



TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Forensic Services Division

Breath Alcohol Unit Standard Operating Procedures Manual Introduction

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The information in the manual is presented as a reference for breath alcohol staff. This manual presents a basic outline of the adjustment and calibration of evidentiary breath instruments in order to certify their use. It states the methods to upgrade instruments and software. This manual is not all-inclusive, and will reference other sources where appropriate. It is always the scientist's responsibility to choose the best troubleshooting scheme for each situation. The Technical Leader will be consulted for extraordinary procedures and situations.

1.2. Documentation

Worksheets are provided as controlled forms and should be used as designed. Scientists are reminded to properly document maintenance and procedures performed which will allow for another competent scientist/technical leader to repeat the procedure under conditions as close as possible to the original, evaluate the data, interpret the results and come to the same conclusion.

1.3. Technical Factors

The following technical factors have been taken into consideration in the development of these procedures: environmental conditions, methods and their validation, equipment, traceability, and the handling of calibration items.

1.3.1. The laboratory facilities provide sufficient environmental conditions to conduct all tests listed in the Procedures Manual with no further consideration required. Offsite calibration activities shall only be conducted when the scientist does not believe that detrimental conditions exist. If it is impossible to complete calibration and/or adjustment activities offsite, the instrument in question will be removed from the offsite location and calibrated and/or adjusted at the laboratory.

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1.4. Validation

New methods, instrumentation, and software must be validated before use. Prior to beginning a validation process, consult the Technical Leader for an appropriate validation plan. See the TBI Quality Assurance Manual.

1.5. Changes

Due to the extensive travel performed by the Breath Alcohol Section, procedures that will affect instrument maintenance will not be changed and adopted without an agreed upon start date.