

*April 13, 2016*

Dear ABC Certificate Holders,

The American Board of Criminalistics has been operating under the framework of ISO/IEC 17024. As such a quality issue (our first corrective action) was discovered and remediated. We are now informing our “customers” or the ABC certificate holders.

**Description of Quality Issue:** In 2015 during review of the Molecular Biology examination, one question was discovered to have had the incorrect answer provided when the examination question was initially generated. This resulted in an incorrect answer key.

**Investigation:** Several test takers were found to have failed the exam by this one particular question. These examinees were contacted and the issue resolved to their satisfaction.

**Root Cause:** The group performing the root cause analysis agreed that due diligence had been exercised in reviewing the question(s) of the examination. The Question Database Manager did feel that the question is a fair question; however it is difficult and requires careful reading of the question stem. The key was mis-keyed and prior reviews did not reveal the error.

**Actions:** Prior to the identification of this issue, the Question Database Manager had already implemented a system that requires that all questions be peer reviewed by three technical experts prior to submitting the questions to the database for inclusion. This will make the review of questions more systematic and prevent such errors in the future. Also, a new procedure is forthcoming that will review the relevant examinations for poor performing questions every three years. This review will result in a written report identifying any potential issues and the remedies taken.

By committing to transparency with such issues, we welcome discussion and feedback on how we may better serve our certificate holders.

Best Regards,

Meg Aceves, D-ABC  
President, ABC