



**Report on the Responses to the July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015
Customer Satisfaction Survey for
Bureau of Forensic Fire and Explosives Analysis**

The following derives its data from a survey of seven questions sent to customers who submitted samples to the Bureau during the period from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

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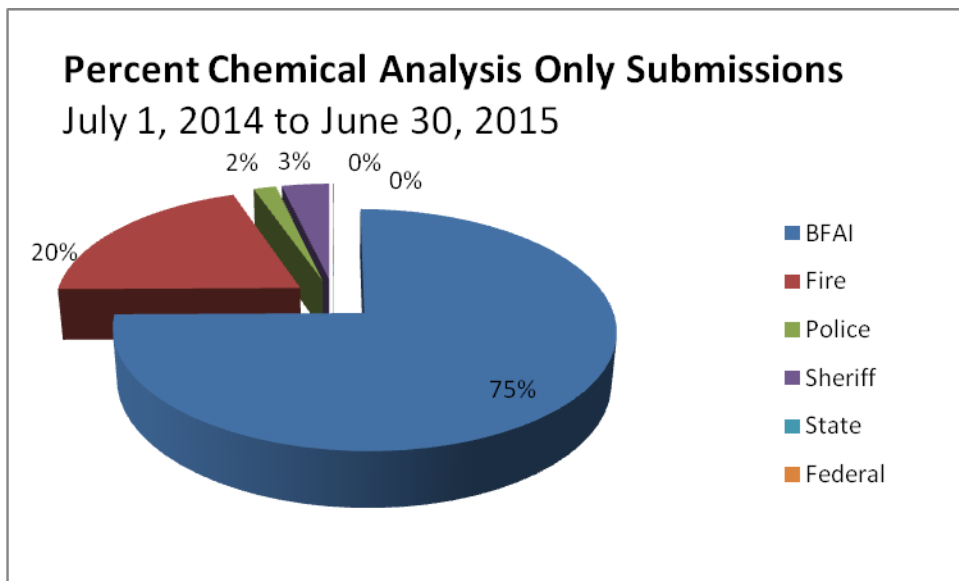
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Submitters:

During the survey period, a total of two hundred one (201) submitters were identified. Nineteen (19) individuals had their emails returned as they were no longer with those agencies. They represented twenty-two (22) Fire Departments, seventeen (17) Police Departments, eleven (11) Sheriff's Offices, twelve (12) BFAI Field Offices, the Florida Department of Corrections, Division of Insurance Fraud, Department of Agriculture, the Lottery, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the State Attorney's Office. The majority of physical evidence submissions (74.84%) were made by detectives from the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations (BFAI). The majority of submissions from Sheriff's Offices were for identification of hazardous chemicals seized during clandestine drug laboratory investigations. BFAI was responsible for 100% of Digital Image Submissions which were not considered in the table below. Internal Bureau created samples necessary for quality assurance, instrument validation, and proficiency evaluations were redacted from the totals.

| Type of Agency | Number of Separate Agencies/Field Offices | Number of Submitters by Agency Type | Percent of physical evidence (chemical) Submissions |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| BFAI | 12 | 89 | 74.84 |
| Fire Dept. | 22 | 58 | 19.80 |
| Police Dept. | 17 | 23 | 1.72 |
| Sheriff's Office | 11 | 22 | 3.58 |
| Other (State Agencies) | 6 | 8 | 0.03 |
| Federal | 1 | 1 | 0.03 |
| Totals | 69 | 201 | 100% |



Of the non-BFAI submitting agencies, six (6) were identified as submitting sixty (60) or more samples each (these were from five (5) fire departments and one (1) sheriff's office).

| Agency | Samples |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Palm Beach County Fire Rescue | 168 |
| Hillsborough Co. Fire Marshal | 129 |
| Miami Fire Department | 106 |
| Lake County Sheriff | 100 |
| Pasco County Fire Rescue | 81 |
| Tampa Fire Rescue | 64 |

A breakout of the physical evidence submissions made by our largest customer, the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations, indicates that the average number of chemical analysis submissions per detective who submitted physical evidence items in the target time frame (eighty-nine (89) detectives) was 31.21 samples per detective. The field office with the greatest number of chemical analysis submissions was Jacksonville followed by Plantation. The average number of digital image case submissions per detective who submitted digital image cases in the target time frame (eighty-six (86) detectives) was 35.15 cases per detective. The field office with the highest number of digital image case submissions (DI) was Jacksonville followed by Orlando.

| Field Office | Samples | DI Cases |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Jacksonville | 504 | 523 |
| Plantation | 377 | 277 |
| Orlando | 279 | 481 |
| Lake Wales | 266 | 281 |
| Tampa | 250 | 174 |
| Fort Myers | 246 | 221 |
| Pensacola | 181 | 233 |
| Daytona | 168 | 250 |
| Tallahassee | 159 | 144 |
| Ocala | 144 | 170 |
| Panama City | 102 | 165 |
| West Palm Beach | 102 | 104 |
| Totals | 2778 | 3023 |

The top eleven (11) individual submitters of fire debris analysis requests are listed in the following table (Brock Dietz and Raul Vallejo were tied at the number ten spot):

| Detective | FO | Samples |
|-------------------|----------------|---------|
| Tom White | Jacksonville | 147 |
| Jerry Baker | Jacksonville | 82 |
| Max Melendez | Tampa | 75 |
| Josh Bass | Jacksonville | 67 |
| Roberta Case | Lake Wales | 66 |
| David Lepper | Fort Myers | 66 |
| Anthony Mozealous | West Palm Bch. | 63 |
| Wally Romero | Plantation | 62 |
| Mike Eyes | Orlando | 58 |
| Brock Dietz | Tallahassee | 56 |
| Raul Vallejo | Fort Myers | 56 |

The top ten (10) individual submitters of digital image cases are listed in the following table:

| Detective | FO | DI Cases |
|----------------|--------------|----------|
| Mike Vitta | Orlando | 96 |
| Josh Bass | Jacksonville | 91 |
| Jerry Baker | Jacksonville | 87 |
| George Holcomb | Orlando | 81 |
| Joe Pietrefesa | Jacksonville | 77 |
| James Little | Jacksonville | 73 |
| Robert Harvey | Orlando | 70 |
| Daniel Yeager | Jacksonville | 70 |
| Charles Grice | Pensacola | 68 |
| Roberta Case | Lake Wales | 64 |

The Survey:

The Bureau's Customer Satisfaction Survey was in an electronic format and was sent one hundred eighty-two (182) of the identified submitters after subtracting those whose emails were indicated as being undeliverable. A survey return percentage above 25% of those sent is considered "significant". A total of one hundred twenty-nine (129) customers (70.88%) provided responses for at least one of the five (5) BFFEA services listed before the survey deadline. Some customers who utilized more than one of our services provided responses for those services as well.

BFFEA services which the customers were asked to rank individually:

- Fire Debris Analysis
- Explosives Analysis
- Chemical Unknowns Analysis
- Digital Image Archival
- Forensic Video Examination

If a customer did not use a service, they did not provide responses. Each of the five (5) services was assessed by four (4) attributes:

- Level of satisfaction with the work product
- Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases
- Impact on the investigator or their agency if the service were no longer available
- Quality of any personal contact with BFFEA staff

Again, if the customer did not wish to address a particular attribute they were allowed to pass without ranking it.

The ranking scale for all attributes was:

- Very High
- High
- Neutral
- Low
- Very Low

There were different numbers of respondents for each of the attributes in each of the five services. A table showing the number of respondents for each service:

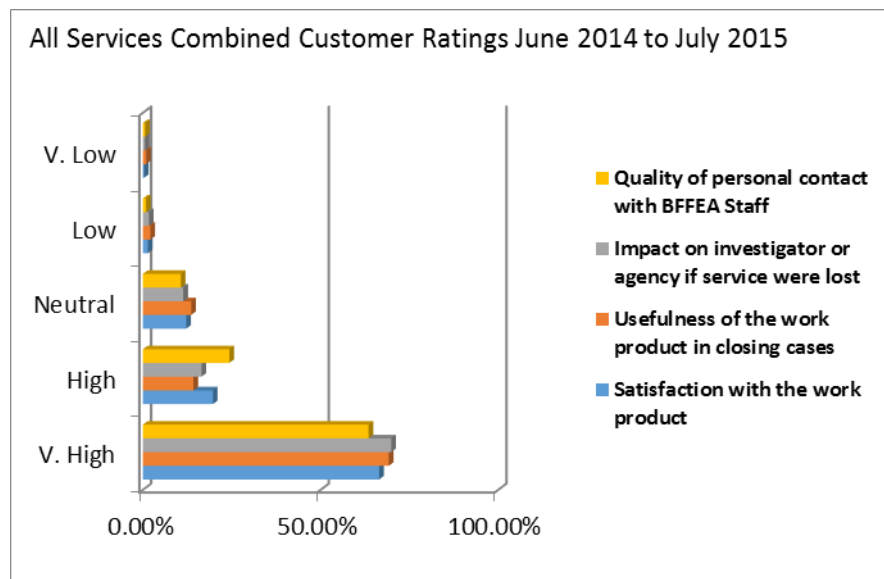
| Respondents | Raw Number | Percent responding to a portion of the survey |
|---|-------------------|--|
| Maximum number that responded to a portion of the survey | 129 | 100.00% |
| Maximum respondents to issues on fire debris service | 122 | 93.80% |
| Maximum respondents to issues on explosives service | 70 | 54.26% |
| Maximum respondents to issues on chemical unknown service | 65 | 50.39% |
| Maximum respondents to issues on digital imaging service | 64 | 49.61% |
| Maximum respondents to issues on forensic video service | 43 | 33.33% |

Overview of All Services

If all responses for the survey were merged regardless of the service category a comprehensive view of the Bureau’s overall performance was created with the greatest weighting toward the chemical analyses that compose the bulk of our service requests For FY 2014/15 the chemical requests totaled eight thousand three hundred eighty-nine (8,389) and the imaging requests totaled three thousand two hundred forty-eight (3,248). The following tables and graphs show the statistical customer perception of each of the four attributes for all services combined:

| All Services Merged | Count | Count | Count | Count | Count | Total |
|---|---------|-------|---------|-------|--------|----------|
| Attribute | V. High | High | Neutral | Low | V. Low | Response |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 240 | 71 | 44 | 5 | 1 | 361 |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 229 | 47 | 45 | 7 | 3 | 331 |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 246 | 58 | 40 | 6 | 2 | 352 |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 214 | 82 | 36 | 3 | 2 | 337 |

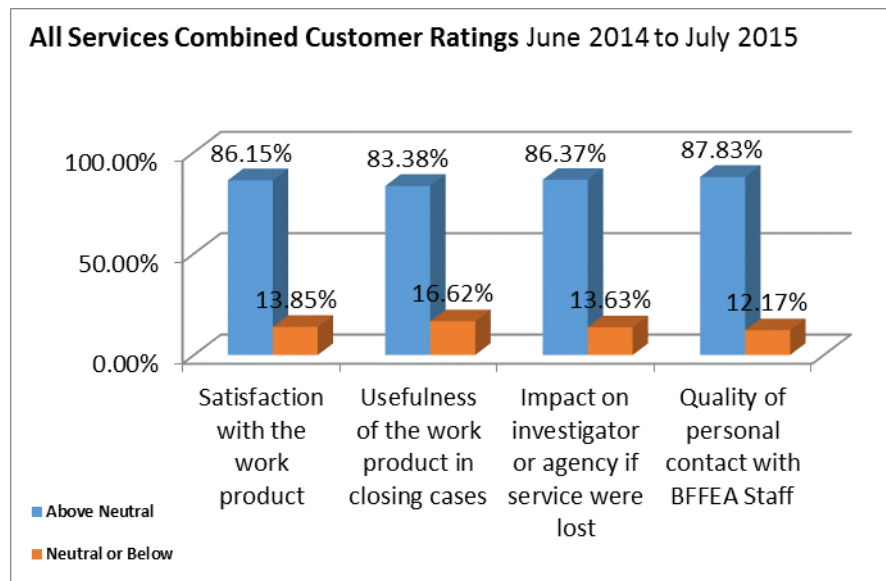
| All Services Merged | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Ranking | V. High | High | Neutral | Low | V. Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 66.48% | 19.67% | 12.19% | 1.39% | 0.28% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 69.18% | 14.20% | 13.60% | 2.11% | 0.91% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 69.89% | 16.48% | 11.36% | 1.70% | 0.57% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 63.50% | 24.33% | 10.68% | 0.89% | 0.59% |



The scope of this evaluation by customers is examined by combining the percent of responses that rank the attributes at “Very High” and “High” against all the responses that rank the attributes at “Neutral”, “Low”, or “Very Low”. This evaluation period shows similar percentages in the percentages of “Very High” and “High” rankings compared with the previous

evaluation period covering fiscal year 2013 to 2014. All ratings of “Very High” plus “High” are between 83.38% and 87.83% and is a significantly positive reflection of the value our customers place on our services and staff.

| All Services Merged | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------------|------------------------|
| Ranking | V.High + High | Neutral, Low, or V.Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 86.15% | 13.85% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 83.38% | 16.62% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 86.37% | 13.63% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 87.83% | 12.17% |



This comprehensive ranking of all services by attributes shows that 83% or more of our customers rank each of the attributes (satisfaction, usefulness of the product, impact, and personal contact) at “High” or “Very High”. If we examine the statistics for the highest rating of only “Very High” the Bureau scores from above 63% to almost 70% for each attribute.

Each of the services were evaluated separately by the four attributes to determine areas where potential improvements may be possible. The number of work units associated with each service is listed below. The category “Explosives” includes both explosive determinations as well as the determinations of Chemical Unknowns. This will be evaluated further when the services are discussed separately.

| 07/01/2014 to 06/30/2015 | Film Special Requests | Fire Debris Samples | QA/QC | Explosives | Images | Video | Total |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------|------------|--------|-------|-------|
| Work Requests | 147 | 3691 | 3473 | 1225 | 3070 | 31 | 11637 |

Fire Debris Analysis Service

Fire debris analysis is the primary service provided by the Bureau. The individual samples and associated quality assurance analyses compose 61.56% (7,164 of 11,637) of the total number of work requests processed by the Bureau in the fiscal year running from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. Fire debris analysis, where we examine material from the fire scene for trace amounts of ignitable liquids possibly used to accelerate a fire, is accomplished with the use of gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS).

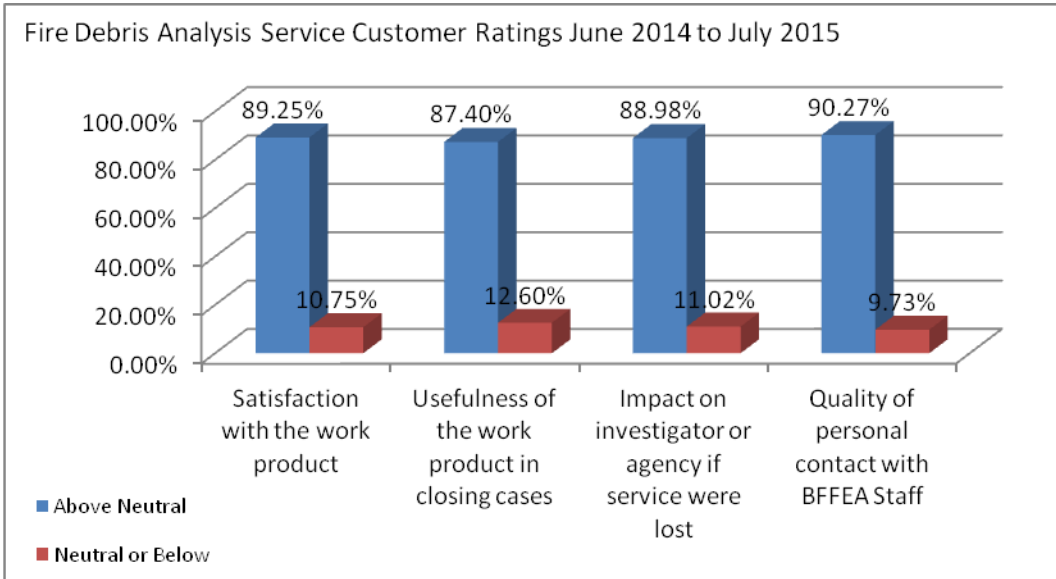
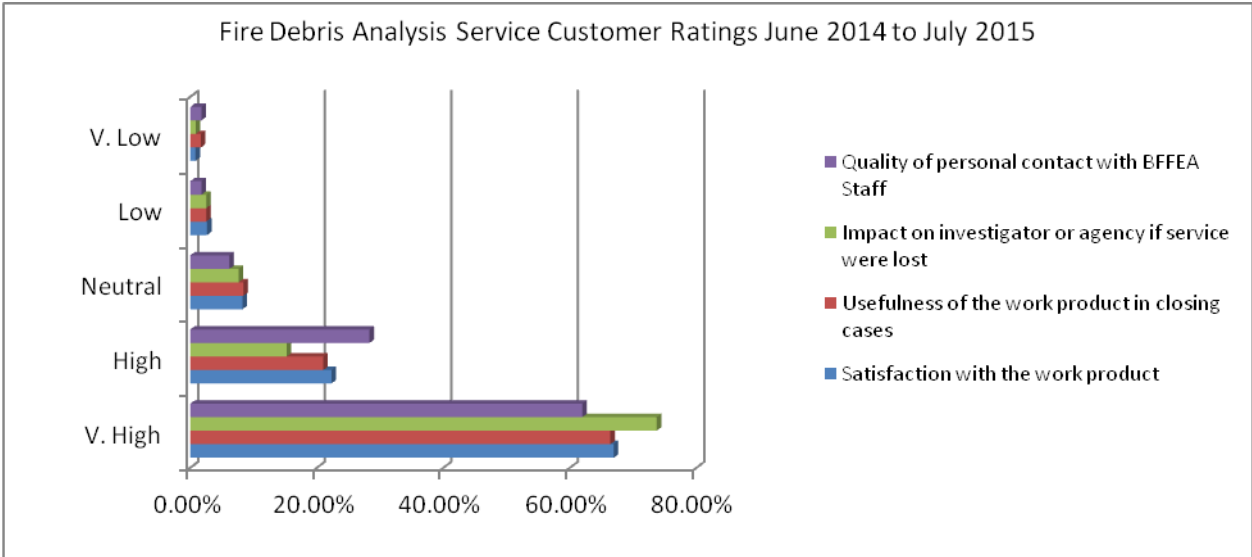
Of all forensic sub-disciplines under the general category of “Trace Evidence,” fire debris is notoriously difficult to analyze. Ignitable liquids are complex mixtures of organic chemicals. In a sample of fire debris, these are intermingled with additional complex mixtures of organic chemicals (some of which are the same as some of the components of ignitable liquids) coming from the fire debris (burned substrates from the fire). The level of scrutiny required is high and the international guidelines for what may be determined are suggested by the American Society for Testing and Materials E1618, “Standard Test Method for Ignitable Liquid Residues in Extracts from Fire Debris Samples by Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry”. The number of negative determinations in fire debris analysis is higher than other disciplines either because the ignitable liquid did not survive the fire, was not on the sample submitted, or the components recovered did not meet the requirements of the Bureau SOP which uses ASTM recommendations for classification.

Our customers provided the following responses concerning their view of fire debris analysis service:

| Fire Debris Service | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Ranking | V. High | High | Neutral | Low | V. Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 66.94% | 22.31% | 8.26% | 2.65% | 0.83% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 66.39% | 21.01% | 8.40% | 2.52% | 1.68% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 73.73% | 15.25% | 7.63% | 2.54% | 0.85% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 61.95% | 28.32% | 6.19% | 1.77% | 1.77% |

Again, the scope of this evaluation by customers is more impressive when the statistics are examined by simply viewing the percent of responses that rank the attributes at “Very High” plus “High” against all the responses that rank the attributes at “Neutral” or lower.

| Fire Debris Service | Percent | Percent |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ranking | V.High + High | Neutral, Low, or V.Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 89.25% | 10.75% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 87.40% | 12.60% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 88.98% | 11.02% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 90.27% | 9.73% |



When over 87% of customers rank the usefulness of the work product to close their case investigations at “Very High” or “High” it is clear that the fire debris analysis provided by BFFEA is a necessary component to fire investigation in the State of Florida.

Explosives/ Chemical Unknowns Analysis Service

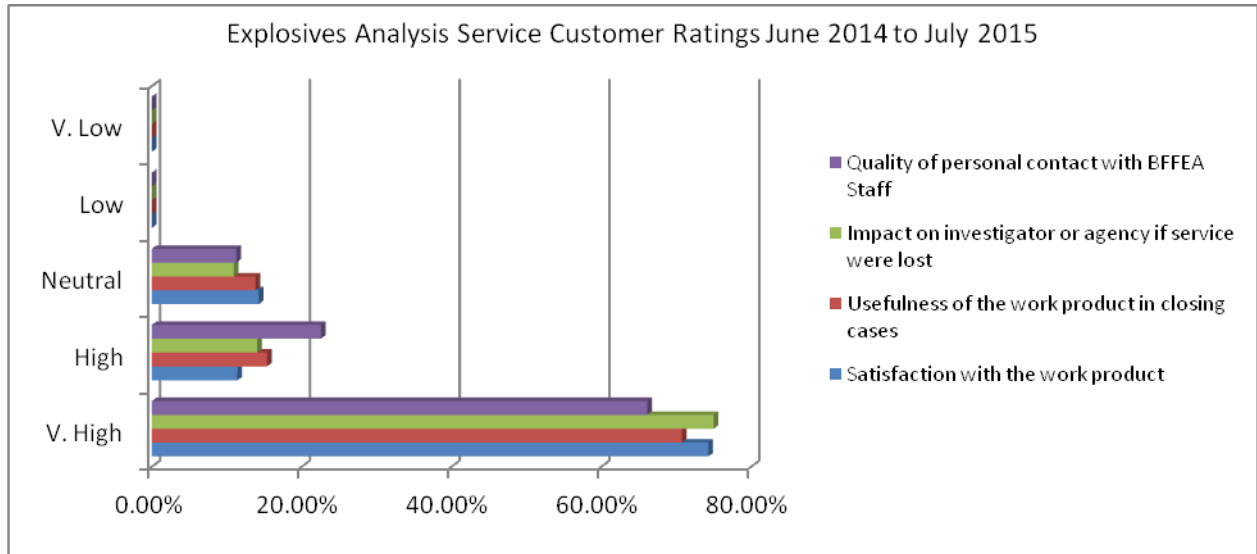
The determination of explosives, explosive residues, or chemical unknowns typically requires the use of multiple instruments on multiple sub-samples. Fire debris only requires a single analysis by gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS). Organic (compounds with a carbon atom “backbone”) explosives, residues and Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by GC-MS, Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), and/or Ion Mobility Spectrometry (IMS). Inorganic (compounds without the carbon atom “backbone” and that typically dissociate into positively and negatively charged ions) explosives, residues and Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by ion chromatography- mass spectrometry (IC-MS), Fourier Transfer Infrared Spectrometry (FTIR), Raman Spectroscopy, and/or X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF). In addition, all explosives, residues and Chemical Unknowns typically require additional various classic wet chemical “spot” tests and determination of pH (level of how acidic or basic a liquid may be).

The Bureau’s statistics currently combine all explosives, explosive residues, and Chemical Unknowns (true unknowns as well as chemicals from clandestine drug laboratories) under the single heading of “explosives.” Originally the Bureau only had the identification of the Chemical Unknowns as a minor task and incorporated them into the more numerous explosives determinations.

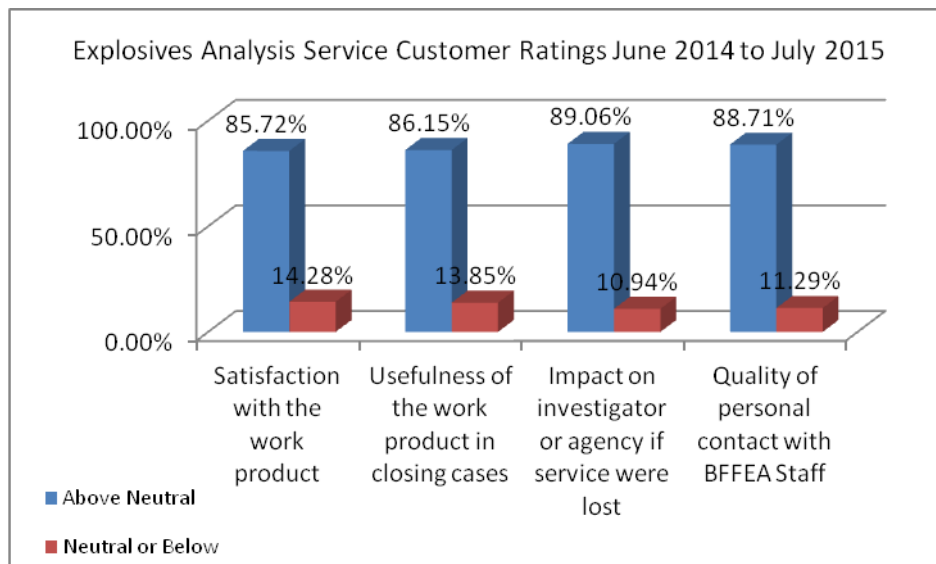
This is not the case today. No other State of Florida laboratory is performing testing of this type of evidence for investigators. Florida Statutes criminalize possession of the chemicals used to construct a clandestine drug laboratories (FS 893.033(2), FS 893.13 (g), FS 893.135(1)(f)1, and FS 893.149(1)). As a result we had seen a steady increase in the number of these submissions through FY 2013/2014. By FY 2014/2015 the submissions had dropped. The reason provided by our customers was that foreign produced methamphetamine was lower in cost that could be made here in the US and as a result, there were fewer clandestine laboratories. Of the twelve hundred twenty-five (1225) “explosives” analyses completed by the Bureau from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015, only 21.80% or two hundred sixty-seven (267) were for actual explosives while 78.20% or nine hundred fifty-eight (958) were for Chemical Unknowns identification. This section will report the customer satisfaction rankings for the explosives analysis while unknown and clandestine laboratory chemicals analysis will be covered in the next section.

| Explosives Service | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Ranking | V. High | High | Neutral | Low | V. Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 74.29% | 11.43% | 14.29% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 70.77% | 15.38% | 13.85% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 75.00% | 14.06% | 10.94% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 66.13% | 22.58% | 11.29% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

To appreciate the scope of this evaluation by customers we will again examine the statistics by simply viewing the percent of responses that rank the attributes at “Very High” plus “High” against all the responses that rank the attributes at “Neutral” or lower.



| Explosives Service | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------------|------------------------|
| Ranking | V.High + High | Neutral, Low, or V.Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 85.72% | 14.28% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 86.15% | 13.85% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 89.06% | 10.94% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 88.71% | 11.29% |

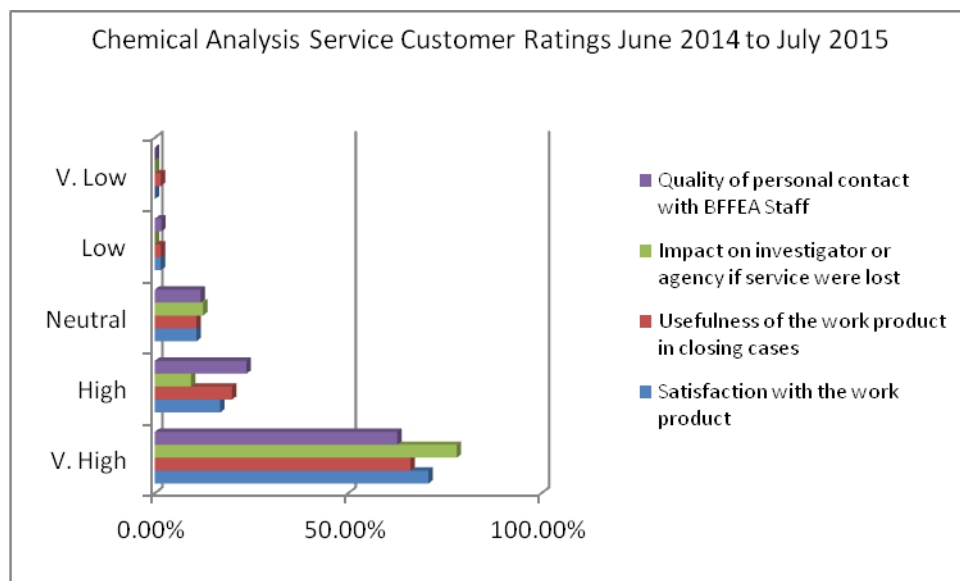


Overall, the ratings of “Very High” and “High” are similar to the previous review period. As with the previous review period a drop in favorable ratings to “neutral” and lower can be seen. With the current work product rated at “Very High” and “High” by 85.72% of our customers it is clear we are performing well above expectations.

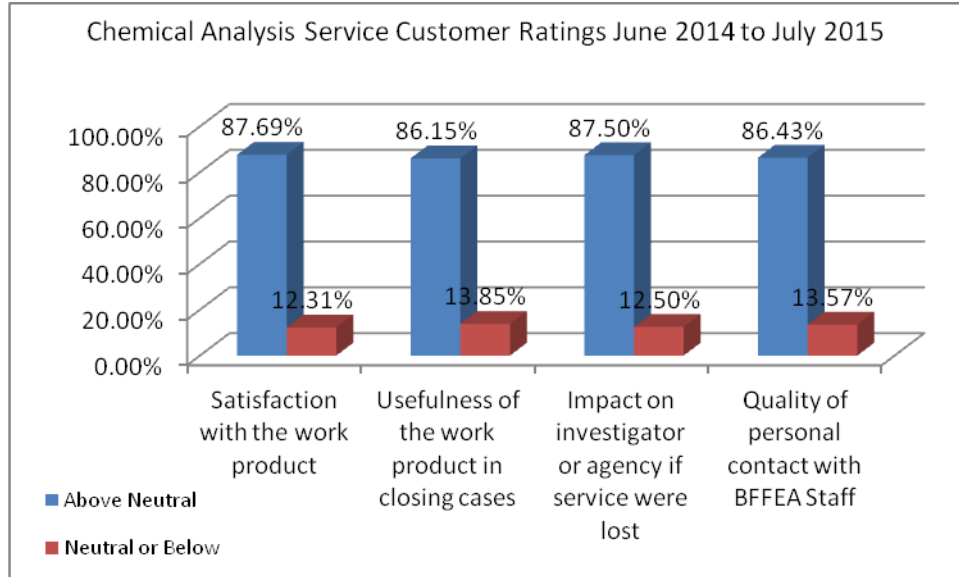
Chemical Unknowns Analysis Service

As was discussed at the beginning of the section on Explosives Analysis, the twelve hundred twenty-five (1225) “explosives” analyses completed by the Bureau from January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015 can be broken down into 21.80% or two hundred sixty-seven (267) analyses for actual explosives while 78.20% or nine hundred fifty-eight (958) were for Chemical Unknowns identification. In addition, organic based Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by GC-MS, Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), or Ion Mobility Spectrometry (IMS). Inorganic based Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by ion chromatography- mass spectrometry (IC-MS), FTIR, Raman Spectroscopy, or X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF) and will require screening by various classic wet chemical “spot” tests and determination of pH (level of how acidic or basic a liquid may be).

| Chemical Unknowns Analysis Service | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Ranking | V. High | High | Neutral | Low | V. Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 70.77% | 16.92% | 10.77% | 1.54% | 0.00% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing cases | 66.15% | 20.00% | 10.77% | 1.54% | 1.54% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 78.12% | 9.38% | 12.50% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 62.71% | 23.73% | 11.86% | 1.69% | 0.00% |



| Chemical Unknowns Service | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------------|------------------------|
| Ranking | V.High + High | Neutral, Low, or V.Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 87.69% | 12.31% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing cases | 86.15% | 13.85% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 87.50% | 12.50% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 86.43% | 13.57% |



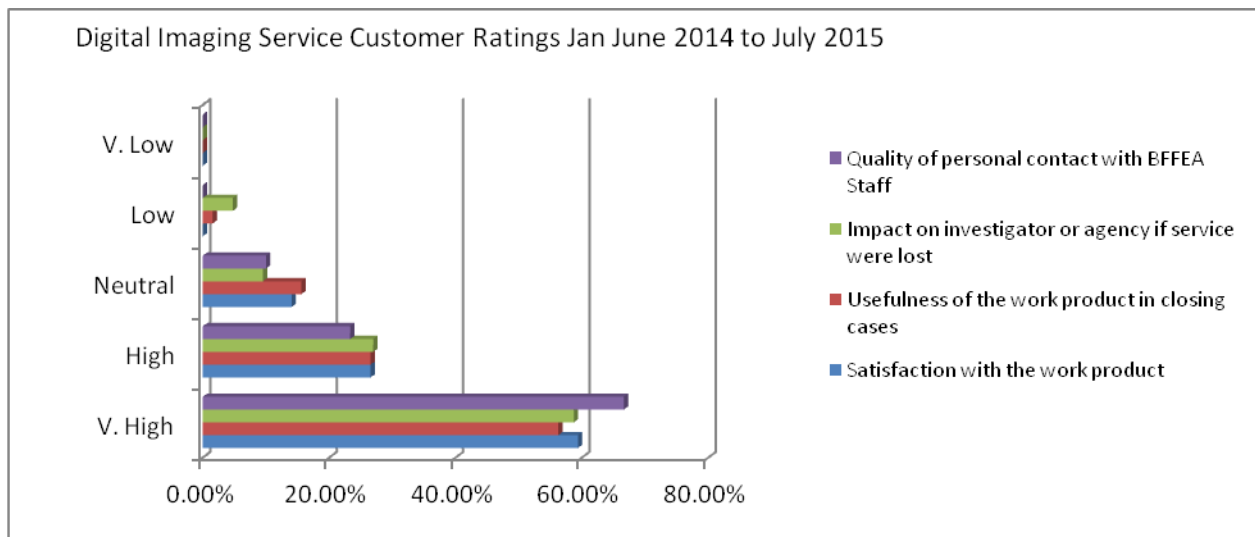
As with the Explosives Analysis Service, our customer ratings in the previous review period had shifted to the center with a small increase of customers rating the attributes as “Neutral” in three of the attributes. The attribute assessing the impact on the investigator should the laboratory not be available to them saw a shift upward to levels seen in much earlier reviews and is attributable to the same issues affecting the “explosives” section of analyses. With all attributes at 86% or higher for “Very High” and “High” it indicates the vast majority of our customers have a strong positive view of the work we offer.

Digital Image Processing Service

As was stated earlier, this service is only performed for the investigators from the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations (BFAI). We act as the central repository for images from scene investigations. The images are uploaded by Detectives in the field to a server noted as “PhotoDump”. Each Detective has access to his file folder. Supervisors have access to their subordinate staff. Once the Detectives upload their files onto their field and ACISS servers, the files are automatically transferred to the laboratory’s archive server. On occasion, Detectives will need the reverse process where archived images will be restored to their field servers for their use in investigations or for courtroom presentations.

Items sent after May 2012, are stored on a server that is backed up each night on a remote secondary server for Disaster Recovery purposes. The service includes transfer and archival of digital images plus fulfilling requests for reproduction of archived photographs and images. This comprises 26.38% of the service requests processed by the Bureau from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 (3,070 of 11,637 requests). A total of eighty-six (86) BFAI Detectives transferred images to our centrally secure archive. With sixty-four (64) of them responding to this section of the survey it would appear that a majority (74.41%) of the BFAI Detectives are participating in completion of the survey.

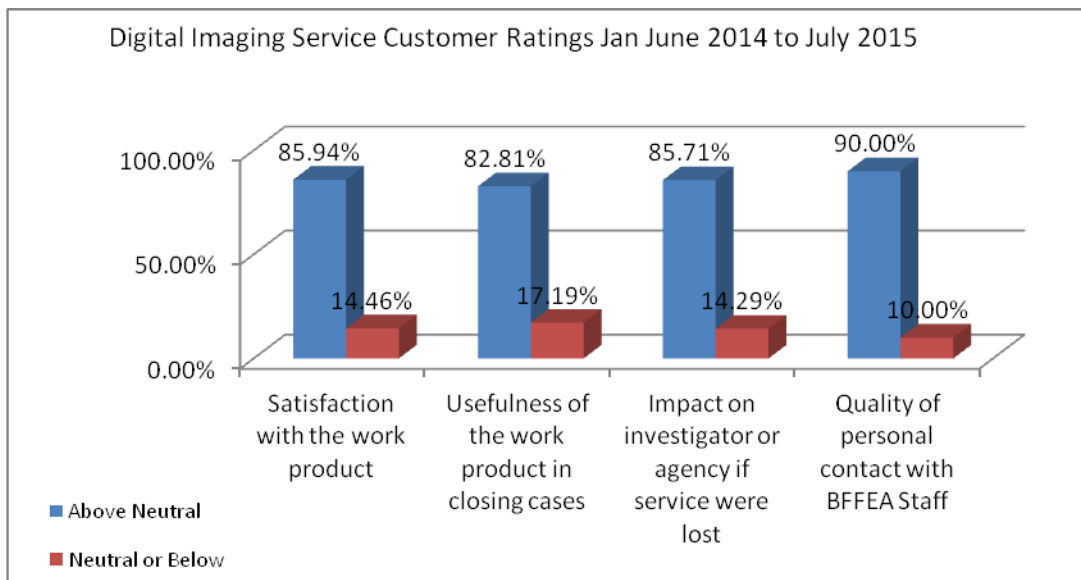
| Digital Imaging Service | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Ranking | V. High | High | Neutral | Low | V. Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 59.38% | 26.56% | 14.06% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 56.25% | 26.56% | 15.62% | 1.56% | 0.00% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 58.73% | 26.98% | 9.52% | 4.76% | 0.00% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 66.67% | 23.33% | 10.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |



For the four (4) attributes ranked in this service, the percent of “Neutral” or” Low” rankings is similar to the immediately previous reporting period. This would indicate that of those responding, the value to ascribe to our service was high.

Because there is minimal interaction between laboratory staff and investigators once the items are archived, investigators may have a greater tendency to view the work in this service area as meeting their needs or “Neutral”. This is seen in the table and chart below.

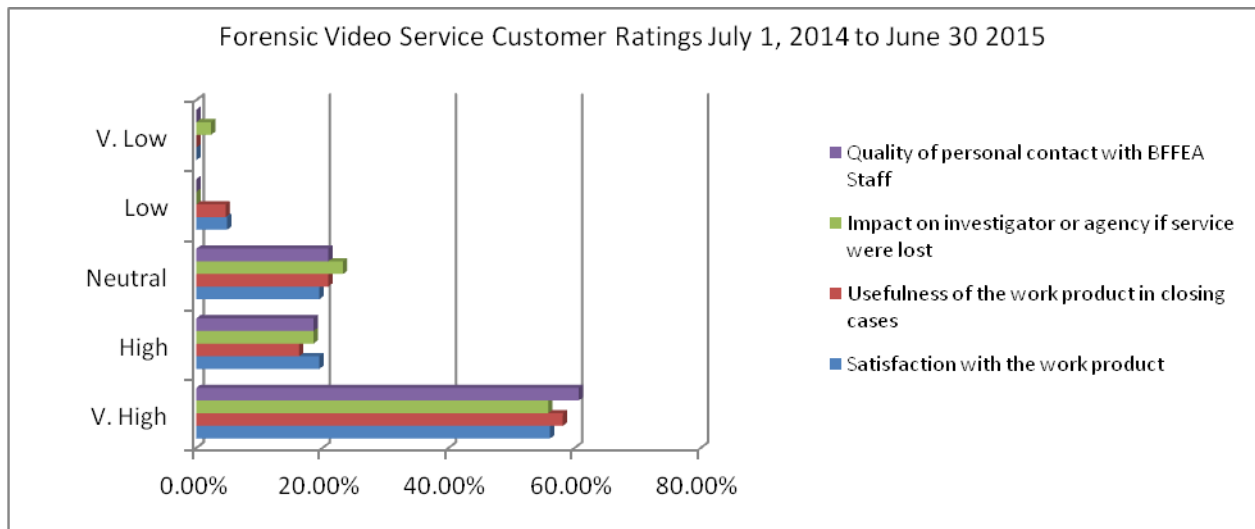
| Digital Imaging Service | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------------|------------------------|
| Ranking | V.High + High | Neutral, Low, or V.Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 85.94% | 14.46% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 82.81% | 17.19% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 85.71% | 14.29% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 90.00% | 10.00% |



Forensic Video

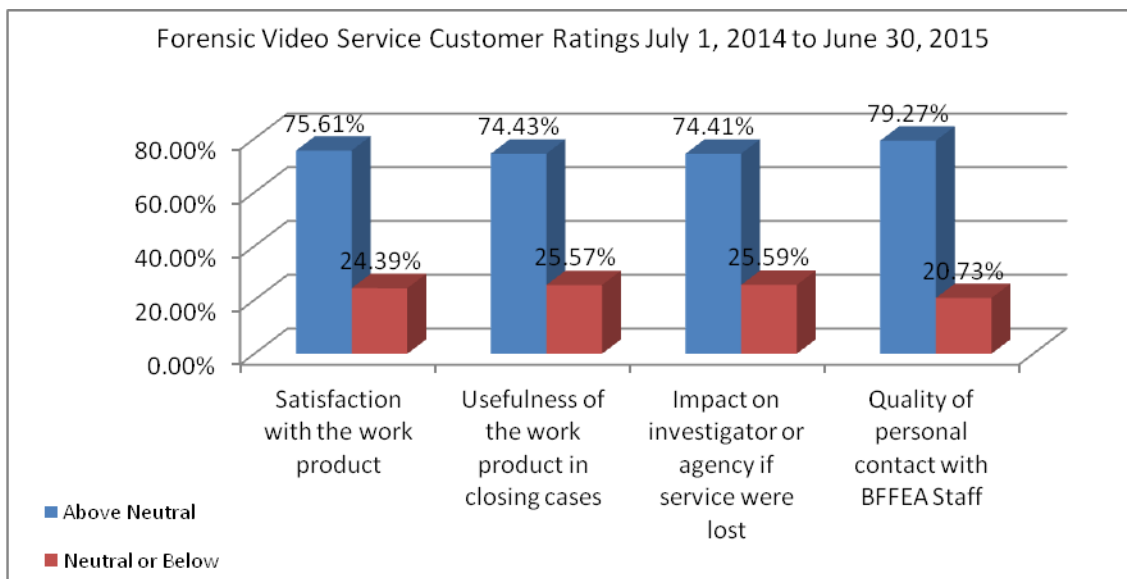
For the review period all official reports from this section were issued as reports from the BFAI detective who performed the examinations. BFFEA provides the facility, equipment, and an analyst in training to assist in this service area.

| Forensic Video Service | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Ranking | V. High | High | Neutral | Low | V. Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 56.10% | 19.51% | 19.51% | 4.88% | 0.00% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 58.14% | 16.29% | 20.93% | 4.65% | 0.00% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 55.81% | 18.60% | 23.26% | 0.00% | 2.35% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 60.67% | 18.60% | 20.93% | 0.00% | 0.00% |



The value of the service and the information it can provide to the investigator is acknowledged by the customers. However, the ability to process and manage video is severely limited by the quality of the original camera that captured the image or the resolution of the data as it was stored. A low quality and low resolution camera will not capture images with sufficient detail to have evidentiary value. At the same time the storage capacity of digital systems can become an issue even when a high quality camera is used. In order to increase the number of hours of video that can be recorded on a drive or tape, the owner of the security system will lower the resolution. Thus, it is common to not be able to provide the investigator with all the information requested or to completely process the video. These are the direct component causes whereby this service has higher “Neutral” and “Low” rankings. However, while the value of the service itself was only ranked from 74% to just over 75% “High” and “Very High”, the ratings for the quality of contact with the personnel in the section was over 79% “High” and “Very High”.

| Forensic Video Service | Percent | Percent |
|---|---------------|------------------------|
| Ranking | V.High + High | Neutral, Low, or V.Low |
| Satisfaction with the work product | 75.61% | 24.39% |
| Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases | 74.43% | 25.57% |
| Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost | 74.41% | 25.59% |
| Quality of personal contact with BFFEA Staff | 79.27% | 20.73% |



The Survey:

Input and comments from the customers were solicited in the last two questions. This report will provide an overview or synopsis of the most pertinent findings.

Question 6: Are there any BFFEA personnel you would like to identify regarding their work or contacts with you (positive or negative)?

There were only three negative comments listed out of thirty-three (33) responses to this question (9.1%). The remaining thirty (30) were positive comments. There were fifteen (15) comments praising Bureau staff in general for their willingness to assist customers in answering various questions and their degree of professionalism. Several staff members were listed specifically. All had positive comments about their ability, willingness to help, or professionalism. They are:

- Perry Koussiafes (Mike) (4 positive and 2 negative)
- Carl Lugviel (7 positive)
- Reggie Hurchins (1 negative)
- Pam Kenon (2 positive)
- Melissa Stephens (4 positive)

Other members of staff who were not specifically named have only minimal, or no contact, with customers.

Two members of the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations were singled out for praise in our survey. They are:

- Brock Dietz (5 positive)
- Eric Bryant (1 positive)

Question 7: Do you have any general comments or complaints regarding the work, personnel, or consultations? Do you have any suggestions for improvements we can make or additional services you would like to see?

While the majority of the comments provided were positive commendations and praise for the Bureau and staff, six (6) comments need to be addressed. The responses *in italics* are the comments of Chief Chasteen:

1. I do not have any complaints with the BFFEA laboratory personnel, but would like to see more improvements with the video/digital analysis department.

Funding is the issue here. We have been able to periodically upgrade the equipment and continue to rely on Detective Dietz for its use and as a trainer. Melissa Stephens has almost completed her training as a forensic video analyst. We will add capabilities as our funding will allow.

2. When describing samples submitted for accelerant analysis, the lab should remain consistent with the Detectives labeling of such samples, i.e. Labeled as (unknown liquid), Lab described as (dirty green fluid). This type of issue, as small as it is, causes problems for Detective in depositions and is seen as inconsistency in handling of evidence by Defense Attorney's. It has been experienced more than once by this Detective in depositions.

The analyst is trained to open the evidence container and make an observation of what he or she sees inside. Often what the analyst sees does not match what the Detective sees since our view is limited only to the interior of the can and we do not remove the contents. A Detective may know that she is removing upholstery from a piece of furniture. When the analyst looks into the can, she can only say it was cloth. This is common practice in most forensic laboratories. You are correct that this could cause a problem; however, we cannot compromise our principles by making assumptions based on the Detective's description. We have to make the call as we see it. If there is a large discrepancy the analyst is instructed to write their observation in the Description and include the Detective's description between quotation marks.

3. Yes, if a sworn law enforcement officer calls "our" lab and ask results from a case regardless what Detective the case was assigned, he or she should not have to jump through hoops to get that information. We are on the same team, if I call for results on a case it is for a reason not for fun. I am a criminal investigator sworn under oath and my own lab doesn't trust me with results from a case that "our" agency is working does not make any sense. I shouldn't have to jump through hoops, I have been in law enforcement for 19 years and a Detective for the last 10, while working at the Sheriff's Office if I called the lab and asked for results they gave them to me, they didn't question my motive, there was a trust that if I was asking it was to solve a crime and obviously useful information to me at the time.

Please note that the laboratory is one of the Bureaus of the Division and has a Bureau status equal to the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigation. While we do work for the same Department and Division, we must strive for a level of objectivity that keeps us separate from investigations. One of the key criticisms of forensic science laboratories is that too many of them are under the control of the investigative agency and are not sufficiently independent of the command structure. Forensic Laboratory personnel should never feel obligated to create findings which may support a particular investigation. In maintaining this separation, our policy has always been that the evidence submitted is not ours. It belongs to the individual Detective submitting the sample. If he or she is working the case with a second detective, all they need to do is list them in the remarks so they can have access to the results. If the original detective is not available their Lieutenant, Captain, or Major can authorize release of information. It is not a matter of "trust"; it is a matter of proper protocol and maintaining the integrity of information while the criminal investigation is open. In my almost 37 years in the laboratory, there have been reported occasions from several jurisdictions where a fellow fire investigator or fire fighter either becomes a suspect or is friends or related to a person of interest within the investigation. This is something that we will typically not know. Thus our policy of only releasing information to the detective of record, persons they approve, or their chain of command must remain our policy. One of the most prolific arsonists was John Orr who was a fire investigator in southern California. This policy will not change. If you are working a case with another detective be certain to have them list you on the remarks section as being authorized to receive case information.

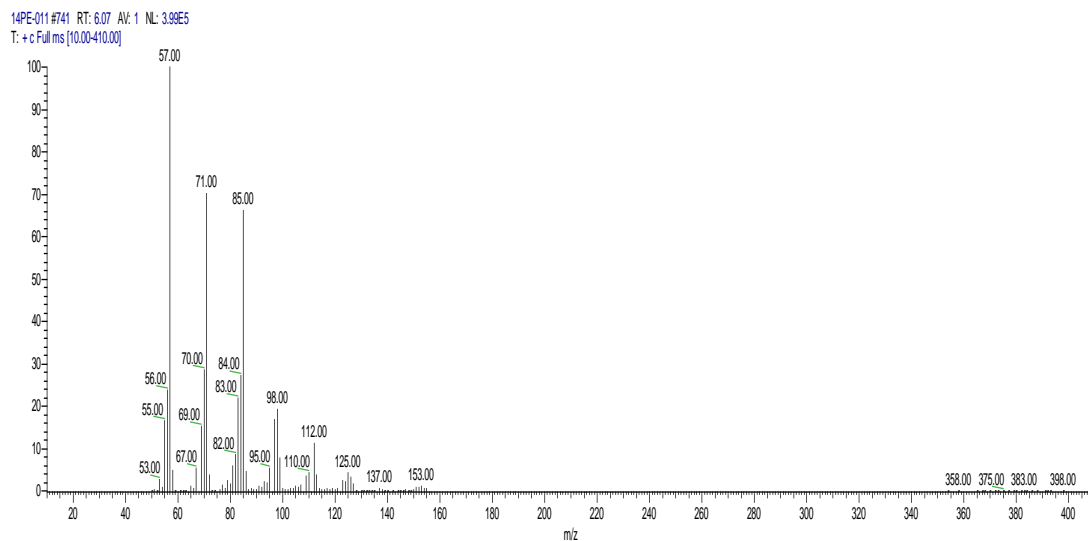
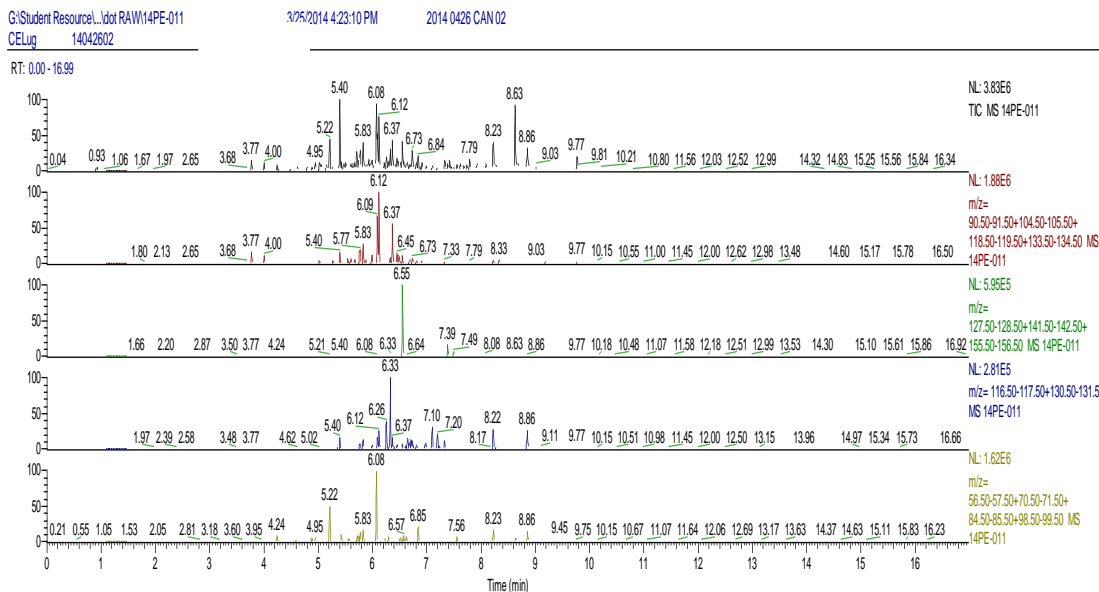
4. The turnaround for video is "meh", plus the results returned are minimal. Otherwise, love you guys.

Thanks for the love. The turnaround for the video is caused by the fact that the primary analyst is also a Detective in the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations. He has his own caseload and cannot be here for the entire workweek. Our analyst will soon be authorized to work independently and should help to reduce the turnaround. However, with video, often the most time intensive phase is in reviewing the video to find only a small segment that is of value. Last, the ability of the analyst in video is affected by the quality of camera and resolution of the stored video. If it is a poor camera, we will not have clear images. If the resolution has been bumped down so that a longer period of filming can be archived, the quality of the images will be low.

5. I would like to have the readout from the analysis included with the results.

I am not certain what you are asking for. None of our instruments is a magic box which spits out answers! There are some fairly simple field use instruments which provide limited chemical identifications, but these are not sufficient for conclusive determinations and should only be used in the field for screening purposes. The gas chromatograph with mass spectrometric detector is not a field use screening device. It does not analyze a sample and then pop out a report that the items contain a specific ignitable liquid. We

generate data that our education and training allows us to interpret. Not only is a degree in chemistry with significant study of organic and analytical chemistry required for our analysts, but there is a considerable amount of specialized training on top of that which will allow them to make interpretations of the data. Investigators are invited to tour the lab to get a better understanding of what we do with the evidence submitted to us. As an example, the following is a Total Ion Chromatogram with Extracted Ion Profiles and Mass spectra. This is what the “readout” from our instrument looks like. Multiply this by additional extracted ion profiles and mass spectra so that there may be 20 to 100 pages of data in each case file to be interpreted:



6. Please get sheets that fit

I think you have confused us with the Fire College. We don't provide sheets.

This ends the report on the responses to the survey for July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

This report may be used in the Bureau's Business Plan, Management Review, or to answer other questions regarding a statistical evaluation of the bureau's customers or their opinions on the quality of service received.