



## 7.0 Volatiles Analysis Alcohol Competency and Proficiency Tests

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### 7.1 BACKGROUND

In accordance with the *Volatiles Analysis Training Plan*, a trainee will complete a competency test consisting of  $\geq$ six (6) specimens which contain representative commonly encountered analytes. Thereafter, the analyst will complete an annual proficiency test. Breath Alcohol proficiency tests may be completed by reanalysis of a single instrument.

### 7.2 SCOPE

This method describes the criteria to be applied to the evaluation of results obtained for both competency and proficiency testing for ethanol and other volatiles analysis.

### 7.3 PROCEDURE

#### 7.3.1 Competency Tests

7.3.1.1 The competency test can be ordered through a reliable vendor.

7.3.1.2 The acceptable alcohol concentration range is determined from the target value provided by the manufacturer of the competency test.

7.3.1.3 Reported values must fall within  $\pm 10\%$  of the target value reported by manufacturer.

7.3.1.4 If all volatiles are not detected and/or the quantitative ethanol value(s) reported does not fall within the allowable range, analysis procedures will be reviewed and additional training may be required as deemed appropriate by the Discipline Leader. The analyst will be required to perform an additional competency test.

#### 7.3.2 Proficiency Tests

7.3.2.1 The blood alcohol proficiency test can be ordered through an ASCLD/LAB approved vendor and/or Department of Transportation (DOT).

- 7.3.2.1.1 To comply with ASCLD/LAB International proficiency test requirements it is necessary for each laboratory to successfully complete one external test from an ASCLD/LAB International approved provider.
- 7.3.2.1.2 As described in Volatiles AM 1.0, in order to comply with IDAPA 11.03.01 (approval to perform alcohol determinations for legal purposes), a laboratory must take part in an Idaho State Police Forensic Services (ISP-FS) recognized proficiency testing program.
- 7.3.2.1.3 A single proficiency test can be used to comply with both IDAPA and ASCLD/LAB International requirements as long as it is an ASCLD/LAB approved test.
- 7.3.2.1.4 The appropriate tests to be ordered will be evaluated yearly by the Quality Assurance Manager with input from the Discipline Leader.
- 7.3.2.1.5 The acceptable alcohol concentration range is determined from the target value provided by the manufacturer of the competency test.
- 7.3.2.1.6 The target value will be based only on the compilation of results provided by ASCLD/LAB accredited laboratories.
- 7.3.2.1.7 The acceptable range is the target value  $\pm$  two standard deviations or 10%, whichever is greater.
- 7.3.2.1.8 Reported values must fall within this acceptable range.
- 7.3.2.1.9 If the value reported does not fall within the allowable range, analysis procedures will be reviewed and additional training may be required as deemed appropriate by the Discipline Leader. The analyst will be required to perform a competency test prior to resuming casework.

7.3.3 The competency testing and proficiency testing only apply to the training/testing of volatiles analysis in fluids and does not apply to the breath alcohol program portion of the discipline. If an applicable breath testing proficiency/competency test is available through a commercial vendor or in agreement with 6.3.2.1, then that shall be the approved choice for proficiency testing and competency testing.

7.3.3.1 Until an approved vendor is available, the proficiency tests shall be created internally.

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## *Revision History*

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### 7.0 Review of Volatiles Analysis Proficiency and Competency Tests

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Revision	Issue Date	History
0	04-25-2002	Original Issue
1	05-24-2006	Update, additional test providers added
2	05-07-2007	Updated format
0	01-20-2011	Initial version as 1.0, split from toxicology discipline analytical methods. Formerly Toxicology AM 5.7.
1	8-23-2011	Change made to reflect current training plan title. Renamed as Alcohol AM 6.0
2	4-23-2012	Changes made to reflect correct references to other AM's.
3	1-16-2013	Changed numbering from AM 6 to AM 7. Changes to section 7.1. Added sections 7.3.3 and 7.3.3.1.