



**THE ASCLD-NIFS-SMANZFL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE
TERMED THE
INTERNATIONAL FORENSIC STRATEGIC ALLIANCE (IFSA)**

**BACKGROUND TO AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIME LABORATORY
DIRECTORS (ASCLD)
and the
SENIOR MANAGERS OF AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND
FORENSIC LABORATORIES (SMANZFL)
and the
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE (NIFS)**

ASCLD and SMANZFL have very similar aims and objectives. A number of the SMANZFL aims and objectives are underpinned and driven by NIFS support. An agreement that enables these three organizations (ASCLD and the NIFS/SMANZFL partnership) to actively collaborate and share information on business practices, professional programs and products, and services to their respective memberships is seen as mutually beneficial.

Following extensive discussions over a number of years, it was decided to recommend to the respective governing bodies of the organizations involved, that a strategic collaboration be forged.



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It was further recommended that the ASCLD and NIFS/SMANZFL partnership should be reflected as an entity in its own right and badged as 'The INTERNATIONAL FORENSIC STRATEGIC ALLIANCE' or 'IFSA'. It is acknowledged, however, that this cooperative entity has no legal standing. The vision and goals and objectives of this entity are described below.

VISION

To create opportunities for strategic collaboration across the global forensic science community.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To:

- **Identify potential improvements to the effective business management of the participating organizations;**
- **Research and implement programs and products offered by the participating organizations; and**
- **Provide information directly to members of the participating organizations.**

It is recognized that to move this partnership forward a letter of agreement needs to be struck which takes account of potential intellectual property (IP) and business collaboration costs. It is, therefore, to that end that the following 'Letter of Agreement' has been drafted for consideration by the respective governing bodies.



THE INTERNATIONAL FORENSIC STRATEGIC ALLIANCE (IFSA)

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

B E T W E E N

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIME LABORATORY DIRECTORS (ASCLD)

the

SENIOR MANAGERS OF AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND FORENSIC LABORATORIES (SMANZFL)

and the

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE (NIFS)

The three organizations, ASCLD, SMANZFL and NIFS have agreed to collaborate with respect to business practices, and notably, the development and use of research, training/education and quality enhancement materials and products relevant to forensic science. The collaboration will be of mutual benefit through the use of the skills and competencies of these organisations and economically through avoidance of duplication of effort in programme and product development.



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This letter constitutes an agreement to share jointly (i.e. ASCLD and NIFS/SMANZFL) developed training, learning and quality enhancing products in the following areas:

- Knowledge;
- Assessment tools;
- Mutual recognition of qualifications;
- Research; and
- Operational support strategies.

In the first instance, ASCLD NIFS/SMANZFL may collaborate on:

- Business practices;
- 'After the Fact' which is an interactive CD-Rom program developed for training and assessment of crime scene investigators;
- Disaster Victim Identification (mass casualty) and first responder standard operating procedures;
- Accreditation mentoring products;
- Information exchanges;
 - Newsletter articles;
 - Web site postings;
 - Web site links;
 - Discipline-specific Working Group and Board minutes.

Where there is a stated intention to collaborate in relation to current and future proposed projects, an Memo of Understanding (MOU) will be struck between relevant Agencies and/or jurisdictions to confirm expectations with respect to the sharing of materials and products where deemed necessary and the protection of potential IP (if any) with respect to each relevant product and each and every project.

It is agreed that ASCLD and NIFS/SMANZFL senior officers will communicate at least three times a year, twice by teleconference/video link and once through an annual visit. The annual visit will typically be on an alternating basis (Australasia ↔ America) when the visiting official will attend at the annual business meeting of the other at their own Agency's expense. Communications will focus on current collaboration and future projects that may be of mutual interest. However, where participation in the annual business meetings/symposia involves the delivery of specialist presentations and/or workshops by the visiting Agency, cost sharing options will be negotiated.



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It is agreed that all meetings will have agreed formal agendas and will be minuted with actions identified and tied to timescales where possible. Agendas will be agreed two weeks in advance of the meetings. Representation on IFSA and Secretariat support to it will be provided by the two international liaison officers (ILO), one nominated by ASCLD Board and domiciled in the USA and the other by the SMANZFL Executive and domiciled in Australasia. Representation will be for a period of three years to ensure continuity.

In addition, there will be an annual review of this Agreement.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2004.

SIGNED on behalf of ASCLD

SIGNED on behalf of SMANZFL

SIGNED on behalf of NIFS