

In the on-going effort to keep you informed of issues that impact the Forensic Science Community, the AAFS would like to bring to your attention two recent and very important FBI CODIS Bulletins (#BT050815 dated May 8, 2015 and #BT050915 dated May 29, 2015), which describe an amendment to the 1999 and 2001 FBI STR Population Data.

In summary, the bulletins advise of the errors identified by the FBI Laboratory in the data published in the Journal of Forensic Sciences "Population data on the thirteen CODIS core short tandem repeat loci in African Americans, U.S. Caucasians, Hispanics, Bahamians, Jamaicans and Trinidadians", Journal of Forensic Sciences 1999 44(6):1277-86. The samples that were used in the published study were recently genotyped again with new commercial products and errors were identified that have been attributed to clerical mistakes in the transcription of genotypes and to limitations of the old technology and software.

The FBI Laboratory has made the expanded FBI population data available at FBI.gov and on the CJIS WAN (Expanded FBI STR). The data will also be included in a future update to Popstats. An announcement of population data will be submitted for publication under the title "Population data on the expanded CODIS core STR loci for eleven populations of significance for forensic DNA analyses in the United States." Additionally, an erratum notice containing the empirical data, demonstrating their nominal effect on profile probabilities, will be published as a Letter to the Editor in the Journal of Forensic Science, July 2015, Volume 60, Issue 4 and may be viewed in advance electronically via the following link: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1556-4029.12806/abstract>.

The FBI Laboratory acknowledges that the erroneous allele frequencies cited in the original publication have been used by the FBI and many forensic laboratories for calculating match statistics in criminal investigations and other types of human identification applications since 1999. However, they feel the discrepancies are unlikely to materially affect any assessment of evidential value. The priority of the AAFS is to ensure that our membership and the Forensic Science Community remain informed and are advised of resources available to assist in adopting the amended population data. As the AAFS learns more about the issue, our guidance and involvement may evolve. In the meantime, if you have specific questions relating to this issue, please contact Anthony J. Onorato of the FBI's DNA Support Unit at Anthony.Onorato@ic.fbi.gov or 703-632-7572.