

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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Subject: **A Comprehensive Update to the 2018 Wisconsin State Crime Laboratories Needs Assessment**

In 2018, the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratories (WSCL) contracted the National Forensic Science Technology Center at Florida International University (NFSTC@FIU) to conduct a needs assessment of the entire laboratory system. The goal was to evaluate the WSCL in order to identify areas to improve the productivity and efficiency of analytical sections. A detailed analysis and review of the workflow from the time of evidence receipt through completion of analysis was performed by four internationally recognized forensic science experts over the course of one week.

The assessment evaluated the analytical processes and all contributing factors that may influence productivity and efficiency. A review of each forensic unit in each of the three laboratories examined workflow, staffing, efficiencies and other contributing factors. Subject matter experts in the different analytical disciplines as well as experts in laboratory management participated in this project. Activities included:

- Analysis of workload data: request for service, case submissions, backlogs, turn-around time, performance measures.
- Review of analytical technical procedures and policies.
- Workflow review from time of evidence submission through completion of analysis.
- Layout and condition of physical facilities.
- Availability of equipment, training, supervision and technical resources.
- Review of employee interactions with coworkers and interaction with supervisors.
- Employee administrative requirements and duties.

The [needs assessment report was published](#) in September 2018 . The report included assessor observations, recommendations to the WSCL as a whole, and WSCL responses to recommendations and observations. Since that time, the WSCL has worked with staff and customers to make sustainable changes to the WSCL that will ensure quality, unbiased forensic science testing in the state and will benefit Wisconsin residents.

Please find the updated responses to the Recommended Actions in the Needs Assessment Report for the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratories from the National Forensic Science Technology Center at Florida International University below.

NFSTC Recommended Actions	DFS Updates (April 2020)
<p>Autonomy, Pay, Performance Metrics, Communication, Advancement, Scheduling</p>	
<p>Establishing the WSCLB as a separate division should be considered. If the WSCLB cannot be aligned as a separate division, the laboratory would benefit from a delegation of authority, identifying responsible leaders within the laboratory. Benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would potentially allow the laboratory to make purchasing decisions with appropriate, minimal oversight and tracking rather than seeking individual approvals. • This would potentially allow the laboratory to leverage various Wisconsin pay incentives within approved guidelines. • This would potentially allow the laboratory to exercise hire authority in a timely manner. • This would ensure and solidify the concept that the forensic science laboratory in the state can perform its scientific work with impartiality and with no question of bias for the citizens of the state. This is a benefit as it will provide confidence in the work performed for a multitude of stakeholders. Bureau leadership reported they are developing solid relationships with Division and AG decision-makers. This is critical to advancing the single Bureau operation concept and ensuring the necessary support and authority. 	<p>On April 9, 2019, the Governor of Wisconsin approved a plan to make the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory Bureau its own division. DOJ and DOA worked together to reorganize and create the division administrator and laboratory directors' positions for the bureaus within the new Division of Forensic Sciences (DFS). Under the reorganization, the division has a direct workflow path for purchasing and procurement, hiring authority, and partner divisions and AG Executive decision makers. This pathway makes for a more collaborative and cohesive agency overall. Further, the movement to a division has ensured and solidified the concept that the forensic science laboratory in the state is performing its scientific work with impartiality and with no question of bias for the people of Wisconsin.</p>
<p>A revision of the analytical staff structure should be considered to incorporate additional steps within each level. It was noted by staff that at some point in the past, each level did contain advancement steps, but this practice had been discontinued for some time.</p> <p>An additional position classification should be considered that would be between the level of technician and analyst. This additional classification, for example a Forensic Specialist, could be used as an advancement opportunity for staff.</p>	<p>DFS worked with the DOJ Human Resources (HR), Bureau of Budget and Finance (BBF) and DOJ executive leadership to propose a pay progression for laboratory staff for the 2019-2021 biennium. While the pay progression proposal was not included in the 2019-2021 budget, in December 2019 the Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER) did approve general wage adjustments (GWAs) for employees (other than those who are in a certified bargaining unit or covered by the merit pay progression provisions under Wis. Stat. § 230.12). The GWAs outlined were a 2% increase on January 5, 2020, and another 2% increase on January 3, 2021. In addition, the compensation plan included funded market stratification provisions for employees in pay schedules 02, 03, 05, and 06, as well as generated market funding for DFS fingerprint and laboratory technician positions. The compensation plan also</p>

	<p>included the opportunity for a DOJ-funded forensic scientist market equity adjustment, beginning April 12, 2020. The market equity adjustments were outlined in the compensation plan to be used to address specific classifications of employees that were identified as recruitment and retention challenges owing to market factors. The market adjustment was identified in the plan as “generated market” which means the agency receives the amount of money designated for each employee in the classification but retains flexibility to determine how that money is awarded. This is typically done to address equity issues within the classification. DFS management also continues to review other options to resolve pay inequities.</p>
<p>Performance metrics are a good idea, but the process is confusing and not monitored consistently. If possible, an analysis of processes and procedures used in all of the units should be conducted to determine the reasons for the disparities in performance. Consistency should be stressed unless plausible reasons exist for deviations. It is important to point out that case output must not supplant the emphasis needed on producing quality results.</p>	<p>DFS management and supervisory team continues to review the performance metric (PM) methods in place to determine overall utility. Many workflows have changed since August 2018 therefore the PMs in place from that time may no longer be as useful or robust as they were just a few years ago. PMs are additionally challenged due to the software currently used by DFS. The main software used in DFS is the current Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), which has been a staple at DFS for approximately 20 years. While the software is sufficient for overall case management, case notes and reporting, it needs major structural changes in order to be a reliable tool for PM use. In addition, crime laboratories nationwide are participating in utilizing more consistent business quantitative data software supplement solutions which will allow DFS to easily upload the business-relevant information from the LIMS to the supplemental software solution which will provide tailored quantitative reports and evaluations to DFS about employee and unit performance. These software solutions will allow DFS to be more strategic in its awareness of needs, resources and allocations by leveraging the information gained from casework to determine overall performance. Currently, DFS is evaluating case output and queues on a monthly basis at the management and supervisory level. DFS continues to strive towards a work environment that properly evaluates the contribution of all staff to the completion of quality casework conclusions in a timely manner.</p>
<p>Supervisors need to be given more time to actually supervise. They should know which team members are on which tasks and</p>	<p>DFS management and supervisors continue to work with individual employees on performance and to provide information to all analysts on checking their</p>

<p>therefore know how much casework to expect from each person. Supervisors should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track non-casework duties like validations, tech reviews and crime scene response (CSR) to ensure a balance of responsibilities. • Review schedules and try if possible to prevent overlap of duties such as tech review and CSR. This will prevent slowdown of tech reviews if someone is out on CSR. • Meet with staff whose metrics are below goals to determine root cause and provide direction. 	<p>personal metrics. In the past, limited resources at the laboratories resulted in supervisors performing other necessary tasks in addition to their supervisory duties. Currently, DFS has been expanding to allow more growth opportunity as well as to add functional FTE positions that will take on duties previously shared with DFS supervisors. For example, DFS has added a Forensic Case Manager, IT positions and a Quality Bureau. In April 2020, DFS continued the process of incorporating a CSR branch to its Division. Part of this process included the addition of the CSR Section Chief position which has complete oversight over the CSR program and operations which will further allow supervisors currently assisting in the supervision of CSR to focus more time on their primary unit. The goal is for WSCL to be able to be more strategic in its awareness of needs, resources and personnel duties by continuing to evaluate these areas on an annual basis.</p>
<p>The perception is that flexible work locations are applied unfairly across disciplines. Workflows should be analyzed to determine which disciplines can allow remote work and whether or not this flexibility would benefit the laboratory, thus the benefit could be applied equitably.</p>	<p>Since August 2018, several disciplines were granted overtime ability and funds through the NIJ funded grants awarded to DFS. These included: controlled substances, toxicology, firearms/toolmarks, DNA casework and DNA database work. While permitted, there was still limited use of the overtime afforded to staff. Additionally, during this time, the remote-work program was evaluated. The program allowed DFS the opportunity to consider other work from home capabilities, specifically, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The evaluation of this program is ongoing.</p>
<p>When reviewing the staff feedback, bureau management appeared familiar with the issues and indicated having taken steps to remedy them. However, the staff seemed unaware that management knew of their concerns. Bureau management needs to meet directly with all staff to ensure the message they want delivered is being provided in a timely manner and in the way intend.</p> <p>There appears to be a disconnect between management and staff when it comes to communication. Bureau management believes they are passing information down the line; however, the analysts are not receiving it.</p> <p>The stream of information from bureau leadership to laboratory staff needs to be disseminated regularly and consistently as appropriate through regular meetings, documentation (memos or news feeds), or other methods identified as both convenient and accessible.</p>	<p>DFS continues to take steps to remedy miscommunications and to strive toward excellence in communicating to staff. Lab directors have been given more access to administrators and the DOJ executive team, enabling them to be better poised to respond and communicate transparently to supervisors and laboratory staff. Employee town halls have allowed the administrator and deputy administrator to interface directly with team members. In addition, the management team have “open door” policies and some have instituted office hours for staff members to speak face-to-face with management members. DFS management continue to work towards more transparency in order to establish a more cohesive working environment.</p>
<p>The pay structure must be reviewed and adjusted as soon as possible. As cited above, this is causing cascading issues across the entire bureau.</p>	<p>To address the perceived imbalance in the distribution of overtime pay, the administrator and deputy administrator utilized in-person and video</p>

Regarding the perceived imbalance in overtime pay, overtime is being applied correctly and although it seems the message has been shared repeatedly, it apparently is still not correctly understood by staff. This can be addressed with improving all communications avenues.

conference town halls to reiterate several times in 2019 the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) rule of exempt vs. non-exempt employees. The entry level employees are non-exempt and the senior level employees are exempt, which is why the application of overtime is different.

In addition, DFS continued to request volunteers for the crime scene response (CSR) team and has yet to have a shortage in volunteers. To be clear, though, the DFS leadership reiterated to supervisory staff expectations with regards to CSR volunteer work. Additionally, DFS was provided additional CSR specialists through the state budget in 2019. As of December 2019, all three positions provided were filled, thus, bringing the total number of full time CSR staff in WSCL to four FTE.

This recommendation also supports the current attempts to increase pay for DFS employees. While DFS cannot make independent decisions on pay, the division has been working collaboratively with HR, BBF, DOJ executive team, and DPM to continue addressing pay on transfer and retention/merit awards when they become available. Since becoming its own division, the WSCL was able to have more influence and insight into awarding annual merit and retention-based pay increases (DMCs and DERAs) since January 2019. However, the state is restricted in the number and size of awards, therefore the mechanism was not adequate and inappropriate to fix all existing inequities.

As outlined previously, in December 2019, the Joint Committee on Employment Relations did approve general wage adjustments (GWAs) for employees (other than those who are in a certified bargaining unit or covered by the merit pay progression provisions under Wis. Stat. § 230.12). The GWAs outlined were a 2% increase on January 5, 2020, and another 2% increase on January 3, 2021. In addition, the compensation plan included funded market stratification provisions for employees in pay schedules 02, 03, 05, and 06, as well as generated market funding for DFS fingerprint and laboratory technician positions. The compensation plan also included the opportunity for a DOJ-funded forensic scientist market equity adjustment, starting April 12, 2020. The market equity adjustments were outlined in the compensation plan to be used to address specific classifications of employees that were identified as recruitment and retention challenges owing to market factors. The market adjustment was identified in the plan as “generated market” which

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<p>Evidence, Crime Scene Response, Quality, Biology, Chemistry</p>	
<p>The current B.E.A.S.T LIMS system needs to be updated to the newest available web-based version. If a secured portion of the system was made available to the submitters over the Internet, they could also enter their own transmittal data as well as retrieve needed information in a timely manner. This would reduce the information that is currently being distributed by the laboratory staff or entered by evidence technicians, improving efficiency. Also, the ability to access case information anywhere within the laboratory (via a secure WIFI) or other off-site locations would allow analysts to perform case review, data entry and other job-related activities. This would be especially helpful to in-unit areas that are currently in need of more space (Milwaukee).</p>	<p>Since January 2019, the DFS worked with BBF and the Bureau of Computing Services (BCS) to determine the viability of BEAST.net system. It was determined that further investigation and evaluation from multiple entities needed to determine what was best for DFS with regards to the LIMS system. A new system will allow customers to directly access testing status and results, facilitate a more lenient remote-work policy, and allow more flexibility. DFS will seek a commercial off-the-shelf solution that does not require as much customization and allows for some configuration. Currently, DFS is working with BBF, BCS and other stakeholders to identify a solution while following proper procurement authority procedures.</p>
<p>Empowering a person with the case manager responsibilities, as we understand them, will be very beneficial to both the customer and the laboratory in terms of efficiency and the potential benefits can result in reduced turn-around times and backlog reductions.</p> <p>Submitting agencies need to be contacted directly through outreach methodologies such as: off-site and on-site training, formal letters, email, etc. and provided the information regarding what is expected of them when submitting evidence. The evidence submission acceptance policies must be clearly defined within the Administrative Procedure Manual and then enforced by management within the WSCLB once stakeholders are made aware of any changes. If evidence is received by mail, policy enforcement can be accomplished by simply sending the evidence back to the submitting agency and accompanying the evidence with a formal letter explaining why it is not being accepted at this time. If the evidence is hand-delivered by the submitting agency, it may be refused directly, with information about the policy.</p> <p>An example of success: A strict but structured evidence acceptance policy was implemented by the Wausau laboratory a few years ago and they were able to make a significant reduction in their case backlog as a result. By doing so, Wausau is now taking on controlled substances cases from another laboratory within the bureau.</p>	<p>DFS hired a forensic case manager for the WSCL in June 2018. Since that time, the Forensic Case Manager has released and/or revised the following guidelines: DNA analysis, latent prints, firearms/toolmarks, controlled substances and toxicology. The forensic case manager has consistently revised the format of the evidence submission guidelines to make them more clear, concise, and user-friendly. The forensic case manager has also continued to review, clarify, and more strictly enforce submission guidelines through contact with law enforcement to educate them on polices and best practices. Documentation is consistently produced to submitters for evidence that won't be processed with explanations on the sound justifications. In addition, the forensic case manager is point person in disseminating and discussing the guidelines at events and conferences in the state. While still in progress, the position has resulted in fewer submissions of evidence the labs cannot assist with and more consistency on submissions.</p>

<p>The potential of initiating a full-time dedicated Crime Scene Response Unit should be explored. At least three staff members dedicated to the Crime Scene Response Unit, one per laboratory, could have a positive impact on limiting the amount of time other staff members have to spend on Crime Scene Response Unit related responsibilities. It was relayed by staff members that a significant number of law enforcement agencies in the northern part of the state have very limited resources. Surveying these agencies might determine that a significant need for a full-time response unit exists and would be used significantly.</p>	<p>In July 2019, the state budget provided position authority relating to the crime laboratories that included crime scene response (CSR) specialists. DFS worked with HR and BBF to determine allocations, develop position descriptions, and run recruitments for the positions. As of December 2019, the positions were filled and the unit has improving and revamping many of the WSCL trainings offered statewide as well as evaluating program technical and quality improvements, training new staff, and developing cohesive and standardized workflows in that unit for the Division.</p>
<p>In summary: As the new QAC responsibilities evolve, it will be important to ensure he has sufficient training and support to carry out his new first-line supervisory responsibilities. Close coordination with the discipline supervisors is needed to ensure the TULs get the direction needed and are not reporting to two supervisors in practice.</p> <p>The self-reporting of NCs in Qualtrax enables all examiners the opportunity to participate in the quality system. Restructuring the process to limit who (e.g. TUL or supervisor) is able to initiate a NC in Qualtrax should result in more consistency. We also suggest that the process require person-to-person discussion about the investigation and corrective action planning to facilitate completing corrective actions. The appropriate supervisor should be engaged in that discussion along with the TUL and the QAC or QM.</p> <p>A TUL has significant responsibilities in every discipline. To support the TUL in each of the sites, consideration should be given to assigning an examiner in the other locations Assistant TUL responsibilities, particularly in the larger technical disciplines. This would enable the TUL to provide consistent technical guidance and oversight through his/her assistant.</p> <p>A detailed review of some portion of recently closed corrective actions is suggested. The objective should be to determine the effectiveness of implemented corrective actions and their ability to address a root cause. The review should include to what degree and frequency are similar NCs occurring, how they were categorized and what were identified as the root causes.</p>	<p>In May 2019, it was announced that the quality assurance coordinator (QAC) would be retiring in September 2019. The DFS management, Administrator and Deputy Administrator worked with BBF, HR and the DOJ executive team to have a recruitment to fill the position and allow enough overlap to ensure knowledge transfer for the newly hired QAC via mentorship with the current QAC. In June 2019, the new quality assurance director position was filled and training with the QAC began. Shortly after, two forensic scientist supervisor positions were recruited and filled for the new Quality Bureau. These positions provide daily, in-person oversight of the Technical Unit Leaders (TUL) as first line supervisors; the previous structure did not allow for this level of oversight. The creation of this structure provided clear direction on the responsibilities for quality supervisors and allowed TULs to still interact and complement the Unit Supervisors and scientists. In addition, DFS has worked to educate analysts on when it is appropriate to declare a non-conformance incident (NCI) and has continued to work through changes to the NCI, validation, and deviation processes. Since August 2018, DFS has gone through several routine surveillance visits by its accrediting body. DFS continues to be lauded for the thorough NCI documentation and quality system. This recommendation will be evaluated but the DFS accreditation requirements will dictate the final decision on how best to proceed.</p>
<p>The DNA section needs to be staffed to identify a validation team, and a CSR unit. This ensures that validations are completed in a timely manner and be quickly implemented rather than taking a year or more. Also, having a full-time CSR unit will prevent pulling staff from other duties like technical reviews or casework to work crime scenes, as noted above. Depending on the crime scene, a staff member can be out of the laboratory for days and their work or work of other analysts are</p>	<p>The DNA/biology discipline has undergone many changes in workflow and capabilities since August 2018. The discipline adopted a new extraction system that speeds up the process and allows for samples to be more automated. In addition, the submission guidelines for the discipline were revamped and have been applied more consistently, allowing scientists to work on the most probative</p>

<p>waiting for them to do (e.g. robot or tech reviews) and do not get done. The section would benefit from more technicians or specialists, at least 3 additional full-time positions in each of the DNA Units. Technicians or specialists can assist with tasks such as contacting submitters to ensure the work still needs to be done thus preventing work on adjudicated cases. The techs can also assist with evidence returns, which takes significant time from analysts. This should be evaluated in tandem with the evidence submissions recommendations to ensure tasks are covered appropriately. Example: If evidence handlers were hired, this aspect of technician support may not be needed.</p>	<p>and/or most likely to have DNA. The DNA/biology unit has adopted several variations on High Throughput (HTP) DNA processing workflows. This workflow entails keeping a subset of the analysts focused on a duty for a set amount of time, after which that subset rotates to another duty. It allows each small team of analysts to focus on an individual function for a period of time to complete a large number of cases in a timely manner. Once the team finished their portion of the casework, they forward it to the next team, who performs the next function. DFS management is evaluating the success of this pilot and plans to expand it if appropriate.</p>
<p>A form that is applicable to both agencies could be created to better capture case information and test requests (maybe one side for forensic testing and the other for health), and still be used by both laboratory systems. Since both are state laboratories, this should be easily accomplished. Instructions could also be included in the kit to ensure that the new form is filled out appropriately.</p>	<p>DFS and the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene have discussed reformatting the form to provide information adequate for both laboratories and will continue to pursue that discussion.</p>
<p>Ensure that the submitting agencies are filling out their submission forms correctly and consistently. This can be accomplished through outreach mechanisms. The evidence technicians need to be properly trained on how to process case submissions as it pertains to a particular forensic discipline and ask questions when necessary. While this observation is specific to toxicology, it illustrates the larger evidence acceptance issues addressed above.</p>	<p>In 2019, the management team worked with technical unit leaders in all disciplines to revamp the evidence transmittal form used by submitting agencies. This new form provides clearer guidance for the end user, resulting in more consistent and correct submissions. To facilitate better understanding on toxicology case acceptance for supervisors, scientists, evidence technicians, and submitters, DFS developed submission guidelines for the discipline. These were published in March 2020.</p>
<p>Given that the TULs for both toxicology and controlled substances work at the Milwaukee location and fall under the Quality Assurance Coordinator (QAC) which resides at the Madison location, the QAC needs to work closely with their unit supervisor to ensure that they are performing their respective duties as a case analyst as well as the bureau's Technical Unit Leader. This goes back to the discussion about supervisory lines and should be evaluated system-wide. For example: Because of the supervisory question, goal dates still need to be set for the validation of the LC-MS/MS and the Hamilton pipette in Milwaukee.</p>	<p>In Summer 2019, the new quality assurance director position and two forensic scientist supervisor positions were filled to create the new Quality Bureau. One of those positions provides daily, in-person oversight of the controlled substances and toxicology TULs first line supervisor that the previous structure did not allow. The creation of this structure provided clear direction on responsibilities for quality supervisors and TULs moving forward, while still allowing them to interact and complement unit supervisors. In addition, the approval processes for many of the quality processes are being evaluated to ensure they are still viable and make sense given the structural change.</p>
<p>It is recommended that technician or specialist positions be considered for the Chemistry Units, at least one position per laboratory. Technicians or specialists can assist with tasks such as contacting submitters to ensure the work still needs to be done thus preventing work on adjudicated cases. The techs can also assist with evidence returns and prepping samples.</p>	<p>In 2019, DFS was provided additional staff through the state budget in order to have a full-time laboratory technician for the chemistry discipline. This was a first for the labs and the position allotted to the classification is in the process of being filled. The position is valuable because it will allow the scientific staff to focus on their duties.</p>

<p>The bureau needs to standardize the GC-FID and/or GC-MS instrument methods as well as column types and lengths across trace, controlled substances and the toxicology units. TULs and/or the QAC should do annual audits to ensure that methods and instrument configurations are in compliance with the established bureau standard.</p>	<p>DFS management and TULs are evaluating the recommendation on instrumentation. The disciplines continue to work toward implementing standardization. DFS will evaluate including new instrumentation and technologies in the next biennium's budget request.</p>
<p>It is recommended that all of the toxicology units perform alcohol analysis at a minimum of once per week. While a typical alcohol run using Headspace analysis by GC-FID does require the preparation of at least five standards, a few controls and some instrument data entry, the entire process to include the data review of these QA/QC samples is less than an hour. Therefore, the brief amount of time spent to prepare these extra QA/QC samples for weekly runs would have little to no impact on overall analyst's time. By implementing this change, the total number of alcohol cases that would need to be prepared, analyzed and reviewed would be significantly reduced running smaller, weekly batches. As a result, 'alcohol only' cases would then be completed one to two weeks sooner than they are currently done, decreasing turnaround time. Given that the bureau also has a policy that they will NOT perform a drug screen or drug quantitation if the alcohol was determined to be above 0.10 g/dL, these types of cases would also be completed much quicker.</p> <p>Although cases are being assigned utilizing batching methodologies in the controlled substances units, some of the CS analysts were observed to be doing analysis one case at a time. Thus, the batching of cases by the supervisor defeats the entire purpose. It is recommended that CS not batch cases unless every case analyst is batching their analysis.</p>	<p>DFS management and TULs evaluated the recommended changes and decided to continue batching with slight modifications. In addition, it was determined that samples submitted and tested in 2018 would not meet the submission guidelines today. This workflow is monitored and updated as appropriate.</p>
<p>The TUL for the controlled substance unit needs to standardize an electronic case note form and ensure that it is distributed to all CS analysts for use. Supervisors, QAC and TULs need to ensure that the form is being used.</p>	<p>The TUL in the controlled substances discipline has standardized the case note forms used throughout DFS.</p>
<p>Instrumentation software from the Agilent GC-MS, GC-FIDs, FT-IR, LC-MS/MS could be made available so that analysts could remotely connect over the network to the instrument computer to retrieve data and perform data analysis from their desktop.</p>	<p>DFS management are working with BCS to evaluate the functionality and feasibility of this recommendation.</p>
<p>Adjust instrument macros and ensure that the bureau is sharing the same macros between the individual units, so that all of the reports that are generated are the same and are not affected when hole punched at the top.</p>	<p>DFS management and the controlled substances TUL are evaluating the functionality and feasibility of this recommendation.</p>
<p>The TULs need to ensure that each laboratory within the bureau is doing everything consistently. An analyst exchange could also help with this. An analyst from each lab could visit a neighboring lab for a week to see how they operate and vice versa.</p>	<p>DFS supports collaboration between the laboratories and has encouraged the TULs in conjunction with Advanced staff to continue exchange of information.</p>
<p>Interviews of staff revealed that training and or conference attendance for analysts is under-funded. It is difficult to get</p>	<p>Funding is available for conference attendance and training through grants. However, due to the increased number of employees at DFS, grant</p>

<p>approval to attend these types of events so analysts can stay current within their field of expertise.</p>	<p>funding limits the number of staff that can attend conferences. DFS management have shared with staff that in person speakers and webinars will continue to be supported.</p>
<p>Madison, Milwaukee and Wausau Laboratories</p>	
<p>Madison: Hire evidence techs that can do both administrative as well as evidence tasks. This will save the bureau from having to hire for both positions and should allow them to increase their pay given that they are performing multiple assigned duties.</p>	<p>In 2019, DFS was provided additional staff through the state budget. The Madison laboratory received one additional evidence technician. The position will allow more flexibility and assistance in that unit.</p>
<p>Madison: New methods or technology being adopted to increase productivity must be required to be used by all staff. Staff should not be able to choose how they will do casework unless their method is proved to be equally effective.</p>	<p>In 2019, additional equipment was purchased for the Madison DNA analysis location. The goal of the WSCL is consistency in how samples are processed, and the intention is to have a well-defined workflow with limited variation for specific circumstances. Due to several scientific advances within the unit, a workflow evaluation to ensure more consistency in how samples are processed is ongoing.</p>
<p>Madison: To foster more teamwork, it would be better to divide the three lab spaces into different parts of the DNA process so all the staff can work together. For example, Evidence Screening, Extraction and Robotics, and Post Amplification.</p>	<p>The recommendation was evaluated and deemed to be ineffective at this time. DFS will continue to evaluate and update workflows annually as deemed necessary and appropriate.</p>
<p>Milwaukee: A new facility in Milwaukee is needed as soon as possible to provide appropriate space for laboratory instrumentation, workflow and storage.</p>	<p>DFS is working with the DOJ executive team and DOA to build a new Milwaukee Crime Laboratory.</p>
<p>Wausau: Have a news bulletin or bureau wide meeting that recognizes individuals for their hard work ethic. This should also come with an award of some type: time off or other affordable compensation. A communications tool of this type could also be used to improve communications about policy and procedure changes and other WSCLB-related news, helping to address issues of communication noted above.</p>	<p>DFS continues to improve communication with staff. The Wausau laboratory director, appointed in November 2018, revamped communication in the Wausau laboratory. The director continues to encourage dialogue between staff and requests feedback from DFS management. Since becoming its own division, DFS management have participated in division-wide town hall meetings and in-person meetings with staff at each location, including Wausau. This has enabled management to respond and communicate better with supervisors and laboratory staff.</p>
<p>Install both visual and audible alarms to ensure the safety of all staff and visitors.</p>	<p>There are visual smoke alarms in the main part of the facilities, and more visual smoke alarms were added in 2019.</p>