



GEORGIA BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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The GBI Crime Laboratory is continuing its efforts to provide the criminal justice community of Georgia the very best service in all aspects of forensics. One of the most crucial services provided by the laboratory is the production of the Official Report that contains the findings of the analyses performed by the scientific staff. Historically the laboratory has mailed copies of these reports to all of the relevant agencies. While this has been an acceptable method in the past, technology developments over the last several years open new possibilities that have substantial benefits both for the laboratory and for the agency receiving the reports.

Over the last year the GBI laboratory in cooperation with GeorgiaNet has been developing a secure web site that can be used to locate and print Official Reports. After several unexpected delays, DOFS is happy to announce that this web site is finally open for use by the criminal justice agencies of Georgia. Even as this letter is being sent, laboratory staff are working with agencies across the state to give them training and instruction on how to access and use the web site to locate, read and print the DOFS Official Reports related to their cases as they are needed. This web site offers several advantages to customers of DOFS:

- Official Reports can be printed directly from the web site for use in court as they are needed;
- Agencies can determine the current status of a request by viewing it on the web site;
- Official Reports that are not available on the web can be requested via the web site, reducing the need for repeated phone calls and long delays;
- Official Reports are available the day after they are completed, eliminating delays caused by sorting and mailing physical copies.

During the next several months staff from all seven DOFS laboratories will be contacting agencies statewide to grant the initial access to the web site and perform training as needed. DOFS is also in the process of producing a training videotape about the web site that should be available in early 2001. If your agency has not been contacted by April 15, 2001 concerning this training, please contact the local DOFS laboratory that serves your agency to establish a time/date for the training. Prior to obtaining the training, please ensure that your agency has on the computers that will be used to access the reports:

- ◆ Access to the internet
- ◆ Microsoft Internet Explorer version 5.01 SP1 or 5.5 (both free downloads from www.microsoft.com) or Netscape Navigator version 4.06 or higher
- ◆ Adobe Acrobat Reader version 4.05 or higher (available as a free download from www.adobe.com)

It is critically important that all agencies gain access to this web site and become proficient in its use, since effective July 1, 2001 the laboratory will no longer mail or fax hard copies of Official Reports unless the report can not be obtained via the web site. The laboratory is requesting your cooperation in this exciting endeavor as we continue to enhance the services provided by the laboratory and make the most effective use of the personnel resources available to us.

Terry Mills III, DOFS Deputy Director