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## Police Science Technical Abstracts and Notes

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## STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES REGARDING POLYGRAPH ("LIE-DETECTOR") EXAMINATIONS

(Adopted by the American Academy of Polygraph  
Examiners at its Fourth Annual Meeting in Wash-  
ington, D. C. on September 5-6, 1957.)

We, the members of the American Academy of Polygraph Examiners, in recognition of the fact that the instruments and techniques utilized by polygraph examiners are capable of tremendous contributions in any area where the determination of the veracity of a human being is important, and

In recognition of the increasing esteem in which the results of polygraph tests are held, and

In recognition of the increasing reliance which is placed upon the results of polygraph examinations by law enforcement officials, businessmen, and government agencies, and

In recognition of the potential source of incalculable harm which exists when the instrument is used by untrained or unscrupulous persons, present this STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES, not only for the guidance of our membership, but for all persons who use the polygraph or who depend on its results.

### I. THE INSTRUMENT

We believe that adequate results can be obtained only with an adequate instrument. We believe that minimum standards require an instrument which records permanently the subject's cardio-vascular and respiratory patterns. We recognize the desirability of utilizing instruments which record additional physiological changes pertinent to the detection of deception. We recognize the desirability and the likelihood of research in the field and retain an open mind toward developments which may increase the reliability and validity of our results.

### II. THE EXAMINER

*A. Qualifications:* We recognize that the polygraph examiner must be a skilled interrogator and formally trained in the use of the instrument and the techniques.

*B. Unprofessional Conduct:* The following are considered to be examples of unprofessional conduct on the part of the examiner:

1. Any verbal or advertised claim of perfection.

No reputable examiner would make such a claim, knowing in the first place that all persons cannot be successfully tested with the polygraph, and knowing that perfection has never been achieved in any process where human beings are involved.

2. Any verbal or advertised claim of professional qualifications which the person has not attained.

3. Any verbal or advertised claim of secret instruments or methods. Ethical examiners are eager to advance the status of their profession by the widest possible dissemination of their techniques.

4. Any use of the polygraph for the sole purpose of inducing confessions and thus disregarding the equally important function of the polygraph in exonerating the innocent.

5. Any conduct, attitude, dress, trick, or device in the administration of a polygraph examination which would tend to induce a false confession.

6. Any report of an examination which is contrary to the professional opinion of the examiner.

7. Any public demonstrations which include mock tests. We see no harm in useful demonstrations of the mechanical operation of the instrument where no question of deception is involved.

### III. THE EXAMINATION

*A. Test Questions:* We believe that the questions asked during a polygraph examination should be pertinent to the matter under investigation and that a polygraph examination should not be permitted to degenerate into an attempt to find something wrong with the subject. The areas covered by the questions are determined by the matter under investigation, but the actual wording of the questions must be left to the discretion of the examiner.

*B. Persons Tested:* We believe there should be an evidential link between the matter under investigation and the persons examined. Such a requirement does not apply to cases where routine pre-employment or screening examinations are conducted. In cases where the parties to an issue

are making conflicting statements, it is recommended that all persons should be given polygraph examinations.

C. *Fitness for Testing*: We believe polygraph examinations should be given only to those persons who are physically, mentally, and emotionally suitable. When in the opinion of the examiner the subject's physical, mental, or emotional condition is such as to preclude successful examination, the examination will be postponed until such time as the condition is no longer significant.

D. *Voluntary Examinations*: We recognize that a polygraph examination is, and must be by its very nature, a voluntary act by the person taking the examination.

E. *The Examining Room*: We believe the examining room must present a professional appearance. There should be no visual distractions, outside noises, abnormal temperatures, or other factors which could prevent successful examinations.

#### IV. THE REPORT

The examiner's report should be a clear, concise summary of what transpired during the examination. The examiner must report all information pertinent to the matter under investigation as well as his professional opinion of the test results. This information should be supplied only to authorized persons.

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## POLICE SCIENCE TECHNICAL ABSTRACTS AND NOTES

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Edited by  
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### Abstractors

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**Deciphering and Photo-Recording of Indented Writing**—Sgt. N. W. Duxbury and Cst. J. W. Warren, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Seminar No. 4*, pages 27–36, describe an Indented Writing Box for photo-examining and recording of impressed writing problems. The bottom of the box has a 15 inch square perforated platform (holes  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch spaced every  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch) to which an ordinary vacuum cleaner is attached. The document is held flat by air suction. A lid with  $3\frac{1}{2}$  x 15 inch slot is designed so that the slot can be moved across the entire document. An 18 inch incandescent tube used for illumination is mounted beneath the lid behind movable baffles. A second movable baffle is arranged so that the two can regulate the size of the opening. A 5 x 7 view camera with  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inch lens is mounted vertically above. The document is placed on the platform, the light and baffles adjusted to give the maximum visual impressions of the writing. For photographing the author recommends a series of passes of the slot across the document to expose the film. (OH)

**Decipherment of Altered and Charred Documents**—Donald Doud, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Seminar No. 4*, pages 39–47, describes standard chemical and physical methods for deciphering erased ink and pencil writing. He further suggests 8-hydroxyquinolin for iron base ink and fluorescent powders for erased pencil writing. Several photographic and visual methods of deciphering charred documents are presented. (OH)

**Indiana State Police Fraudulent Check File**—Det. Sgt. E. C. Schroeder, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Seminar No. 4*, pages 48–51.

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**The Fraudulent Check Section (RCMP)**—Sgt. A. F. Wilcox, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Seminar No. 4*, pages 54–78. Two departments' experiences with handling fraudulent checks are discussed in detail. Sgt. Wilcox's paper contains illustrations from the various sections of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police files. (OH)

**Statistical Methods and the Examination of Questioned Documents**—Cst. A. F. Wrenshall and Cst. D. M. Durk, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Seminar No. 4*, pages 89–95, experiment in the use of statistics in handwriting identification with the hope of stimulating interest in its application to comparable problems. The heights of "h" of two writers were measured. One hundred samples were selected at random from specimens written over a period of months. Range, mean, variance, and standard deviations were computed for each and compared without finding a significant difference. Discussion of statistical measures relating to handwriting identification follows. The authors make no special recommendation for this method of analysis although they state potential values. (OH)

**The Scientific Report with Respect to Document Examination**—Cst. J. F. Fay, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Seminar No. 4*, pages 99–120, compiled data on the method of reporting by document examiners in the United States and Canada. Reports were found to contain: (a) subject of reference, (b) to whom directed, (c) description of questioned and standard material, (d) conclusion, and (e) remarks regarding disposition of exhibits, etc. Some also state: (a) purpose of examination, (b) examination conducted (c) history of case, and (d) reasons for conclusion. Examples of how each is handled by various examiners are cited. (OH)