



# Standard Practice for Reporting Opinions of Scientific or Technical Experts<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E620; 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 reappraisal. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers the scope of information to be contained in formal written technical reports which express the opinions of the scientific or technical expert with respect to the study of items that are or may reasonably be expected to be the subject of criminal or civil litigation.

1.2 If compliance with this practice is claimed, the justifications for any deviations from this practice must be documented.

1.3 *This standard may involve hazardous materials, operations, and equipment. This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.4 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*<sup>2</sup>

**E678 Practice for Evaluation of Scientific or Technical Data (Withdrawn 2022)**<sup>3</sup>

**E2655 Guide for Reporting Uncertainty of Test Results and Use of the Term Measurement Uncertainty in ASTM Test Methods**

<sup>1</sup> This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E30 on Forensic Sciences and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E30.11 on Interdisciplinary Forensic Science Standards.

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For Annual Book of ASTM Standards volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

<sup>3</sup> The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org).

## 3. Significance and Use

3.1 This practice establishes those elements of the expert's opinion report which will make the report understandable to the intended recipient and focus on the technical aspects germane to the purpose for which the opinion is rendered.

## 4. Report

4.1 All of the pertinent observations, calculations and testing results shall be reported accurately, clearly, unambiguously and objectively, and in accordance with any specific instructions in the method(s). The method(s) utilized shall be identified (including version and date when applicable) in such a manner as to allow critical review or replication by another party.

4.2 Interpretations, conclusions and opinions shall be clearly marked as such in the report (see 4.8).

4.3 The observations, test results, interpretations (if applicable), or conclusions (if applicable), shall be reported and shall include all information necessary for an opinion to be issued by a qualified individual.

4.4 Report authors may adopt one of the following means of meeting the requirements of 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3:

4.4.1 Preparation of a report that includes all of the available pertinent information listed in this practice; or

4.4.2 Preparation of an appendix to the report that includes any additional available pertinent information required by this practice not included in the body of the report; or

4.4.3 Preparation of supporting records relating to the specific investigation that contain all of the available pertinent information listed in this practice. The information shall be retained and be available.

4.5 Available and pertinent facts and data should be evaluated in accordance with Practice E678.

4.6 Preliminary information provided shall be clearly marked as such.

4.7 While this practice does not specify report format (see 4.9, Formats), the following information shall be included in the report unless the authoring organization or individual has a valid reason for not doing so, and states that reason in the report:

4.7.1 A title (for example, "Test Report" or "Report of Opinion").