

Standard Method for the Examination and Documentation of Ammunition and Ammunition Components



WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy-to-understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are not intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a published standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STANDARD?

This standard provides procedures for the initial examination and documentation of ammunition or ammunition components by a firearm and toolmark forensic science service provider (FSSP).

This standard does not cover the microscopic comparison of toolmarks on ammunition components.

[ANSI/ASB 068, 1st Ed., 2020](#) is to be used alongside this standard for information regarding the safe handling of firearms and ammunition.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

This standard requires awareness of collaborative evidence collection protocols that support the preservation of potential biological, trace, latent print, or other transient evidence found on these items.

Adequate contemporaneous documentation is required to permit evaluation by another firearm and toolmark examiner.

Appropriate reporting that summarizes the documentation of the items is required.

FSSPs engaged in the examination and testing of ammunition and ammunition components are encouraged to meet this standard.

HOW IS THIS STANDARD USED, AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

This standard recognizes that differing levels of examination may be required depending on the intended use of the information provided by the examination. FSSP policy may inform examiners/technicians which steps in the process are appropriate.

Procedures for the contemporaneous documentation of these examinations allow for flexibility in documentation format that includes the use or combination of worksheets, laboratory notes, sketches, photographs, etc.

This standard provides information on the equipment and materials often used in this type of examination and covers evidence handling; an initial examination to determine suitability for further examination; and the physical examination of unfired ammunition, ammunition packaging, and fired cartridge cases, shotshell cases, bullets and projectiles. For each type of physical examination, the standard lists the information to be documented if applicable to an item.

