



# Strengthening Forensic Science in Texas: Moving Forward

A Series Of Roundtable Discussions Hosted By The  
Texas Forensic Science Commission

On February 18th 2009, the National Academy of Sciences released their report on the current status of forensic science, entitled "Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward".

The report identified key areas where improvements can be made and offered a number of specific recommendations. The intent of the report was to elevate forensic science standards uniformly across the United States. These efforts were recognized and applauded by the Texas Forensic Science Commission.

As an independent body created by the Texas legislature, the Commission remains steadfast in its commitment to promote justice through science. The Commission is encouraged by the recommendations set forth in the report, but also recognizes the need for forensic scientists and stakeholders in Texas to engage in constructive dialogue to fully address the issues and move forward.

In a series of roundtable meetings taking place between November 2009 and May 2010 at strategic locations across the state, the Texas Forensic Science Commission will provide the forum for a series of discussions. The purpose is to identify the most pressing issues of the forensic science community and make recommendations to improve the quality of forensic science and accessibility of forensic services to stakeholders in Texas. Collectively these discussions will help identify the most critical issues in our state and allow those who have already implemented successful new policies to share information. Through this exchange, it is our goal is to formulate specific recommendations and guidance that will improve the quality of forensic science in Texas.

Half-day meetings will take place in Austin (November), Houston (January), Dallas (March) and Lubbock (May). Participants will have the opportunity to select six interactive roundtables from a list of topics. Roundtables will be moderated by subject matter experts or members of the Commission, and the ideas, suggestions and comments will be summarized and presented at the conclusion of the meeting.

Participation of managerial and bench-level forensic scientists in addition to attorneys, the judiciary and policy makers is critical. We strongly urge crime laboratories in Texas to participate to the fullest extent possible. Attendance at each meeting is limited to approximately one hundred, so pre-registration is required. Registrants will receive a confirmation of attendance from the Texas Forensic Science Commission no later than 30 days prior to the meeting date. This confirmation must be presented in order to participate in the roundtable discussions. Limited space is available for observers. For more information, please contact Leigh Tomlin at 1(888) 296-4232 or Dr. Sarah Kerrigan at (936) 294-4286.