



## The Scientific Working Group on Imaging Technology

December 16, 2009

### SWGIT and the NAS Report

#### Background

In February 2009, The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Report: *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward* was released to the public. The report outlined thirteen recommendations for the forensic community. One of the NAS report recommendations suggests that Scientific Working Groups should be recognized as a source for this path forward to strengthen forensic science. Scientific Working Groups are already writing standards, guidelines and best practices for the forensic community that build on the scientific foundation and improve credibility.

#### *NAS Recommendation 6:*

To facilitate the work of the National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS), Congress should authorize and appropriate funds to NIFS to work with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), in conjunction with government laboratories, universities, and private laboratories, and **in consultation with Scientific Working Groups, to develop tools for advancing measurement, validation, reliability, information sharing, and proficiency testing in forensic science and to establish protocols for forensic examinations, methods, and practices. Standards should reflect best practices and serve as accreditation tools for laboratories and as guides for the education, training, and certification of professionals.** Upon completion of its work, NIST and its partners should report findings and recommendations to NIFS for further dissemination and implementation. (emphasis supplied)

#### SWGIT Mission

Recommendation number six of the NAS Report is consistent with the mission of the Scientific Working Group on Imaging Technology (SWGIT), which is to facilitate the integration of imaging technologies and systems within the criminal justice system by providing

recommendations for the capture, storage, processing, analysis, transmission, and output of images. SWGIT's mission in the future will be even more important since the release of the NAS Study.

SWGIT has already been working hard during the last twelve years to provide protocols, scientific methodologies and best practices to the forensic community. We have successfully helped hundreds of international, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies with best practices and standards for still imaging and video technology.

### SWGIT Successes

Currently, SWGIT has seventeen published documents and three additional documents written jointly with the Scientific Working Group on Digital Evidence (SWGDE). SWGIT addresses many subjects, a sample of which include: Proficiency Testing, Developing Standard Operating Procedures, Guidelines for Training, Best Practices for Image & Forensic Video Analysis, and Considerations for Managers Migrating to Digital Imaging Technology. These documents are stepping stones to strengthening forensic science on the *Path Forward*.

### SWGIT Collaboration with White House Subcommittee on Forensic Science

In addition to our current work, SWGIT is collaborating with the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), Subcommittee on Forensic Science. The Forensic Science Subcommittee was established on July 7, 2009 for the purpose of assessing the practical challenges of implementing the NAS recommendations and advising the White House on how to best achieve the goals outlined in the report. Instead of a formal line by line SWGIT response to

the NAS Report, SWGIT will focus efforts on collaboration with the NSTC on these challenges and will to continue to serve the forensic community as we have done since 1997.

CARL R. KRIIGEL  
SWGIT Chairman