sexual assault nurse examiners, forensic nurses, medical examiners, attorneys, judges, etc.

Financial Overview

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	8,026,820	1,500,000	8,026,820	1,500,000
Changes to Base	628,162	1,000,000	636,510	1,000,000
Total	8,654,982	2,500,000	8,663,330	2,500,000

Objectives for this Service Area

Objectives for this Service Area

Objective

To provide body fluid identification and DNA analyses

Description

This objective addresses the identification of body fluid and analysis of DNA criminal evidence in a timely and accurate manner. The DNA results from crime scene samples are compared to reference samples from victims and suspects, or searched against a database of DNA profiles from convicted offenders, arrestees and unsolved cases in order to provide investigative information.

Objective Strategies

- Investigate, develop and implement new technologies
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Retain and recruit qualified forensic scientists

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Ensure that Virginia law enforcement agencies and others entitled by law receive accurate and timely forensic services.

Measures

- Percentage of DNA cases that are analyzed and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued)

Measure Class **Agency Key** Measure Type **Outcome** Preferred Trend **Increase** Frequency **Quarterly**

Data Source and Calculation

The percentage of cases completed annually is calculated by dividing the beginning backlog plus cases received for analysis into the number of cases completed. This information is maintained in the DFS Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

- Average turn-around time for DNA cases that are analyzed and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued)

Measure Class **Other Agency** Measure Type **Outcome** Preferred Trend **Decrease** Frequency **Quarterly**

Data Source and Calculation

The average turn-around time is computed by dividing the total number of days taken to complete cases during the quarter by the total number of cases completed during the quarter. This information is maintained in the DFS Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and the system performs the calculation.

- Average cost per DNA analysis case.

Measure Class **Productivity** Preferred Trend **Stable** Frequency **Annually**

Data Source and Calculation

Average cost per case is calculated based on direct labor divided by number of cases completed during the fiscal year. The labor costs are from CARS (Commonwealth Accounting and Reporting System) and the case completion data comes from LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System) which is an internal agency system.

30902: Chemical Analysis Services

Description

This service area provides chemical analyses of controlled substances, toxicology, and trace evidence for state and local law enforcement agencies, medical examiners, prosecutors, and defense attorneys. This includes laboratory examination, reporting the results, and, as required, providing testimony in courts of law.

Mission Alignment and Authority

The Department of Forensic Science's mission is to protect the public's safety, support law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and advance the growth and understanding of forensic science. This service area supports the Department's mission by doing the following:

- Perform accurate, relevant, reliable, thorough and timely analyses and examinations of evidence
- Convey the results of analyses and examinations through clear, objective, balanced, and easily understood reports, consultations and testimony
- Train law enforcement, attorneys, judges, and the public in the use and understanding of forensic science
- Develop, provide and maintain evidence collection resources

Customers for this Service Area

Anticipated Changes to Customers Base

Current Customer Base

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Offices of Commonwealth's Attorneys	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Other law enforcement agencies and state agencies (statewide)	50	50	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Circuit courts (in 31 circuits)	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relations Courts (32 districts)	201	202	Stable
State Agency(s),	Office of the Chief Medical Examiner	4	4	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Sheriff's offices and police departments	310	310	Stable

Partners for this Service Area

Partner	Description
<i>No partners currently entered in plan</i>	

Products and Services

Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services

DFS methamphetamine lab cases have risen from approximately 2 cases per month to 14 cases per month. Each such case takes approximately three days to process. DFS has also seen a dramatic increase in synthetic cannabinoid and bath salt case submissions. These cases can also involve very complex and time-consuming analyses. Some efficiency can be gained by purchasing and use of specific scientific instruments for this analysis. DFS still estimates, however, that three positions currently held vacant due to previous budget reductions need to be filled in order to keep up with this increased demand.

Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services

None anticipated.

Listing of Products and / or Services

Analysis and examination of submitted evidence

Provide Certificates of Analysis (the results of analysis and examination)

Provide expert witness testimony in courts of law in addition to pre-trial consultations with attorneys for the Commonwealth and Defense.

Train police officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges, etc., in the recognition, collection, preservation, and handling of evidence and the use of forensic results in their investigations, trials and deliberations

Consult with investigators on investigative information and interpretation of reports

Develop, provide and maintain evidence collection resources

Financial Overview

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	8,338,833	0	8,338,833	0
Changes to Base	2,824,519	0	2,833,098	0
Total	11,163,352	0	11,171,931	0

Objectives for this Service Area

Objectives for this Service Area

Objective

To provide analyses of controlled substances evidence.

Description

This objective addresses the analyses of evidentiary materials, submitted by law enforcement agencies, to determine in a timely and accurate manner the presence or absence of: 1) substances classified as "controlled" by the Commonwealth of Virginia, 2) substances specifically defined in the Code of Virginia as prohibited although not "controlled" e.g. marijuana and synthetic cannabinoids, and 3) certain substances which are immediate precursors to controlled substances.

Objective Strategies

- Investigate, develop and implement new technologies
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Retain and recruit qualified forensic scientists

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Ensure that Virginia law enforcement agencies and others entitled by law receive accurate and timely forensic services.

Measures

- Percentage of controlled substances cases that are analyzed and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued)

Measure Class Measure Type Preferred Trend Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

The percentage of cases completed annually is calculated by dividing the beginning backlog plus cases received for analysis into the number of cases completed. This information is maintained in the DFS Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

- Average turn-around time for controlled substances cases that are analyzed and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued)

Measure Class Measure Type Preferred Trend Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

The average turn-around time is computed by dividing the total number of days taken to complete cases during the quarter by the total number of cases completed during the quarter. This information is maintained in the DFS Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and the system performs the calculation.

30904: Physical Evidence Services

Description

This service area provides scientific analyses of latent print, impression, digital, multi-media, firearm, toolmark, and questioned document evidence for state and local law enforcement agencies, medical examiners, prosecutors, and defense attorneys. This includes laboratory examination, reporting the results, and, as required, providing testimony in courts of law.

Mission Alignment and Authority

The Department of Forensic Science's mission is to protect the public's safety, support law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and advance the growth and understanding of forensic science. This service area supports the Department's mission by doing the following:

- Perform accurate, relevant, reliable, thorough and timely analyses and examinations of evidence
- Convey the results of analyses and examinations through clear, objective, balanced, and easily understood reports, consultations and testimony
- Train law enforcement, attorneys, judges, and the public in the use and understanding of forensic science
- Develop, provide and maintain evidence collection resources

Customers for this Service Area

Anticipated Changes to Customers Base

Current Customer Base

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Offices of Commonwealth's Attorneys	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Other law enforcement agencies and state agencies (statewide)	50	50	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Circuit courts (in 31 circuits)	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relations Courts (32 districts)	201	202	Stable
State Agency(s),	Office of the Chief Medical Examiner	4	4	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Sheriff's offices and police departments	310	310	Stable

Partners for this Service Area

Partner	Description
No partners currently entered in plan	

Products and Services

Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services

Analysis and examination of submitted evidence

The continuation of the Training Academy is essential to the quality of analysis the physical evidence section can perform on submitted evidence. Academy instruction ensures evidence is identified and located at the scene, properly collected and submitted to the correct section for analysis. If the officers are not trained properly the submitted evidence may not be suitable for analysis.

The acquisition of on-screen comparison software for the latent print section will allow for efficient detailed analysis documentation of the examination and comparison processes.

Provide Certificates of Analysis (CoAs)

The new LIMS and on-screen software will allow for more efficient methods to generate and provide CoAs.

- Consult with investigators on investigative information and interpretation of reports
- Provide law enforcement agencies with important investigative information in a timely manner through the maintenance and use of appropriate databases

The state police maintain the AFIS database and the ATF maintains the NIBIN database. Without these databases to search unknown evidence in we would not be able to provide investigative leads to law enforcement.

The ATF NIBIN databases in the past were entirely funded by the federal agency. In 2011 the ATF began reducing funding which affected the Department's access to the system in the Western lab. The Department chose not to fund a replacement system for the Western lab due to the limited volume of searches performed in that region. In the summer of 2012 further reduction of federal funding affected the system in the Northern lab. Access to the system was viewed as critical to meet the needs of the Department's customers. The Department chose to fund the acquisition of a system that will provide limited future access to the database and sufficiently meet the needs of the Department.

Provide pre-trial consultations with Commonwealth's and defense attorneys

The media attention given to forensics has impacted the quantity and types of analysis requested by the law enforcement with the intent to decrease possible legal challenges in court. Consultations with all parties involved can be reduced the amount of non-probative analyses.

- Provide expert witness testimony in courts of law

Budget constraints in the past have limited training funds. The use of federal grant funds have been used to provided training which is essential to ensure the staff has the technical knowledge to allow them to provide expert witness testimony. The federal grant programs that support forensic scientist training are slated to be reduced in the future. While the department has a deep knowledgeable staff capable of providing training to peers it is essential for scientist to attend conferences and training to ensure the department is aware and meeting the many challenges facing forensic science.

Train police officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges, etc., in the recognition, collection, preservation, and handling of evidence and the use of forensic results in their investigations, trials and deliberations

Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services

None anticipated.

Listing of Products and / or Services

Analysis and examination of submitted evidence

Provide Certificates of Analysis (the results)

Consult with investigators on investigative information and interpretation of reports

Provide law enforcement agencies with important investigative information in a timely manner through the maintenance and use of appropriate databases

Provide pre-trial consultations with Commonwealth's and defense attorneys

Provide expert witness testimony in courts of law

Train police officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges, etc., in the recognition, collection, preservation, and handling of evidence and the use of forensic results in their investigations, trials and deliberations

Financial Overview

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	6,348,800	0	6,348,800	0
Changes to Base	888,146	0	587,957	0
Total	7,236,946	0	6,936,757	0

Objectives for this Service Area

Objectives for this Service Area

Objective
To provide firearm / toolmark examinations

Description

This objective addresses the examination of firearm and/or toolmark evidence, submitted by law enforcement agencies from criminal and death investigations, in a timely and accurate manner. Fired ammunition components are compared to any submitted firearms and/or searched through the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) in order to provide investigative information and associations between separate criminal investigations.

Objective Strategies

- Investigate, develop and implement new technologies
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Retain and recruit qualified forensic scientists

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Ensure that Virginia law enforcement agencies and others entitled by law receive accurate and timely forensic services.

Objective

To provide latent print, impression, digital and multi-media examinations

Description

This objective addresses the examination of latent print, impression, digital, and multi-media evidence submitted by law enforcement agencies from criminal and death investigations, in a timely and accurate manner. Prints are compared to any submitted known prints of victims and suspects or searched through the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) in order to provide investigative information. Recovered data from digital or other media devices is provided to the requesting law enforcement agency.

Objective Strategies

- Investigate, develop and implement new technologies
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Retain and recruit qualified forensic scientists

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Ensure that Virginia law enforcement agencies and others entitled by law receive accurate and timely forensic services.

Measures

- Percentage of latent print and impression evidence cases that are analyzed and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued).

Measure Class Measure Type Preferred Trend Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

The percentage of cases completed annually is calculated by dividing the beginning backlog plus cases received for analysis into the number of cases completed. This information is maintained in the DFS Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

- Average turn-around time for latent print and impression evidence cases that are analyzed and the results reported to the requesting authority (Certificate of Analysis issued).

Measure Class Measure Type Preferred Trend Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

The average turn-around time is computed by dividing the total number of days taken to complete cases during the quarter by the total number of cases completed during the quarter. This information is maintained in the DFS Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and the system performs the calculation.

30905: Training and Standards Services

Description

This service area provides for the operation of the Forensic Science Academy, the maintenance and certification of breath test instruments and the training and licensing of breath test instrument operators.

The Virginia Forensic Science Academy is designed to give law enforcement officers the necessary training to enable them to fully utilize the expertise of the state forensic laboratory system. The nine-week program provides classroom instruction by qualified forensic experts, evidence collection demonstrations and numerous practical exercises in simulated crime scenes. This is a rigorous academic program and the students are evaluated on their class performance, tests, application of evidence documentation and recovery techniques, and homework assignments.

After successfully completing the Academy, the law enforcement officers should be able to demonstrate proper techniques of locating, recognizing, documenting, and collecting items of physical evidence. They should also be able to preserve items of physical evidence, recognize the laboratory potential of examining physical evidence, properly package and submit physical evidence. By understanding both the value of their physical evidence and the capabilities of the forensic laboratory, the officers can more efficiently evaluate the probative value of their evidence thereby streamlining the evidence submission and scientific analysis processes.

The Department's Breath Alcohol Section ensures that statewide quality assurance and operational standards are followed by the Commonwealth's law enforcement agencies when administering breath tests. To accomplish its goals, the Department of Forensic Science provides training, equipment, supplies, and laboratory support to local, state, and federal authorities.

Mission Alignment and Authority

The Department of Forensic Science's mission is to protect the public's safety, support law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and advance the growth and understanding of forensic science. This service area supports the Department's mission by doing the following:

- Convey the results of analyses and examinations through clear, objective, balanced, and easily understood reports, consultations and testimony
- Train law enforcement, the attorneys, judges, and the public in the use and understanding of forensic science
- Develop, provide and maintain evidence collection resources

Customers for this Service Area

Anticipated Changes to Customers Base

None

Current Customer Base

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Offices of Commonwealth's Attorneys	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Other law enforcement agencies and state agencies (statewide).	50	50	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Circuit courts (in 31 circuits)	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relations Courts (32 districts)	201	202	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Sheriff's offices and police departments	310	310	Stable

Partners for this Service Area

Partner	Description
No partners currently entered in plan	

Products and Services

Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services

The June 2009 Melendez Diaz case ruling placed additional demands for DFS forensic scientists' presence during court proceedings as well as an increased need for trained breath test instrument operators. DFS experienced a 38 percent increase in new operators trained annually.

The Forensic Training Section provides on-going training to law enforcement personnel that is essential to the quality of analysis performed by various disciplines. Law enforcement personnel receiving training through the Section's Forensic Science Academy (FSA) provides greater assurance that the evidence identified and located at the scene is properly collected and suitable for analysis. Academy training is limited to two sessions per year for a total of 24 trainees, while the eligible applicant pool continues to increase. To further meet the needs of our customers, short courses and workshops are interspersed throughout the year to address current trends as well as provide basic and advanced technical instruction. In addition, the Section provides several retraining opportunities to the FSA alumni annually.

Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services

None anticipated.

Listing of Products and / or Services

- Train law enforcement personnel in crime scene investigative techniques
- Provide pre-trial consultations with Commonwealth's and defense attorneys
- Provide expert witness testimony in courts of law
- Provide records of breath tests and instrumentation as requested by subpoena duces tecum and requests for information
- Provide breath test instruments to include maintenance, repair, and certification
- Train and license breath test instrument operators for the evidential analysis of breath to determine alcohol content of blood

Financial Overview

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	1,202,522	5,984	1,202,522	5,984
Changes to Base	291,630	1,012	291,630	1,012
Total	1,494,152	6,996	1,494,152	6,996

Objectives for this Service Area

Objectives for this Service Area

Objective

Provide training to law enforcement personnel

Description

This objective addresses the Forensic Science Academy training of law enforcement personnel as crime scene search specialists. Consistent approach by state and local law enforcement agencies to the collection and preservation of physical evidence partners with the Department of Forensic Science to provide optimal scientific support services to the criminal justice system.

Objective Strategies

- Evaluate and prioritize training courses when developing the annual training plan.
- Select students for upcoming Academy sessions six to nine months in advance whenever possible.
- Survey law enforcement agencies on their training needs.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Enhance the quality and use of forensic evidence to improve public safety through fair and effective court proceedings.

Measures

- Percentage of agencies with active, eligible forensic science academy applicants, served during the year.

Measure Class Measure Type Preferred Trend Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

Data for the calculation is managed by the Training Academy in an on-line event registration system. The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of agencies that had an applicant(s) trained during the annual training cycle by the total number of agencies with valid applicants awaiting training at the beginning of the training cycle.

30906: Administrative Services

Description

This service area provides the overall direction and management of the agency. It also provides all support services to the agency such as lab safety, facility operation and maintenance, information technology, legal resources, human resources, grant administration, purchasing, accounts payable, financial reporting and budgeting.

Mission Alignment and Authority

This service area directly aligns with DFS' mission by providing overall management and direction of the Department and the support necessary to accomplish its objectives.

Customers for this Service Area

Anticipated Changes to Customers Base

Current Customer Base

Pre-Defined Customer Group	User Specified Customer Group	Customers Served Annually	Potential Annual Customers	Projected Trend in # of Customers
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Offices of Commonwealth's Attorneys	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Other law enforcement agencies and state agencies (statewide)	50	50	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Circuit courts (in 31 circuits)	120	120	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relations Courts (32 districts)	201	202	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Sheriff's offices and police departments	310	310	Stable

Partners for this Service Area

Partner	Description
<i>No partners currently entered in plan</i>	

Products and Services

Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services

There are numerous state and federal entities that promulgate laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and reporting requirements that DFS must adhere to. There are also numerous entities that perform audits or reviews of our operations to ensure that we are complying with each of these mandates.

Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services

None anticipated.

Listing of Products and / or Services

Overall agency management and direction - strategic planning, continuity of operations planning, agency funding, budgeting / resource allocation, and policy alignment.

Coordinate and process responses to subpoenas duces tecum, discovery motions, and FOIA requests.

Legal advice to the agency, as well as, training and guidance to agency staff, attorneys, judges, medical examiners, legislators, and law enforcement agency heads.

Administrative support and resources for the Forensic Science Board and the Scientific Advisory Committee.

Facility Management – responsible for the operation, maintenance, and security of the four laboratory buildings which house DFS operations, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner operations, and certain other programs of the Department of Health. Work with Department of Mines Minerals and Energy (DMME) to ensure agency compliance with the Governor's executive order on energy efficiency and usage. Oversee and manage all construction or renovation performed within a DFS facility, including working with the Department of General Services (DGS) to obtain all necessary permits and approvals. Maintain building information in the state's FICAS and VAPS systems.

Human Resources – ensure agency compliance with Federal and State employment laws; ensure agency compliance with State policies issued by the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM); assist agency personnel in the areas of: recruitment, employee benefits, employee relations, performance management training and administration.

Procurement Services – ensure agency compliance with applicable procurement and related regulations issued by Department of General Services (DGS), Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA), and Department of Accounts (DOA); administer the Small Purchase Charge Card (SPCC) program; develop & administer the agency's SWaM Plan and report results weekly as required by the Governor to maximize usage of Small, Women, and Minority vendors; purchase goods & services that cannot be purchased via the normal SPCC program; develop & renew purchasing contracts in accordance with State best practices in order to obtain the best pricing possible in addition to maximizing the use of SWaM vendors and making the process of obtaining necessary scientific supplies as efficient as possible; Agency Security

Officer for the State's Procurement System (eVA) and train agency personnel on the proper and efficient use of eVA; oversee surplus property disposal for the agency; and perform Transportation officer duties in accordance with Fleet Management guidelines.

Information Technology – ensure agency compliance with all state, federal, and agency specific information technology laws and regulations and related policies and procedures; agency liaison with the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA) and the IT Partnership; provide application support for agency specific applications; provide hardware, software, & firmware support for assets specifically used for scientific analysis and examination; computer security; etc.

Financial Management – ensure agency compliance with financial and related policies and procedures issued by Department of Accounts (DOA), Department of Planning and Budget (DPB), Department of General Services (DGS), Department of Treasury (TRS), Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM), Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA), and Virginia Retirement System (VRS); process payments to vendors for goods and services and payments to employees for reimbursement of travel expenses; ensure all payments are properly documented and coded; certify payroll each pay period; perform Security Officer duties for central agency systems; develop and monitor internal agency budgets; receive and deposit checks; ensure proper internal controls are in place and documented in order to protect Commonwealth assets; properly record assets in the state's FAACS system and leases in the state's LAS system; prepare and submit monthly and annual financial reports; prepare and submit decision packages to DPB; monitor and report capital outlay expenses and prepare necessary capital outlay progress forms and reports for DGS; prepare and submit Maintenance Reserve plan, etc.

Order and distribute evidence collection kits to appropriate agencies and institutions; process agency mail.

Financial Overview

Budget Component	2013 GF	2013 NGF	2014 GF	2014 NGF
Base	10,335,627	0	10,335,627	0
Changes to Base	-2,350,342	0	-2,367,281	0
Total	7,985,285	0	7,968,346	0

Objectives for this Service Area

Objectives for this Service Area

Objective

Provide administrative support to the agency's scientists.

Description

This objective addresses providing Information Technology resources which will facilitate a more streamlined process for the documentation of scientific analysis performed and the subsequent report writing process. The new streamlined process will result in more efficient use of DFS resources and provide better service to DFS customers by reducing the amount of time necessary to report results to the requesting authority. This aligns with the Commonwealth's Long Term Goal for Government and Citizens "Be the best-managed state in the nation." This also aligns with the Enterprise Strategic Priority for Government Operations "Improve operations to ensure delivery of government services in the most efficient and effective manner."

Objective Strategies

- a. ISSUE a Request for Proposal (RFP) to replace the current Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) in order to take advantage of more current and efficient technology.
- b. EVALUATE the proposals received and award a contract.
- c. IMPLEMENT the new computer system.
- d. UPDATE the Department's Quality Manual for any administrative process changes necessary to achieve efficiencies available with the new system.
- e. MONITOR progress of expected efficiencies and make adjustments as necessary to maximize all possible efficiencies.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements.

Measures

- Percentage of reports automatically generated at the completion of the data collection and analysis

Measure Class Measure Type Preferred Trend Frequency

Data Source and Calculation

Data for the calculation will be maintained in the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) maintained by the Department. The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of reports automatically system generated by the total number of reports generated for the quarter.