



Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) FY2016 Performance Accountability Report (PAR)

Introduction

The Performance Accountability Report (PAR) measures each agency's performance for the fiscal year against the agency's performance plan and includes major accomplishments, updates on initiatives' progress and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Mission

The mission of the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) is to produce high quality, timely, accurate, and reliable forensic science with the use of the best available technology and practices, unbiased science, and transparency with the overall goal of enhancing public health and safety.

Summary of Services

DFS provides independent analysis of evidence and samples submitted by agencies within the District of Columbia and its federal neighbors. The Forensic Science Laboratory Division analyzes evidence submitted from criminal cases, including DNA, fingerprints, firearms, materials, and digital evidence. The DFS also provides expert witness testimony in defense of their analytical reports in the District's courts of law. The Public Health Laboratory Division provides diagnostic and analytical testing for biological pathogens and chemical agents from clinical, environmental, or food sources and provides emergency response testing. The Crime Scene Sciences Division provides the collection, analysis, processing, and preservation of evidence found at crime scenes in the District. The DFS Directorate supports the work of the entire agency through strategic direction, training, quality assurance, research, recruitment and hiring of personnel, information technology, data management, fleet management, procurement, and other administrative support services. The Scientific Advisory Board provides guidance by providing peer review to ensure that scientifically valid protocols are developed, followed, and updated.

Overview – Agency Performance

The following section provides a summary of DFS performance in FY 2016 by listing DFS’s top accomplishments, and a summary of its progress achieving its initiatives and progress on key performance indicators.

Top Agency Accomplishments

Accomplishment	Impact on Agency	Impact on Residents
Continuing ISO 17025 Accreditation in Latent Fingerprints Unit, Firearms Examination Unit, and the Forensic Biology Unit, and the Public Health Laboratory biannual CLIA Certification.	Operating DFS with sufficient Quality assurance and quality control measures in accordance with community standards is demonstrated by successful accreditation and is required by the DC statute that established DFS. Receiving accreditation has a positive impact on all customers and stakeholders that utilize DFS for analytical results and has a positive impact on the employees at DFS.	The major analytical Divisions have demonstrated that they are in compliance with critical community standards (ISO17025, National DNA Standards and CLIA). This ensures that the citizens are assured high quality laboratory operations and results.
Improvement of forensic laboratory services through the increase in productivity in Latent Fingerprints Unit, Firearms Examination and DNA analysis, and the increased submissions to critical national intelligence databases sponsored by the FBI and ATF such as NIBIN, AFIS, and CODIS.	This impacts the agency because it demonstrates that when the laboratory is give the appropriate resources (Mayor’s Safer Stronger DC investment), the laboratory personnel can increase productivity while maintaining a quality laboratory.	Increased productivity and input of data into critical intelligence database leads to increased closure of cases and resolution of investigations. A greater number of leads and case connections were produced in 2016 over 2015.
Reinitiating the Forensic Biology Unit in February 2016.	Resuming DNA testing has had a positive impact on the members of the Forensic Biology Unit, the Forensic Science Division and the Department. It has restored confidence in critical Stakeholders.	? DNA testing of evidence obtained in violent crimes such as rape and homicide is a critical component to solve such crimes. The FBU has implemented a method that allows the interpretation of complex DNA mixtures and now is a leader in the forensic DNA community. Resuming DNA testing has allowed FBU to eliminate DNA backlog and improve turnaround times of sexual assault kits collected in the District.

In FY 2016, DFS had 16 Key Performance Indicators. Of those, 1 were neutral. Of the remaining measures, 31% (5 KPIs) were met, 6% (1 KPIs) were nearly met, and 56% (9 KPIs) were unmet. In FY 2016, DFS had 21 Initiatives. Of those, 90% (19) were completed and 5% (1) were nearly completed, and 5% (1) were not completed. The next sections provide greater detail on the specific metrics and initiatives for DFS in FY 2016.

FY16 Objectives

Division	Objective
Crime Scene Sciences	Improve crime scene services to District residents and stakeholders.
Directorate Operations & Agency Management	Provide professional workplace environment for employees.
Directorate Operations & Agency Management	Implementation of a laboratory information management system (LIMS) to provide seamless accountability and tracking of evidence from receipt-to-return, for all DFS services.
Directorate Operations & Agency Management	Achieve and Maintain Accreditation under the International Organization for Standardization ISO 17025.
Forensic Sciences Laboratory Division	Improve forensic laboratory services to stakeholders.
Forensic Sciences Laboratory Division	Develop new forensic services to improve scientific information for public safety.
Public Health Laboratory	: Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public health laboratory services.
Public Health Laboratory	Shift operational aspects to conform to agency-wide systems.

FY16 KPIs

Objective: : Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public health laboratory services.

Measure	Target	Freq	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	KPI Status	KPI Barriers
PHL Successful Competency Tests	100	Q	100	100	100	100	100	Met	
Sample Analyzed within Unit specific Turnaround Time	95	Q	95	95	80	80	87.5	Nearly Met	Due to testing personnel shortage, the overall TAT was not met routinely due to the focus on current Zika outbreak testing.
Number of Clinical Tests	38,691	Q	5,320	5,639	7,135	14,985	33,079	Unmet	Influenza specimens for 2016 Influenza season was 50% less than the previous year according CDC influenza report. This was a nationwide phenomenon which affected the DC metro area also. Hence less specimens were submitted by the hospital for confirmatory testing by PHL.

Objective: Achieve and Maintain Accreditation under the International Organization for Standardization ISO 17025.

Measure	Target	Freq	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	KPI Status	KPI Barriers
DFS Complaint Tracking	100	Q	100	100	100	100	100	Neutral Measure	

Objective: Improve crime scene services to District residents and stakeholders.

Measure	Target	Freq	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	KPI Status	KPI Barriers
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Response time (minutes)	60	Q	60	60	60	30	52.5	Met	The reduction in the KPI supports a more effective and efficient response time to scenes by DFS CSSU. CSSU has improved on its previous response time to support the District and the mission.
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Objective: Improve forensic laboratory services to stakeholders.

Measure	Target	Freq	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	KPI Status	KPI Barriers
*Average Turnaround time Firearms (change in calculation due to LIMS implementation)	55	Q	29	8	9	11	14	Met	Firearms was able to meet goal of reducing TAT, however efforts do not align with the year end totals.
*Turnaround time for DNA (change in calculation due to LIMS implementation)	50	Q			69	66	68	Unmet	Unit unable to meet goal due to TAT being dependent on the outsourcing labs who can only work a small percentage of cases on an expedited basis.

*Average Turnaround time for fingerprints (change in calculation due to LIMS implementation)	30	Q	88.7	100	52	33	68	Unmet	Fingerprints was not able to meet goal due to an increase in priority requests resulting in other cases being delayed, an increase in case production leading to some cases being delayed in the review process, and with working more backlog cases the TAT increased since some of those cases have been in our backlog for 30-60 days before being assigned and those days have sometimes been included in the TAT for this year since it was taken from manual stats.
Average Turnaround time for NIBIN verification	2	Q	33	5	1	1	10	Unmet	NIBIN KPI met goal of reducing TAT, however efforts do not align with the year end totals.
*Average Turnaround time for test fires (change in calculation due to LIMS implementation)	1	Q	4	3			3	Unmet	Test Fires KPI met goal of reducing TAT, however efforts do not align with the year end totals.
Reports per FTE DNA	140	Q		0	10.5	8.8	10	Unmet	DNA did not meet goal due to dependence on outsourcing labs who can only work a small percentage of cases on an expedited basis.

Reports per FTE Fingerprints	180	Q	13	15	18	22	17	Unmet	Target for this KPI was not met due to the implementation of LIMS, and training. The extra work required by LIMS increases the time it takes to work a case.
Reports per FTE Firearms	150	Q	17	67	46.2	67	49	Unmet	Previous Administration set unachievable targets in Firearms. DFS spent FY16 establishing a productivity baseline in Firearms. Baselines proved to be significantly lower than targets provided.
Reports per FTE NIBIN	800	Q	219	197	110	222	187	Unmet	Previous Administration set unachievable targets. DFS spent FY16 establishing a productivity baseline. Baselines proved to be significantly lower than targets provided.

Objective: Provide professional workplace environment for employees.

Measure	Target	Freq	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	KPI Status	KPI Barriers
Participation in Medical Surveillance Program	75	Q	75	75	75	76.7	75.4	Met	
Number Hours of Professional Development	400	Q	178	699	1,291	681	2,849	Met	

FY16 Workload Measures

Measure	Freq	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Digital Evidence Cases Submitted	A					78
DNA Cases Submitted	A					1,401
Fingerprint Cases Submitted	A					2,843
Firearms Cases Submitted	A					1,870
Test fires case submissions	A					1,718
Materials Analysis Cases Submitted	A					0
DNA Database Entries	A					489
Fingerprints Database Entries	A					6,255
Firearms Database Entries	A					3,489
DNA Database hits	A					159
Fingerprints Database hits	A					1,341
Firearms Database hits	A					349
PHL Samples Submitted	A					3,082
Total PHL Tests conducted	A					14,985
Immunology/Virology Tests	A					5,482
Clinical Chemistry Tests	A					842
Microbiology Tests	A					1,306
Molecular Biology Tests	A					7,355
CSS Scenes Processed	A					3,048
CSS Items Processed	A					89,546
CSS Autopsies Processed	A					346
CSS Vehicles Processed	A					599
DFS Requests for Information (FOIA)	A					8

FY16 Initiatives

Title: Increase the level of DFS scene response.

Description: The Crime Scene Sciences (CSS) division of DFS will acquire a 3-Dimensional laser scanning device for detailed documentation of major crime scenes. Upon acquisition of the instrument, CSS staff will undergo training for the use and data production provided by the instrument. This instrumentation will provide high resolution, 3-dimensional depictions of major crime scene environments for better investigations, documentation, and court presentations. Experienced CSS will begin to respond to homicides in the District, thereby responding to all crimes against persons.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Progress is being made over time whether due to hiring and/or training. Current staff level training is at 75% with trainees still being brought up to speed on the technology and homicide response.

Title: Hire additional Crime Scene Sciences forensic scientists and Central Evidence specialists and deploy CSSU forensic scientists to crime scenes.

Description: CSS Division will hire additional Crime Scene Sciences forensic scientists and Central Evidence specialists pending Council approval of additional funding and approval of legislation to hire retired police officers through the Mayor's FY2016 Supplemental Budget Request. Once approved, the hiring plan will begin in Q1 with filling the CSS Division Director position and continue through the Q3 of FY16. Training will begin in Q2 and will take up to 6 months.

Complete to Date: 75-99%

Status Update: Currently 94% of current new hires have been brought onto DFS, pending hire, or in the interview phase(s). DFS has been allotted an additional 22 FTE, to support CSSU. This will bring the projected staffing levels from 56 FTE to 78 FTE by the end of the next FY.

If Incomplete, Explanation: DFS has been allotted an additional 22 FTE, to support CSSU. This will bring the projected staffing levels from 56 FTE to 78 FTE by the end of the next FY.

Title: Restore and Maintain Full Operational and Accreditation status of the DFS Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) division.

Description: Timely completion of the Independent Review Corrective Action Response Plan to restore full operational status of the FSL Forensic Biology Unit and maintain FSL accreditation in accordance with the ISO 17025 standard.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: On August 22 and 23, 2016, ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board auditors conducted an on-site surveillance of the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL). The auditors noted only four minor non-conformities that required clarification in Standard Operating Procedures. There were no non-conformities in the Forensic Biology Unit. On September 26, 2016, DFS was notified that we had successfully completed all requirements for continued ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation.

Title: Enhance ISO 17025 Auditor Training frequency to maintain qualified personnel in the DFS Internal Auditor program.

Description: Provide ISO 17025 Auditor training from an ISO 17025 accrediting body for DFS members to increase employee accreditation awareness and to maintain an adequate number of qualified DFS personnel to participate in the annual DFS Internal Auditor program.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Scheduled training is complete.

Title: Develop and Implement an automated DFS Complaint/Inquiry Reporting System.

Description: In accordance with ISO 17025 Section 4.13, an automated feedback system will accommodate transparent accountability and reporting of inquiries and complaints via tracking and analysis to improve the management system, testing suitability and customer service.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: The complaint/inquiry form is easily accessible on-line via dfs.dc.gov. The form is offered in both English and Spanish.

Title: Provide training curriculum to DFS employees to ensure professional development.

Description: In FY16, DFS will continue to offer beginning and master classes on communication, scientific writing, and management of science to develop employee skill sets and foster a positive work environment. DFS technical trainings such as serial number restoration, armorer's courses, exclusions and sufficiency, and mock trials will also occur. In addition, the Forensic Biology Unit will continue to be trained on mixture interpretation and scientists will be tested on new methodologies concerning interpretation of mixed profiles by November 2015.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: DFS employees have been provided approximately 2,849 hours of professional development and/or technical/scientific skills training.

Title: Improve and expand agency-wide communication (internal) and increase communication to the public (external).

Description: Create appropriate tools to enhance communication within the agency. Assemble monthly all staff meetings, execute a bi-weekly agency newsletter and review options to purchase an intranet. Increase our public web presence by creating additional social media avenues.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Presently weekly management meetings are held to discuss the operational status of the agency. DFS Intranet has been implemented.

Title: Increase medical surveillance services to include vicarious stress, trauma training and counseling.

Description: Incorporate a stress, trauma training and response program into our medical surveillance program for employees. The current medical surveillance program offered to employees is OSHA compliance driven. It entails testing laboratory employees for bloodborne pathogen exposure, annual respiratory protection program, BSL3 Select Agent and Toxin testing and compliance, chemical exposure testing and other medical services as dictated by laboratory exposure. Addition of vicarious stress, trauma training and counseling would benefit our entire organization to train and handle situations which may evolve from their forensic laboratory positions. DCHR does not offer programs specific to these types of vicarious stress exposures. The program would entail training, counseling, debriefing for specific incidents, and providing necessary literature for employees.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Vicarious Trauma was added to the Medical Surveillance Program for DFS in FY2016. This program adds counseling services to our employees and assists in morale and productivity of the staff in times of stress. The medical surveillance program provides employees with necessary protection and prevention against bloodborne pathogens, and hazards in the field and the laboratory.

Title: Develop the DFS Guiding Principles of Professional Responsibility.

Description: Guiding Principles of professional responsibilities are designed to promote integrity among employees, and to increase public confidence in the quality of laboratory services, whether or not the laboratory is accredited by any accrediting body. DFS will modify the ASCLD/LAB guiding principles document (approved February 7, 2013 by the ASCLD/LAB Board) and issue as DFS doctrine.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: The DFS is guided by the DFS Quality Policy Statement. The purpose of the DFS quality management system is to ensure quality forensic services and public health services are provided to DFS customers. Laboratory management is committed to continually improving the effectiveness of the

management system and maintaining compliance with the ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation requirements, Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA), and the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness Response Act (PHSBPRA).

Title: Set up an operations support team.

Description: LIMS will require a team of Super Users to manage the evolution of the system to provide updates to the system and develop further features and functions as the units move to entering results into LIMS. Super Users represent all four divisions of DFS and the various units within each division. The Super Users will meet once per month to discuss workflow efficiency, draft standard operating procedures, and take any corrective actions. Each quarter the IT department will conduct stress and security tests of the infrastructure and provide an analysis report of the LIMS operational capabilities. By the end of the FY16 fiscal year the LIMS system will be the standard operational platform for evidence analysis in DFS.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: The LIMS system Super Users group meets on a monthly basis and will be ongoing. LIMS Systems have been Stress and Security Tested. Adjustments to Systems were made based on progress reports. LIMS data is being used to generate automated reports for the management of forensic testing and reporting; and, for process and performance management in each of the units. An external review of LIMS has been conducted and it was found to be sound and robust.

Title: Increase the Firearms Examination Unit's capacity to support the Metropolitan Police Department by purchasing a second national intelligence workstation.

Description: The Firearms Examination Unit (FEU) will complete training for the recently recruited trainee technicians and examiners who can then undertake casework increasing the output of the unit. The FEU will increase the provision of timely National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) results to DFS stakeholders through the purchase of a second MATCHPOINT image comparison system. Implementation of FEU specific worksheets and reporting processes in the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) will improve the ability of FEU to provide real time, actionable intelligence reporting to D.C. Metropolitan Police Department.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Supervised training of FEU trainees has been conducted; the Individuated Training Plan (ITP) has three (3) FEU trainees scheduled for completion by December 2016. Six (6) FEU Contractors were hired to help reduce the backlog from 1212 cases to 956 cases. FEU has also purchased and is in the process of implementing Gun-Ops, which is a crime tracking map application and Mideo which assists firearm examiners with case management.

Title: Adopt a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) in the Latent Fingerprint Unit to improve work flow productivity.

Description: The Latent Fingerprint Unit (LFU) will continue to develop and implement work flow improvements through the implementation of the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and electronic work flow. Electronic worksheets specifically designed for LFU will improve records of examinations, data entry and reporting processes and ensure data integrity. This will reduce the amount of paperwork generated in the examination process resulting in an increase in productivity, reduce the potential for error and reduce turnaround time for reporting. Additional experienced staff is being recruited to increase the throughput of the LFU which will improve responsiveness.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: LFU uses LIMS worksheets to input case notes and results ensuring adherence to forensic accreditation and quality assurance standards. LIMS has resulted in more effective case management by tracking case requests so priorities are assigned and worked in a timely manner. Contractor assistance had great effect on LFU productivity and customer satisfaction. Case output tripled and LFU AFIS database entries increased by about 8 times leading to more AFIS hits assisting MPD in closing cases.

Title: Recommence DNA casework in the Forensic Biology Unit.

Description: DNA casework in the Forensic Biology Unit was suspended following the identification of an issue concerning the interpretation of DNA results in samples that contain DNA from more than person. Following the suspension of DNA casework, the entire staff of the FBU commenced an intensive, full time, six month long training program that is being conducted by a range of national and international experts in DNA mixture analysis. The training involves class instruction, practical exercises and homework assignments. Of particular importance, the analysis tool, STRMix, is considered to be the most advanced method for these calculations and will place the DFS Forensic Biology Unit at the forefront of DNA analysis and interpretation. Once training has been completed, the FBU will be fully operational and provide advanced DNA analysis services, including mixture analysis, to DFS stakeholders who can be confident in the quality of the results produced.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: FBU staff completed training in 8 months to include workshops, practical, theory, and hands-on experience with STRMix. FBU restarted on February 18, 2016. Now that unit it online, data collection will be ongoing.

Title: Scope the introduction of next generation sequencing for DNA analysis.

Description: DFS will establish a working group to assess the feasibility and potential impact of next generation sequencing technologies for DNA analysis. In order to address the CODIS/NDIS requirement in 2017 of additional loci, DFS will explore the use of commercially available NGS platforms to analyze STR and SNP loci. The working group will produce a report detailing the requirements for implementing next generation sequencing.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Joined 2 other labs to conduct validation plan for forensic DNA community - Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory [AFDIL] and University of North Texas [UNT] Health Sciences Center. Validation plan established across all 3 labs to share workload and results. Intern has arrived to work with FBU staff to perform lab work. Training conducted with AFDIL to learn how to use equipment and determine which additional equipment and reagents are needed. NGS instrument, server and initial set of reagents delivered in September.

Title: Develop a prioritization and case acceptance process for evidence submitted to the FSL.

Description: DFS wants to ensure that its resources are directed to forensic examinations and testing that will produce the most effective results for its stakeholders and District residents. To assist with this, a case prioritization model will be developed that takes into account the severity of the offence, the likelihood of recurrence of further criminal activity, the probative value of the evidence gathered at crime scenes, the likelihood of obtaining results from forensic analysis among other factors. FSL will develop and implement a case prioritization and acceptance process that will be applied to all forensic casework submitted to each unit.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: LFU developed a case completion and prioritization plan enabling the unit to work down backlog cases. Priority requests are identified in LIMS for tracking. FEU prioritizes cases with court dates, homicides and identified in stakeholder meetings. FEU process includes guidelines for customers to identify eligible evidence versus non-eligible evidence for case submissions. FBU prioritizes sex kits and customer requests and determines if testing will be in-house or outsourced depending on the requested TAT and caseload.

Title: Scope the implementation of capabilities for Forensic Chemistry analysis.

Description: DFS will establish a taskforce to examine all factors impacting the establishment of a Controlled Substances Unit primarily for the analysis of illicit drugs and the illegal sale and/or distribution of pharmaceuticals. The taskforce will produce a report detailing the needs, logistics, staffing, resources, security, legal issues and broad agency policies to provide guidance on the creation of a controlled substances unit.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Forensic Chemistry Unit placed under the Public Health Laboratory and headed by Dr. Luke Short.

Title: Implement next-generation sequencing (NGS) technology into unknown organism identification in public health and forensic sciences.

Description: NGS is the use of advanced molecular techniques to identify and characterize different pathogens to include bacteria, virus, and parasites. According to the information from American Public Health Association (APHL), current Pulse-Net Methods for foodborne pathogens surveillance will be replaced by whole genomic sequencing methods after 2017. In FY16, PHL will embrace the trend of development to perform sequencing and analysis through NGS. Potential outcomes from this initiative include increasing the number of referred isolates received from external stakeholders that will be analyzed and reported to a national database, improved characterization of unknown isolates and agents of outbreak, and outreach activities aimed to increase awareness of the PHL services.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: DFS has procured two Miseq machines. One machine for the Forensic Biology Unit (FBU) within the Forensic Science Laboratory and the Public Health Laboratory (PHL). Three (3) PHL staff have been trained through a partner organization. Supplies for use have been obtained. On-site vendor training is upcoming during the 1st quarter of FY17 which will allow PHL to move towards implementing NGS as standard protocol for characterization of unknown isolates.

Title: Improve the effectiveness of PHL services by conducting outreach activities to customers and stakeholders that will lead to developing business plans and cost analysis needed to phase in new testing to increase capability.

Description: PHL will develop business plans and cost analysis to identify increased costs for expanding testing capability. Completion of business plans and cost analysis will identify the additional funding required to provide expanded services to other District agencies, local and federal partners. Testing areas not currently provided that are being considered for analysis include: HIV, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis, Syphilis, and Gonorrhea testing; Foodborne disease testing from DC-restaurants; Nicotine, medicinal marijuana, and pharmaceutical drug components; Newborn screening testing; and Lead-based blood testing.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: Partner with the DOH in emergency preparedness, and outbreak testing. PHL successfully passed proficiency testing for the Zika virus and is a key partner within the District as the country combats this virus. Forensic Chemistry Unit (FCU) established within the PHL. The FCU has developed a partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Through this partnership, PHL has begun testing in cases involving synthetic drugs. Services provided are ongoing.

Title: Obtain accreditation in ISO 17025.

Description: The Public Health Laboratory and Forensic Science Laboratory seek accreditation through two different processes; the PHL work conforms to its own profession's quality standards. PHL has identified common testing across divisions, simplifying paperwork and reporting, and aligning its practices to international quality standards (ISO 17025). During FY15, the PHL revised all standard operating procedures (SOPs) and laboratory operation procedures (LOM) to meet the ISO 17025 requirements. In addition, the PHL has successfully completed internal audits in preparation for the final phase of accreditation. PHL will complete an external assessment prior to initial audit to become certified.

Complete to Date: 0-24%

Status Update: During 2016, the decision was made to hold on seeking ISO 17025 accreditation for the PHL. The focus for PHL was to improve their existing quality system to meet quality regulations as outlined under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA) and Division of Select Agents and Toxins (DSAT).

If Incomplete, Explanation: During 2016, the decision was made to hold on seeking ISO 17025 accreditation for the PHL. The focus for PHL was to improve their existing quality system to meet quality regulations as outlined under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA) and Division of Select Agents and

Toxins (DSAT).

Title: Obtain recertification of CLIA license.

Description: The Public Health Laboratory has a Federal regulation that set Public Health Laboratory practice standards. The Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendment (CLIA) regulates all laboratory testing performed on humans in the United States (CFR Part 493). Because PHL performs confirmation testing on human specimens for District hospitals and other health caregivers, this certification is required. The PHL is also a Tier 1 Division of Select Agents and Toxins (DSAT) laboratory. Any new accreditations PHL obtains must complement the guidelines set by these federal regulations. PHL will maintain all certifications to maintain a laboratory compliant with federal regulations and guidelines for handling select agents.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: CLIA inspectors conducted an on-site audit of the PHL on September 27 and 28, 2016. Inspectors reviewed written policies and protocols, patient test management records, records of competency and proficiency, records of quality control of instrumentation, and conducted interviews of PHL staff members. Close-out meeting was held September 28. During the meeting, auditors noted approximately seven minor non-conformities. The PHL is working to address the non-conformities mentioned in the close out session.

Title: Utilize PHL LIMS database.

Description: The Public Health Laboratory currently utilizes a limited system for laboratory information management (LIMS) that only handles PHL's information. Other divisions with DFS will be implementing a LIMS system specific to their divisions. Phase one of PHL's LIMS has been completed and tested internally. PHL will move forward with phase two of implementation. Phase two implementation involves submitting laboratory reports to clients via the LIMS system, and instrument interface. Use of the LIMS system will allow for a reduction in turn-around-time (i.e. the amount of time that transpires from the moment a sample is received by the laboratory until that sample result is reported to a customer). LIMS-generated electronic reports would be delivered directly to the client either by a secure fax or through a web portal. The potential outcomes from this initiative would include reduction in turn-around-time for laboratory results, and improved tracking of samples.

Complete to Date: Complete

Status Update: PHL went live with Chemware Horizon LIMS in 3rd quarter. PHL is consistently working with the DFS IT team to work out issues involving codes for the different new tests being performed as well as how to properly track turnaround time. All PHL biology units are currently utilizing system.