

**International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program – ICITAP<sup>9</sup>**

*Daniel D. Garner*

*U.S. Department of Justice – Criminal Division*

---

During the past fifteen years, the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) of the U.S. Department of Justice has provided law enforcement training and development programs in over 80 countries. A significant number of ICITAP's programs have involved forensic science activities. This poster will present the forensic training and development activities being conducted as part of Plan Colombia in full partnership with the forensic laboratories in Colombia. This program has been funded by the U.S. Government with a budget of \$16million.

In Colombia, there are four national organizations with forensic responsibilities and capacities. These include the National Police, the Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Science, DAS, and the Fiscalía. The forensic laboratories of these institutions provide comprehensive forensic services to investigators and prosecutors within their own organization as well as to those in the others three agencies.

In some criminal cases, including many homicides, evidence split between two laboratories. For instance in the case of a homicide with a firearm, the Institute of Medicine would perform the autopsy including the recovery and examination of any bullets. In the same case, the National Police, DAS, or the Fiscalía might have processed the crime scene and recovered any shell casings or firearms. While the examination of the evidence in any of the four labs would be technically competent, the information provided to the investigators is delayed and fragmented as a result of the evidence being split. One of the primary forensic goals of Plan Colombia is to enhance the delivery of complete and timely forensic information to the investigators, especially in cases involving human rights violations.

The approach being taken in Colombia, with the complete support of the four national laboratory systems, is to create a "virtual forensic laboratory" with respect to the investigators. In a particular case, the information available to the investigators will not be depended upon which lab, or the number of labs, that conduct the examination of the physical evidence. The organizational boundaries of the four laboratory systems are being eliminated by : 1) standardizing forensic protocols and procedures, 2) installing automated systems including AFIS, IBIS, CODIS, LIMS, and digital image databases, 3) enhancing internal laboratory computer networks, 4) linking the laboratories together for complete sharing of information and searching of various databases, and 5) providing electronic access to investigators of laboratory findings.

Details will be provided on the implementation of the various forensic technologies, the status of linking the laboratories in Bogota, Cali and Medellin, training requirements for a highly automated and integrated group of laboratories, and their impact on the investigator.

---

<sup>9</sup> 120x120 cm format.