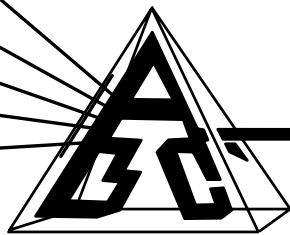


Official Publication
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Certification News

Volume 8 Issue 2 Winter 2001

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Your commitment to continued professional development

If this newsletter was sent directly to you, then you are one of those dedicated professionals certified by the ABC as a Diplomate, Fellow, and/or Technical Specialist. This President's message is directed to you. So, before you pass this newsletter on to one of your not-yet-certified colleagues (and I know you do) take a moment to read it, absorb it, and pass on your experiences to a colleague.

I am very proud of your accomplishments – as you should be and so should your colleagues. To become a holder of a Certificate of Professional Competency issued by the ABC is not a simple process. It tells your colleagues that you are committed to your profession and willing to challenge yourself. The examinations offered by the ABC are not trivial and passing the exam requires a strong personal commitment and both professional and personal support.

I would like you to take a moment and think back to the time prior to sitting for the examination. What was most meaningful to you in your preparation for taking the exam? What stands out as the most important factor in your success? Was it the hours a week you carved out of your busy schedule to read and study? Was it the litany of questions you asked your fellow colleagues in their area of expertise? Was it their willingness to share

their knowledge? Was it that the laboratory management paid the examination registration costs or supported your attendance at the test site event? Was it a mandatory requirement of your supervisor? Or was it simply being told by a certified colleague that your goal was attainable? Maybe it was just one moment, or several, but everyone that has committed to participating in the certification process has memories of what kept them moving toward their goal.

The ABC Mission: To raise the level of competence in forensic science through peer-based certification and promotion of professional development. The ABC is dedicated to the highest standards and programs for scientists involved in the administration of justice.

Keeping our Mission in mind, I suggest ABC Certified individuals take just a few moments to reflect on the portion that states "... peer-based certification and promotion of professional development." There are greater than 520 forensic professionals across the United States and other countries certified by the ABC. I suggest that each and every one of you take a few moments of time to promote professional development with your colleagues. Answer the litany of questions posed to

**SHARE
CERTIFICATION**
Read this message
absorb it, and pass
on your
experiences to a
colleague

Presidents Message continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED:

you by the colleague preparing for the exam. Tell them that their goal is attainable. Remind them that taking an ABC exam is not trivial. If you are a laboratory manager find ways to assist your staff in obtaining their goal. The rewards will not only be for the colleague taking the exam, but to yourself in knowing that you assisted an individual in promoting his/her professional development, and the Criminalistics profession by having an additional member that has objectively demonstrated their ability to competently manage or direct casework involving multiple disciplines.

Thinking back on how I utilized my time before taking the General Knowledge and the Molecular Biology examinations I realized just how many individuals assisted me in achieving my goals. My laboratory manager, whom supports certification, instilled in me the importance of acquiring as much general knowledge as possible because the GKE was not trivial or simple. My colleague who spent three hours of his precious time teaching me firearms safety, an area in which my knowledge was limited. The formation of a GKE study group composed of professionals with a wide variety of expertise. And ultimately, my family, for giving me the time I needed and supported my effort in obtaining my goal of Certification.

Spread the word, encourage a colleague, and support a friend in pursuing their certification goals and our profession will be richer for your efforts. Thank You!

As I close this message, I want to recognize our colleagues who are tasked with evaluating and analyzing the enormous amount of physical evidence generated as a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States. I thank you for your strength and willingness to do your job under tremendous personal and professional stress.

Jennifer Mihalovich – ABC President

REMINDER

When adding your certification accomplishment to your signature block, the ABC encourages you to use

D– ABC for Diplomate
F-ABC for Fellow
S-ABC for Technical Specialist

Let these marks of distinction bring you recognition for the effort you put into meeting the certification challenge.

HOST A TEST

Are your colleagues having a hard time getting to a test offering?

Make life easier and encourage your colleagues by bringing the test to them.

The ABC will proctor a test at your lab!

All you need is for five or more people to register and the ABC will cover the expenses of getting an ABC test administrator to your site. Even if there are only 1 to 4 people, the ABC will absorb half the cost.

Contact the ABC registrar, Mike Haas, at 715.845.3684 to get the ball rolling.

American Board of Criminalistics **Mission Statement**

To raise the level of competence in Forensic Science through peer based certification and promotion of professional development.

The American Board of Criminalistics is dedicated to the highest quality standards and programs for certification of scientists involved in the administration of justice.

Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB)

— What is it and what is it doing? —

By Rick Tontarski

Background - Historical

The Forensic Specialty Accreditation Board (FSAB) was established to develop standards for an accreditation program for forensic certification bodies. It evolved from an AAFS Accreditation and Certification Task Force that began as an initiative to formally recognize legitimate forensic certifying organizations. The inherent value to a certifying organization and its certificant, is that accreditation of the certifying program demonstrates credibility/validity/reliability of the professional standards of the certification program. It arguably lays the foundation for an individual's credentials.

An initial informational meeting was held at the AAFS meeting February 1998. Fourteen forensic organizations were represented at the meeting. The Task Force held its first meetings following the informational session.

Over the next two plus years the task force developed a plan for the creation of the FSAB, drafted its articles of incorporation, and developed draft by-laws and operating procedures. The FSAB was incorporated in Colorado on June 23, 2000.

Current Overview

The FSAB consists of nine Initial Nominating Organizations (INO) and 5 at-large members. The representatives are listed below.

<i>Graham Jones</i>	<i>President/At-Large</i>	<i>Steve Brunette</i>	<i>At-Large</i>
<i>Yale Caplan</i>	<i>Vice-President/American Board of Forensic Toxicology</i>	<i>Mary Fran Ernst</i>	<i>American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators, Inc.</i>
<i>Carol Henderson</i>	<i>Public Director</i>	<i>Susan Johns</i>	<i>Secretary/At-Large</i>
<i>Tom Johnson</i>	<i>American Board of Forensic Odontology</i>	<i>Jack Kalin</i>	<i>Forensic Toxicology Certification Board</i>
<i>David Moore</i>	<i>American Board of Forensic Document Examiners</i>	<i>Joe Polski</i>	<i>At-Large</i>
<i>Rick Tontarski</i>	<i>Treasurer/American Board of Criminalistics</i>	<i>Hal Wilkinson</i>	<i>International Institute of Forensic Engineering Sciences</i>
<i>Vickie Willard</i>	<i>Association of Forensic Document Examiners</i>	<i>Kenneth Zercie</i>	<i>International Association for Identification</i>

FSAB Organization/Operation

One representative from each of these INOs will make up the FSAB — with 5 "At-Large" equivalent representatives, for five years. The "at-large" representatives currently are four founding members originally selected by the Academy to create and incorporate the FSAB, and the Public Director. After five years, certifying bodies, who are accredited by FSAB, will be able to nominate representatives to the FSAB Board. There is a maximum of 25 directors allowed on the Board per the by-laws. Therefore, there is no guarantee that every organization will have a representative on the Board.

The FSAB appears to be a strong organization of member representatives. The tone of discussions and effectiveness of working together speaks well for the future of the FSAB. The two Boards for QD and Toxicology sat and talked through some of their differences, and progress was made to form stronger ties and harmonize. The redundancy has historical roots that can't be denied, but there is common ground available for advancing these fields through collaborative action.

CONTINUED –

Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB) continued:

ABC CALENDAR

PLEASE POST ON YOUR LAB BULLETIN BOARD

Date/Deadline	Event	For More Information, Contact:
February 13, 2002 <i>Deadline December 13, 2001</i>	All ABC Exams, AAFS Meeting Atlanta, Georgia	Carol Hunter 310/763-2374
April 24, 2002 Deadline February 24, 2002	All ABC Exams, MAAFS Meeting Fredericksburg, Maryland	Susan Blankenship 301/739-8577
May 11, 2002 Deadline March 11, 2002	All ABC Exams, CAC Meeting San Francisco, California	Jennifer Mihalovich 510/238-3386
May 24, 2002 Deadline March 24, 2002	Special Offering – John Jay College New York, New York	Judy O’Conner 718/558-8745
September 18, 2002 Deadline July 18, 2002	All ABC Exams, MAFS Meeting Milwaukee, Wisconsin	Dani Bergman 651/642-0700
October 18, 2002 Deadline August 18, 2002	All ABC Exams, CAC Meeting Huntington Beach, California	Greg Matheson 213/847-0043

Consider studying for one of these future offerings.

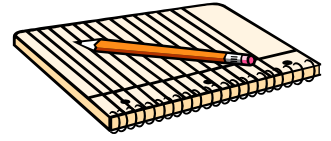
SAFS – Fall 2002 – Biloxi, MS., Spring 2003 – Savannah, GA., Spring 2004 – New Iberia, LA., Fall 2004 Orlando, FL.

To arrange to sit for an examination, you must contact the Registrar by letter or fax (715-845-4156) by the deadline listed.

Local contacts are provided for conference information only.

To arrange for ABC Exams to be administered in your laboratory, contact your regional representative.

NOTES FROM THE REGISTRAR



Replacement ABC lapel pins can be purchased from the Registrar for \$10: Make checks payable to the ABC. Additional ABC lapel pins can be purchased by certificate holders for \$10 each. There is not a separate lapel pin for Fellows.

Additional copies of the Directory can be purchased for \$10.

The ABC no longer utilizes the AAFS Offices for maintenance of records. Therefore, changes of address reported to the AAFS for your AAFS Membership will not be forwarded to the ABC Registrar's Office. The ABC cannot track our certificate holders without current addresses, so in order to better serve our certificate holders, changes of address must be reported directly to the ABC Registrar's Office.

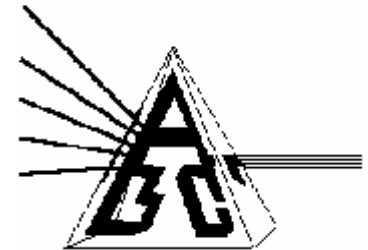
Recertification paperwork should be submitted in **triplicate, one original and two copies.**

If certificate holders or certificate-eligible individuals choose not to submit recertification paperwork by March 1st for any year, for any reason, they are still responsible for paying the \$30 maintenance fees for that year. Payment increases to \$40 if received between March 2nd and May 31st. If payment is made after June 1st of that year, the fees increase to \$50. For each year that maintenance fees are not paid, an additional \$10 non-payment fee is added to the balance.

ABC Shirt Order Form

White short sleeve
Polo shirt
W/ ABC logo
100% cotton

\$27 plus \$3 shipping and handling
No exchanges or refunds



**American Board
of Criminalistics**

M	L	XL	Price	Total
			\$30.00 each	

Name: _____

Address: _____

Mail this form with a check payable to the ABC to:

American Board of Criminalistics
P.O. Box 1123
Wausau, WI 54402-1123

ABC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Greg Matheson

SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Respectfully Submitted – Dani Bergman – ABC Treasurer

AUGUST 1990 – OCTOBER 2001

INCOME (Categories)

300 Member Dues	\$30,800.00
310 Donations	\$ 2,700.00
320 Interest	\$ 4,665.25
330 Application Fees	\$ 31,080.00
340 General Test Fees	\$116,625.00
350 Specialty Exam Fees	\$ 7,925.00
355 Technical Exam Fees	\$ 10,200.00
360 Recertification Fees	\$ 74,320.00
390 Miscellaneous Income*	\$ 9,563.28
NIJ Grant	\$37,643.00

TOTAL INCOME **\$325,521.53**

EXPENSES (Categories)

400 Postage	\$ 30,238.49
410 Supplies	\$ 9,824.34
420 Printing	\$ 29,675.17
425 Miscellaneous Expenses*	\$ 8,207.29
430 Bank Fees	\$ 83.30
435 Equipment	\$ 5,729.73
440 Wages	\$ 49,341.38
445 Insurance	\$ 9,796.44
450 Telephone	\$ 3,216.55
460 Travel Expenses	\$ 32,344.13
470 Lodging	\$ 9,869.27
470 Room-Meals	\$ 28,463.32
475 Miscellaneous Travel*	\$ 2,676.03
480 Legal	\$ 507.50
485 Contractual	\$ 33,552.06
490 Awards	\$ 1,163.73
490 CAC Payback	\$ 11,501.00
496 Insufficient Funds Checks	\$ 370.00
500 Accreditation	\$ 1,250.00
510 Meeting Stipend	\$ 19,956.12

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$287,765.85**

INCOME LESS EXPENSES **\$ 37,755.68**

TRANSFERS

To CD	\$-10,000.00
To Money Market	\$-25,000.00
From ABC	\$ 25,000.00
From CD	\$ 10,512.36
TOTAL TRANSFERS	\$ 512.36

ABC GENERAL ACCOUNTS PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT

JANUARY 1, 2001 – OCTOBER 31, 2001

INCOME (Categories)

300 Member Dues	\$ 4,000.00
320 Interest	\$ 764.24
330 Application Fees	\$ 3,840.00
340 General Test Fees	\$16,350.00
350 Specialty Exam Fees	\$ 700.00
355 Technical Exam Fees	\$ 800.00
360 Recertification Fees	\$14,370.00
390 Miscellaneous Income*	\$ 5,394.20

TOTAL INCOME **\$46,218.44**

EXPENSES (Categories)

400 Postage	\$ 4,612.15
410 Supplies	\$ 1,193.54
420 Printing	\$ 2,789.18
425 Miscellaneous Expenses*	\$ 2,137.16
430 Bank Fees	\$ 11.06
435 Equipment	\$ 2,990.68
440 Wages	\$ 6,590.00
445 Insurance	\$ 1,263.15
450 Telephone	\$ 540.85
460 Travel Expenses	\$ 6,047.26
470 Lodging	\$ 1,441.91
470 Room-Meals	\$ 2,454.42
475 Miscellaneous Travel*	\$ 524.90
480 Legal	\$ 0.00
485 Contractual	\$ 1,260.00
490 Awards	\$
250.00	

510 Meeting Stipend \$ 6,198.65

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$40,304.91**

TOTAL INCOME LESS EXPENSES **\$ 5,913.53**



FSAB meetings are “working meetings” much like the original (Editor’s comment – and current) ABC Board meetings...long hours, few breaks, and little food. All motivating factors for getting the work done.

Some FSAB Activities To Date

- The fourth meeting of the FSAB was held in October in Orlando. Some of the on-going work is listed below.
- The FSAB by-laws have been finalized.
- A Policies and Procedures manual detailing how the FSAB will operate is nearing completion.
- The Application for certifying bodies to apply for accreditation is a work in progress. The Application will become the basis for developing a set of measures to be applied during application review and serve to set of performance measures for standards interpretation.
- The FSAB policy on “grandfathering” has been set. The FSAB will require that the members of all certifying bodies must have competency testing that is relevant to the specific discipline being certified. When certifying bodies are applying for accreditation they may have not more than 49% of their members certified by “grandfathering”. Persons who were “grandfathered” must submit to appropriate examination / competency testing when they are due for recertification. All certifying body members must comply with all FSAB standards within 5 years of application for accreditation.
- The AAFS has agreed to become a sponsoring organization of the FSAB.
- The development of the FSAB website is moving forward. The address is “thefsab.org”. IAI will host the site when it is operational.
- The FSAB is pursuing an additional grant from NIJ to continue supporting the development effort.
- Liability insurance options are being explored.

Next ABC Steps

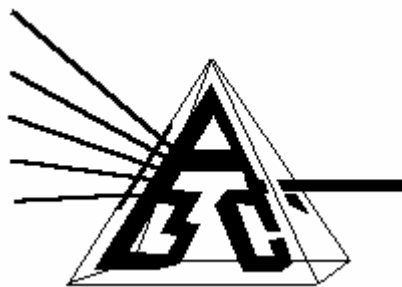
Starting in the 2002, the fees for American Board of Criminalistics (ABC) will be \$750/year, because we have over 500 certificants. There is a sliding scale - with smaller organizations paying less and those above 500 paying the most. IAI and ABC are currently the only two organizations in the "upper class". No decisions have been made yet about the application fee or re-accreditation fee to be charged applicant certification boards.

I will distribute documents and advice as received from FSAB to ABC for consideration and use as we develop our application and compliance specifications. There appear to be only a few, quite manageable, organizational modifications that will be required for ABC to meet the FSAB international standards and thereby gain accreditation. The ultimate benefit for forensic science will be that certification credibility is significantly enhanced through graded compliance with international standards.

My thanks to Carl Selavka and the ABC Board for giving me the opportunity to represent you in this venture. If you have any questions, or have information that would be helpful for me to consider in support of our activities with FSAB, please contact me at RETontarsk@atfhq.atf.treas.gov.

THE ABC LOGO

—
An
Historical
Perspective



As the ABC was forming, Jo Ann Becker designed the ABC Logo. The five rays entering the prism represent the original five members of the ABC; CAC, MAAFS, SAS, NEAFS, and MAFS. The founding Associations came together to form a unified certification program for the whole profession.

Since that date the membership has grown, but the logo continues to represent the roots of the ABC.