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Standard Terminology Relating to Forensic Science¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E1732; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This is a compilation of terms and corresponding definitions used in the forensic sciences. Legal or scientific terms that are generally understood or defined adequately in other readily available sources may not be included.

1.2 A definition is a single sentence with additional information included in notes. It is reviewed every five years, and the year of last review or revision is appended.

1.3 Definitions identical to those published by another standards organization or ASTM committee are identified with the abbreviation of the name of the organization or the identifying document and ASTM committee; for example, ASME is the American Society of Mechanical Engineering.²

1.4 Definitions of terms specific to a particular field are identified with an abbreviation.³

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:⁴

[E135 Terminology Relating to Analytical Chemistry for Metals, Ores, and Related Materials](#)

[E456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics](#)

[E1187 Terminology Relating to Conformity Assessment⁵](#)

[E1301 Guide for Proficiency Testing by Interlaboratory Comparisons](#)

[E1387 Test Method for Ignitable Liquid Residues in Extracts from Fire Debris Samples by Gas Chromatography⁵](#)

2.2 ISO Standards:⁶

[ISO Guide 2 General Terms and Their Definitions Relating to Standardizing Activities](#)

[ISO Guide 30 Terms and Definitions Used in Connection with Reference Materials](#)

[ISO Guide 17025 General Requirements for the Competence of Calibration and Testing Laboratories](#)

[ISO Standard 3534:1993 \(E/F\) Statistics – Vocabulary and Symbols](#)

Part 1: Probability and General Statistical Terms

Part 2: Statistical Quality Control

[ISO 9000:2000 \(E\) Standard Quality management systems—Fundamentals and vocabulary International Vocabulary of Basic and General Terms in Metrology \(VIM\), ISO](#)

2.3 Other Sources:

The Fitness for Purpose of Analytical Methods English Edition, EURACHEM Working Group. IUPAC Compendium of Chemical Terminology second edition (1997), International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry Glossary of Terms and Definitions, Scientific Working Group for the Analysis of Seized Drugs (SWGDRUG); reviewed 2005

3. Significance and Use

3.1 These terms have particular application to the forensic sciences. In addition, a hierarchy of sources of definitions were used in the development of this terminology. The hierarchy is as follows: *Websters New Collegiate 7th Dictionary*; technical dictionaries; and the *Compilation of ASTM Standard Definitions*.⁷ The subcommittee developed a suitable definition after all of the sources in the hierarchy were found wanting.

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E30 on Forensic Sciences and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E30.92 on Terminology.

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² Any definition that is unsourced has been developed by ASTM Subcommittee E30.92.

³ Abbreviations are as follows: CRIM = criminalistics, QD = questioned documents, ENGR = engineering, TOX = toxicology, PB = pathology/biology, ANTH = anthropology, and ODEN = odontology.

⁴ For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

⁵ Withdrawn. The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

⁶ Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 1, ch. de la Voie-Creuse, Case postale 56, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland, http://www.iso.ch.

⁷ *Compilation of ASTM Standard Definitions*, 7th Ed., ASTM, Philadelphia, PA, 1990.