



**Report on the Responses to the Calendar Year 2016  
Customer Satisfaction Survey  
for the  
Bureau of Forensic Services**

**(Prior to July 1, 2016 known as the Bureau of Forensic Fire and Explosives Analysis under the Division of State Fire Marshal)**

The following derives its data from a survey of seven questions sent to customers who submitted samples to the Bureau during the period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016.

Carl Chasteen, Chief of Forensic Services  
Simon Blank, Director, Division of Investigative and Forensic Services  
Julius Halas, Director of the Division of State Fire Marshal  
Jeff Atwater, Chief Financial Officer and State Fire Marshal

This report covers the year of transition for the Bureau in moving from the Division of State Fire Marshal to the newly created Division of Investigative and Forensic Services.



AN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR LABORATORY ACCREDITATION accredited TESTING Laboratory, meeting ISO 17025 and A2LA requirements  
(SINCE February 9, 2017 in the subdisciplines of Fire Debris Analysis, Low Explosives,  
and Analysis of Unknowns Chemicals from Clandestine Laboratories)



AN ASCLD/LAB-International ACCREDITED TESTING LABORATORY meeting ISO 17025 and ASCLD/LAB-International requirements  
(SINCE July 20, 2010 in the subdisciplines of Fire Debris, Explosives and Analysis of Unknowns)

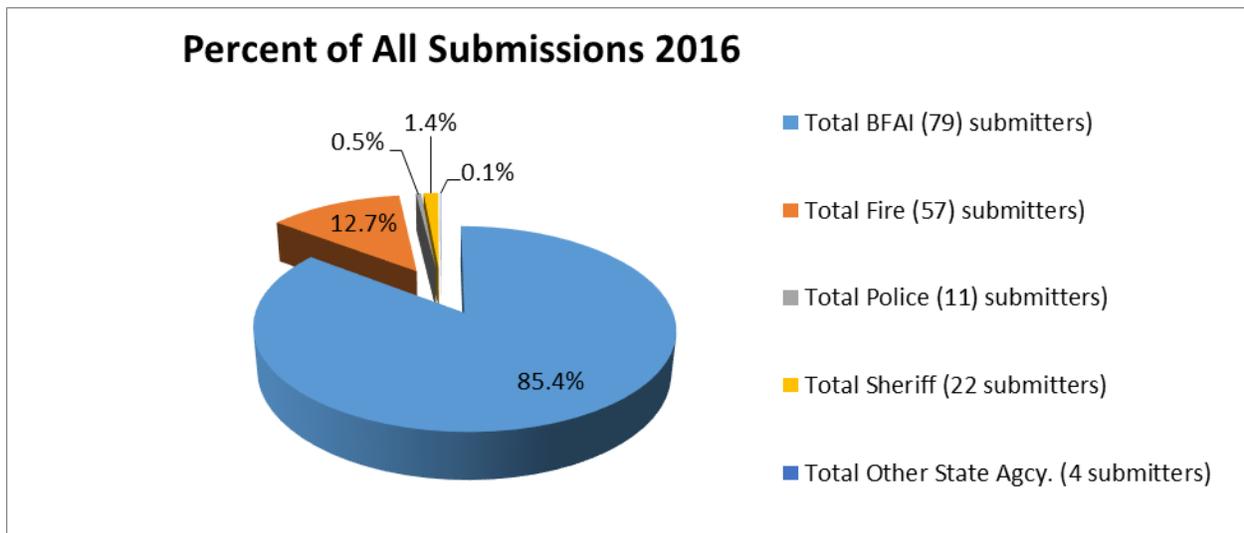
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Submitters.....</b>	<b>page 3</b>
<b>The Survey: Responses by Service</b>	<b>page 6</b>
<b>Overview of All Services.....</b>	<b>page 7</b>
<b>Fire Debris Analysis Service.....</b>	<b>page 9</b>
<b>Explosives Analysis Service.....</b>	<b>page 11</b>
<b>Chemical Unknowns Analysis Service.....</b>	<b>page 14</b>
<b>Digital Image Processing Service.....</b>	<b>page 16</b>
<b>Forensic Video Service.....</b>	<b>page 18</b>
<b>The Survey: Comments</b>	<b>page 20</b>
<b>Question #6 (Comments on Personnel) .....</b>	<b>page 20</b>
<b>Question #7 (General Suggestions/Issues/Complaints) .....</b>	<b>page 21</b>

**Submitters:**

During the survey period, a total of one hundred seventy-three (173) submitters were identified. Nine (9) individuals had their emails returned as they were no longer at the email address we had available. The submitters represented twenty (20) Fire Departments, nine (9) Police Departments, sixteen (16) Sheriff’s Offices, twelve (12) BFAI Field Offices, the Florida Department of Corrections, and various State’s Attorneys Offices. The majority of “chemical evidence submissions” (73.15%) were made by detectives from the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations (BFAI) which is another Bureau within our Division of Investigative and Forensic Services (DIFS). The majority of submissions from Sheriff’s Offices were for identification of hazardous chemicals seized during clandestine drug laboratory investigations. BFAI was responsible for 100% of Digital Image Submissions. Digital Image Submissions, preparation and provision of public records requests for files and images, and forensic video analysis are included in the statistics for “all submissions”.

Type of Agency	Number of Separate Agencies or Field Offices	Number of Submitters by Agency Type	Percent of chemical Submissions	Percent of all Submissions
BFAI	12	79	73.15%	85.41%
Fire Dept.	20	57	23.72%	12.66%
Police Dept.	9	11	0.74%	0.47%
Sheriff's Office	16	22	2.39%	1.39%
Other (State Agencies)	4	4	0%	0.07%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>



Of the non-BFAI submitting agencies, six (6) were identified as submitting forty (40) or more samples each (these were from five (5) fire departments and one (1) sheriff's office).

Agency	Samples
Miami-Dade Fire Rescue	171
Hillsborough County Fire Marshal	160
Pasco County Fire Rescue	109
Tampa Fire Rescue	48
Palm Beach County Fire Rescue	41
Lake Co. Sheriff	41

A breakout of the physical evidence submissions made by our largest customer, the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations, indicates that the average number of chemical analysis submissions per detective who submitted physical evidence items in the target time frame (seventy-nine (79) detectives) was 28.53 samples per detective. The field office with the greatest number of chemical analysis submissions was Jacksonville with 435 followed by Orlando with 244, Plantation with 221, and Fort Myers with 202, all others were under 200. The average number of digital image case submissions per detective who submitted digital image cases in the target time frame (seventy-nine (79) detectives) was 37.90 cases per detective. The field office with the highest number of digital image case submissions (DI) was Jacksonville with over 500.

Field Office	Samples	DI Cases
Jacksonville	435	533
Orlando	244	297
Plantation	221	247
Fort Myers	202	210
Daytona	198	194
West Palm Beach	166	139
Tallahassee	163	130
Lake Wales	157	172
Pensacola	125	256
Ocala	122	202
Panama City	120	172
Tampa	101	126
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2254</b>	<b>2678</b>

The top ten (10) individual submitters of fire debris analysis requests are listed in the following table.

<b>Detective</b>	<b>FO</b>	<b>Samples</b>
White, Tom	Jacksonville	108
Baker, Jerry	Jacksonville	87
Douglas, Caleb	Jacksonville	86
Ruland, Jennifer	Daytona	81
Mozealous, Anthony	West Palm Beach	79
Tyson, Shaun	West Palm Beach	64
Stafford, Jim	Panama City	56
VanVelsor, Kenneth	Orlando	49
Kane, Jennifer	Fort Myers	46
Case, Roberta	Lake Wales	46
<b>Total</b>		<b>702 (31.01%)</b>

The top ten (10) individual submitters of digital image cases are listed in the following table:

<b>Detective</b>	<b>FO</b>	<b>DI Cases</b>
Bass, Josh	Jacksonville	87
Baker, Jerry	Jacksonville	80
Mozealous, Anthony	West Palm Beach	75
Douglas, Caleb	Jacksonville	72
Vaden, Danny	Pensacola	72
Grice, C. "Tony"	Pensacola	69
Ruland, Jennifer	Daytona	61
Yeager, Danny	Jacksonville	59
Little, James	Jacksonville	58
Pietrafesa, Joseph	Jacksonville	57
<b>Total</b>		<b>690 (25.77%)</b>

Four Detectives were in both top ten lists: Jerry Baker and Caleb Douglas (Jacksonville FO), Anthony Mozealous (West Palm Beach FO), and Jennifer Ruland (Daytona Beach FO).

## **The Survey:**

The Bureau's Customer Satisfaction Survey was in an electronic format and was successfully delivered to one hundred sixty-four (164) of the identified submitters after subtracting those whose emails were indicated as being undeliverable. A survey return percentage above 25% of those sent is considered "significant". A total of ninety-one (91) customers (55.49%) provided responses for at least one of the five (5) BFS services listed before the survey deadline. Some customers who utilized more than one of our services provided responses for those services as well.

BFS services which the customers were asked to rank individually:

- Fire Debris Analysis
- Explosives Analysis
- Chemical Unknowns Analysis
- Digital Image Archival
- Forensic Video Examination

If a customer did not use a service, they did not provide responses. Each of the five (5) services was assessed by four (4) attributes:

- Level of satisfaction with the work product
- Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases
- Impact on the investigator or their agency if the service were no longer available
- Quality of any personal contact with BFS staff

Again, if the customer did not wish to address a particular attribute they were allowed to pass without ranking it.

The ranking scale for all attributes was:

- Very High
- High
- Neutral
- Low
- Very Low

There were different numbers of respondents for each of the attributes in each of the five services. A table showing the number of respondents for each service:

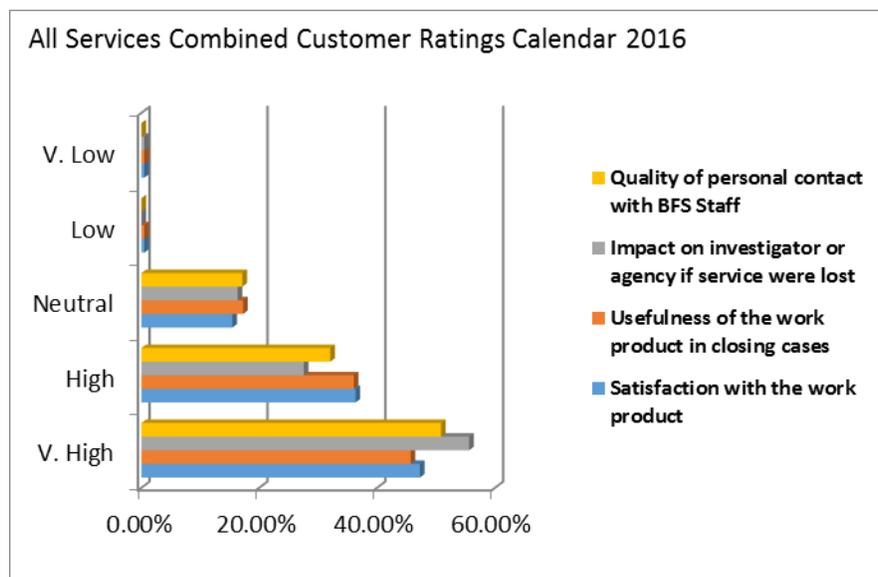
<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Raw Number</b>	<b>Percent responding to a portion of the survey</b>
Maximum number that responded to a portion of the survey	91	100.00%
Maximum respondents to issues on fire debris service	74	81.32%
Maximum respondents to issues on explosives service	32	35.16%
Maximum respondents to issues on chemical unknown service	35	38.46%
Maximum respondents to issues on digital imaging service	36	39.56%
Maximum respondents to issues on forensic video service	24	26.37%

## Overview of All Services

If all responses for the survey were merged regardless of the service category a comprehensive view of the Bureau’s overall performance was created with the greatest weighting toward the chemical analyses that compose the bulk of our service requests. For calendar year 2016, the chemical requests (including QA/QC samples) totaled six thousand seven hundred forty-two (6,742) and the imaging requests totaled two thousand eight hundred ninety-one (2,891). The following tables and graphs show the statistical customer perception of each of the four attributes for all services combined:

All Services Merged	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Total
Attribute	V. High	High	Neutral	Low	V. Low	Response
Satisfaction with the work product	95	73	31	1	1	201
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	90	71	34	1	1	197
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	109	54	32	0	1	196
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	92	58	31	0	0	181

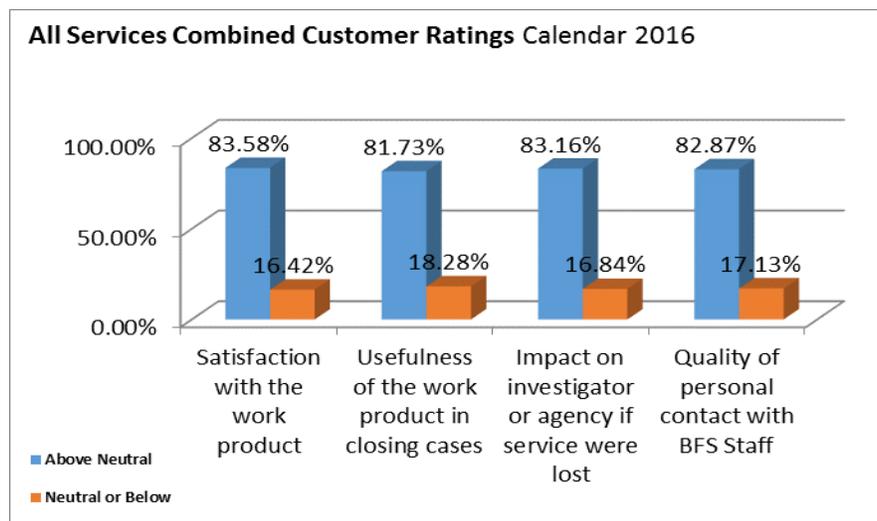
All Services Merged	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V. High	High	Neutral	Low	V. Low
Satisfaction with the work product	47.26%	36.32%	15.42%	0.50%	0.50%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	45.69%	36.04%	17.26%	0.51%	0.51%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	55.61%	27.55%	16.33%	0.00%	0.51%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	50.83%	32.04%	17.13%	0.00%	0.00%



The scope of this evaluation by customers is examined by combining the percent of responses that rank the attributes at “Very High” and “High” against all the responses that rank the attributes at “Neutral”, “Low”, or “Very Low”. This evaluation period shows similar

percentages in the percentages of “Very High” and “High” rankings compared with the previous evaluation period covering the fiscal year of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. All ratings of “Very High” plus “High” are between 81.73% and 83.58% and is a significantly positive reflection of the overall value our customers place on our services and staff.

All Services Merged	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V.High + High	Neutral, Low, or V.Low
Satisfaction with the work product	83.58%	16.42%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	81.73%	18.28%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	83.16%	16.84%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	82.87%	17.13%



This comprehensive ranking of all services by attributes shows that 81% or more of our customers rank each of the attributes (satisfaction, usefulness of the product, impact, and personal contact) at “High” or “Very High”. If we examine the statistics for the highest rating of only “Very High” the Bureau scores from above 45% to almost 56% for each attribute.

Each of the services were evaluated separately by the four attributes to determine areas where potential improvements may be possible. The number of work units associated with each service is listed below. The category “Explosives” includes both explosive determinations as well as the determinations of Chemical Unknowns. This will be evaluated further when the services are discussed separately.

01/01/2016 to 12/31/2016	Film Special Requests	Fire Debris Samples	QA/QC	Explosives	Images	Video	Total
Service Requests	151	3191	3131	420	2696	44	9633

## Fire Debris Analysis Service

Fire debris analysis is the primary service provided by the Bureau. The individual samples and associated quality assurance analyses compose 65.63% (6,322 of 9,633) of the total number of work requests processed by the Bureau in the calendar year running from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016. Fire debris analysis, where we examine material from the fire scene for trace amounts of ignitable liquids possibly used to accelerate a fire, is accomplished with the use of gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS).

Of all forensic sub-disciplines under the general category of “Trace Evidence,” fire debris is notoriously difficult to analyze. Ignitable liquids are complex mixtures of organic chemicals. In a sample of fire debris, these are intermingled with additional complex mixtures of organic chemicals (some of which are the same as some of the components of ignitable liquids) coming from the fire debris (burned substrates from the fire). The level of scrutiny required is high and the international guidelines for what may be determined are suggested by the American Society for Testing and Materials E1618, “Standard Test Method for Ignitable Liquid Residues in Extracts from Fire Debris Samples by Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry”. The number of negative determinations in fire debris analysis is higher than other disciplines either because the ignitable liquid did not survive the fire, was not on the sample submitted, or the components recovered did not meet the requirements of the Bureau SOP which uses ASTM recommendations for classification.

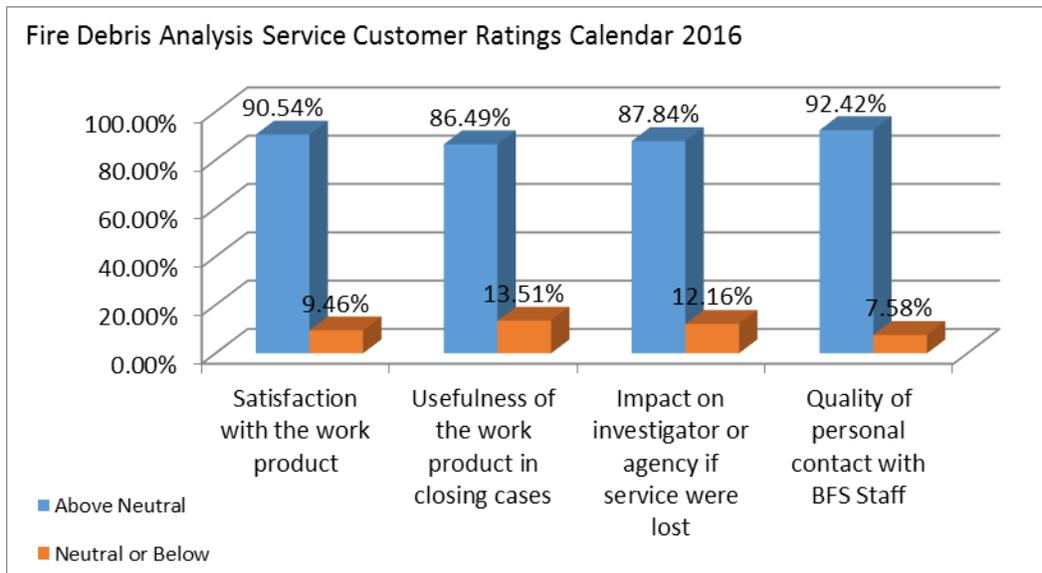
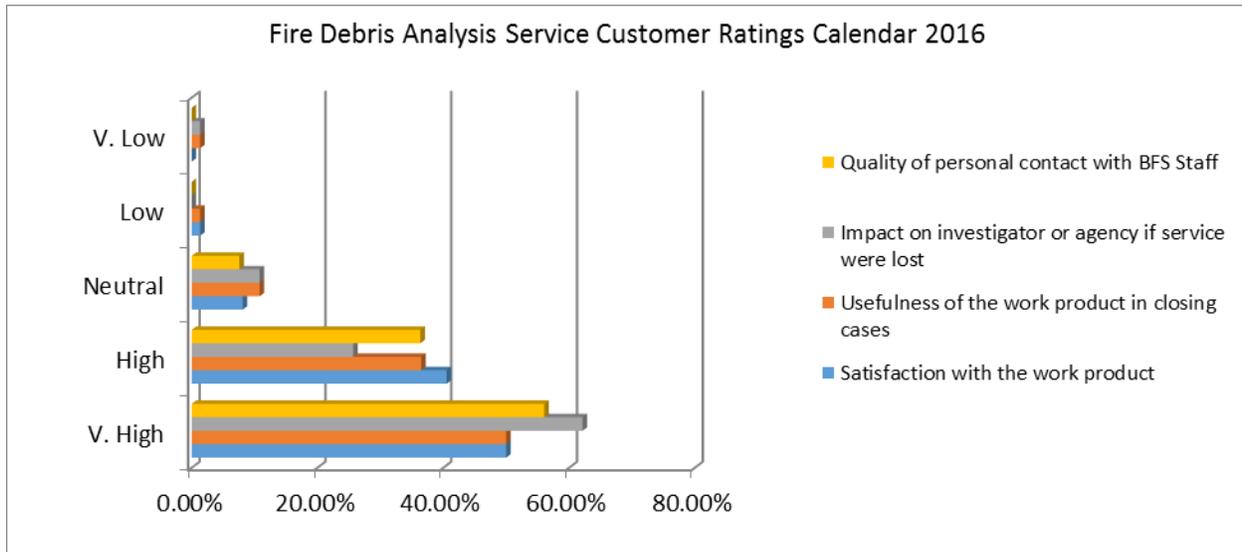
Our customers provided the following responses concerning their view of fire debris analysis service:

<b>Fire Debris Service</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>V. High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>V. Low</b>
Satisfaction with the work product	50.00%	40.54%	8.11%	1.35%	0.00%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	50.00%	36.49%	10.81%	1.35%	1.35%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	62.16%	25.68%	10.81%	0.00%	1.35%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	56.06%	36.36%	7.58%	0.00%	0.00%

Again, the scope of this evaluation by customers is more impressive when the statistics are examined by simply viewing the percent of responses that rank the attributes at “Very High” plus “High” against all the responses that rank the attributes at “Neutral” or lower.

<b>Fire Debris Service</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>V.High + High</b>	<b>Neutral, Low, or V.Low</b>
Satisfaction with the work product	90.54%	9.46%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	86.49%	13.51%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	87.84%	12.16%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	92.42%	7.58%

When over 86% of customers rank the usefulness of the work product to close their case investigations at “Very High” or “High” it is clear that the fire debris analysis provided by BFS is a necessary component to fire investigation in the State of Florida.



When 92.42% of customers rate the quality of their contact with staff as Very High or High, it speaks to the importance of positive customer communication and service exercised by all staff.

## Explosives/ Chemical Unknowns Analysis Service

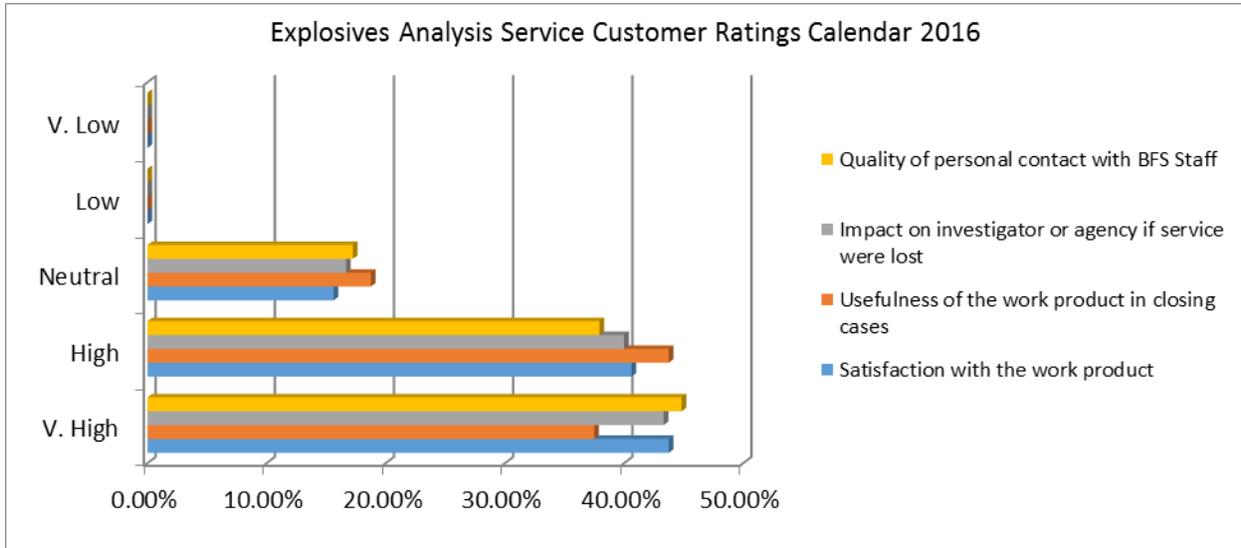
The determination of explosives, explosive residues, or chemical unknowns typically requires the use of multiple instruments on multiple sub-samples. Fire debris only requires a single analysis by gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS). Organic (compounds with a carbon atom “backbone”) explosives, residues and Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by GC-MS, Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), and/or Ion Mobility Spectrometry (IMS). Inorganic (compounds without the carbon atom “backbone” and that typically dissociate into positively and negatively charged ions) explosives, residues and Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by ion chromatography- mass spectrometry (IC-MS), Fourier Transfer Infrared Spectrometry (FTIR), Raman Spectroscopy, and/or X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF). In addition, all explosives, residues and Chemical Unknowns typically require additional various classic wet chemical “spot” tests and determination of pH (level of how acidic or basic a liquid may be).

The Bureau’s statistics currently combine all explosives, explosive residues, and Chemical Unknowns (true unknowns as well as chemicals from clandestine drug laboratories) under the single heading of “explosives.” Originally the Bureau only had the identification of the Chemical Unknowns as a minor task and incorporated them into the more numerous explosives determinations at the time. Over the years as clandestine laboratories proliferated the number of these samples became dominant. These have dropped significantly and our customers tell us the reason is that methamphetamine from foreign sources is so cheap that the number of people willing to make id has dropped significantly. This is the greatest drop on service requests by sub-discipline.

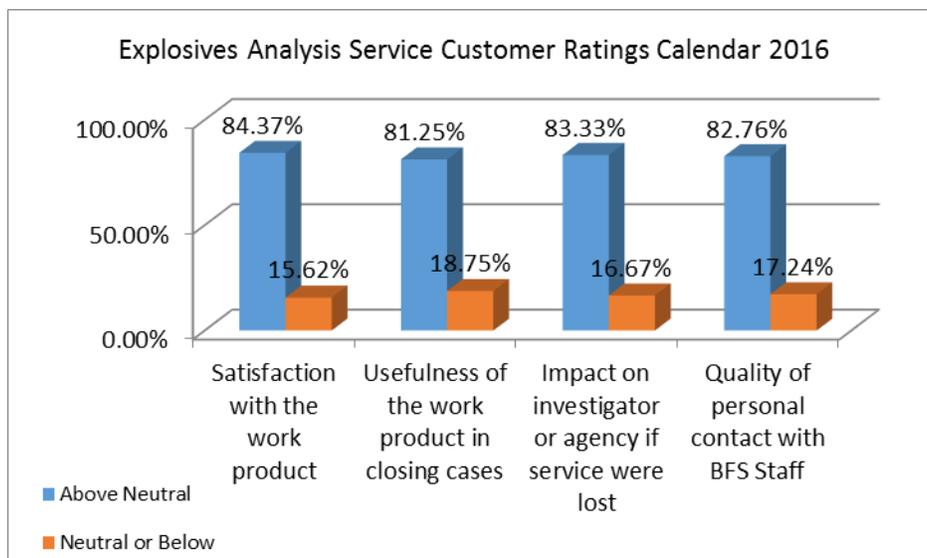
No other State of Florida laboratory is performing testing of non-drug chemicals collected from clandestine laboratory sites of evidence by investigators. Florida Statutes criminalize possession of the chemicals used to construct a clandestine drug laboratory (FS 893.033(2), FS 893.13 (g), FS 893.135(1)(f)1, and FS 893.149(1)). As a result, we had seen a steady increase in the number of these submissions through FY 2013/2014. By FY 2014/2015 the submissions had dropped and in calendar 2016 they had dropped further. Of the four hundred twenty (420) “explosives” analyses completed by the Bureau from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016, only 11.49% or forty-eight (48) were for actual explosives while 88.51% or three hundred seventy-two (372) were for Clandestine Labs or Chemical Unknowns identification. This section will report the customer satisfaction rankings for the explosives analysis while unknown and clandestine laboratory chemicals analysis will be covered in the next section.

<b>Explosives Service</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>V. High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>V. Low</b>
Satisfaction with the work product	43.75%	40.62%	15.62%	0.00%	0.00%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	37.50%	43.75%	18.75%	0.00%	0.00%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	43.33%	40.00%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	44.83%	37.93%	17.24%	0.00%	0.00%

To appreciate the scope of this evaluation by customers we will again examine the statistics by simply viewing the percent of responses that rank the attributes at “Very High” plus “High” against all the responses that rank the attributes at “Neutral” or lower.



Explosives Service	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V.High + High	Neutral, Low, or V.Low
Satisfaction with the work product	84.37%	15.62%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	81.25%	18.75%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	83.33%	16.67%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	82.76%	17.24%

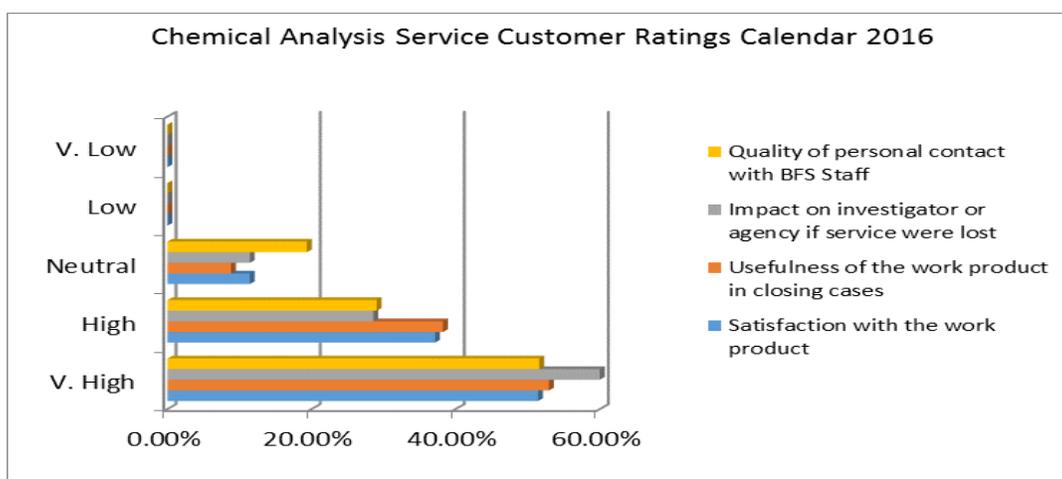


Overall, the ratings of “Very High” and “High” are similar to the previous review period. As with the previous review period a drop in favorable ratings to “neutral” and lower can be seen. With satisfaction with our current work product rated at “Very High” and “High” by 84.37% of our customers it is clear we are performing well above expectations.

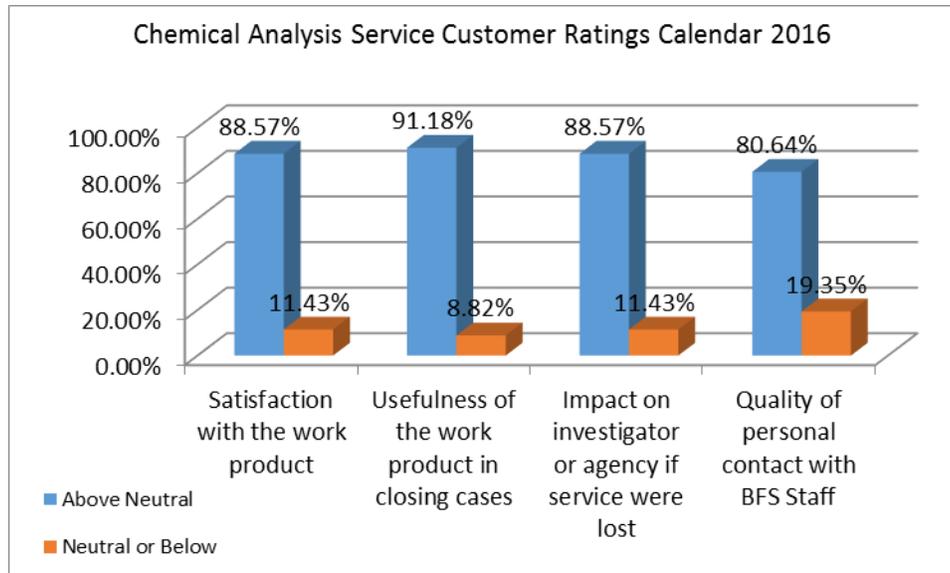
## Chemical Unknowns Analysis Service

As was discussed at the beginning of the section on Explosives Analysis, the four hundred twenty (420) “explosives” analyses completed by the Bureau from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 can be broken down into only 11.49% or forty-eight (48) were for actual explosives while 88.51% or three hundred seventy-two (372) were for Clandestine Labs or Chemical Unknowns identification. In addition, organic based Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by GC-MS, Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), or Ion Mobility Spectrometry (IMS). Inorganic based Chemical Unknowns may require multiple separate analyses by ion chromatography- mass spectrometry (IC-MS), FTIR, Raman Spectroscopy, or X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy (XRF) and will require screening by various classic wet chemical “spot” tests and determination of pH (level of how acidic or basic a liquid may be).

Chemical Unknowns Analysis Service	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V. High	High	Neutral	Low	V. Low
Satisfaction with the work product	51.43%	37.14%	11.43%	0.00%	0.00%
Usefulness of the work product in closing cases	52.94%	38.24%	8.82%	0.00%	0.00%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	60.00%	28.57%	11.43%	0.00%	0.00%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	51.61%	29.03%	19.35%	0.00%	0.00%



Chemical Unknowns Service	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V.High + High	Neutral, Low, or V.Low
Satisfaction with the work product	88.57%	11.43%
Usefulness of the work product in closing cases	91.18%	8.82%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	88.57%	11.43%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	80.64%	19.35%



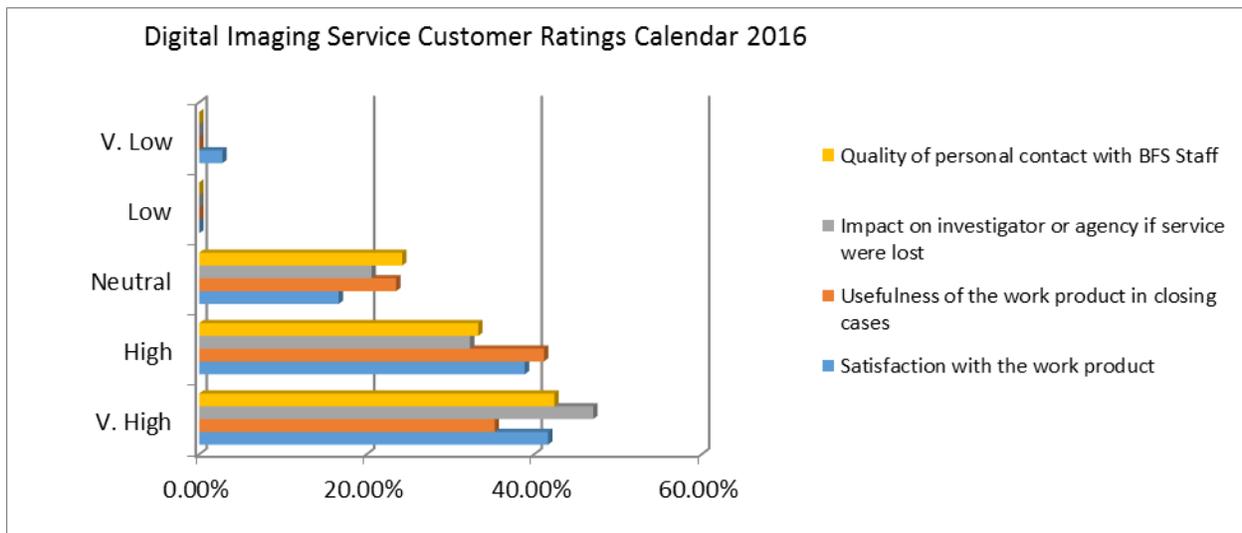
As with the Explosives Analysis Service, our customer ratings in the previous review period had shifted to the center with a small increase of customers rating the attributes as “Neutral”. The attribute assessing the impact on the investigator should the laboratory not be available to them is attributable to the same issues affecting the “explosives” section of analyses. With all attributes at 80% or higher for “Very High” and “High” it indicates the vast majority of our customers have a strong positive view of the work we offer.

## Digital Image Processing Service

As was stated earlier, this service is only performed for the investigators from the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations (BFAI). We act as the central repository for images from scene investigations. The images are automatically uploaded in the field to a server which we then track and can access to provide the archived images. Each detective has access to his or her file folder. Supervisors have access to their subordinate staff's folders. On occasion, detectives will need the reverse process where archived images will be restored to them for their use in investigation or for courtroom presentations.

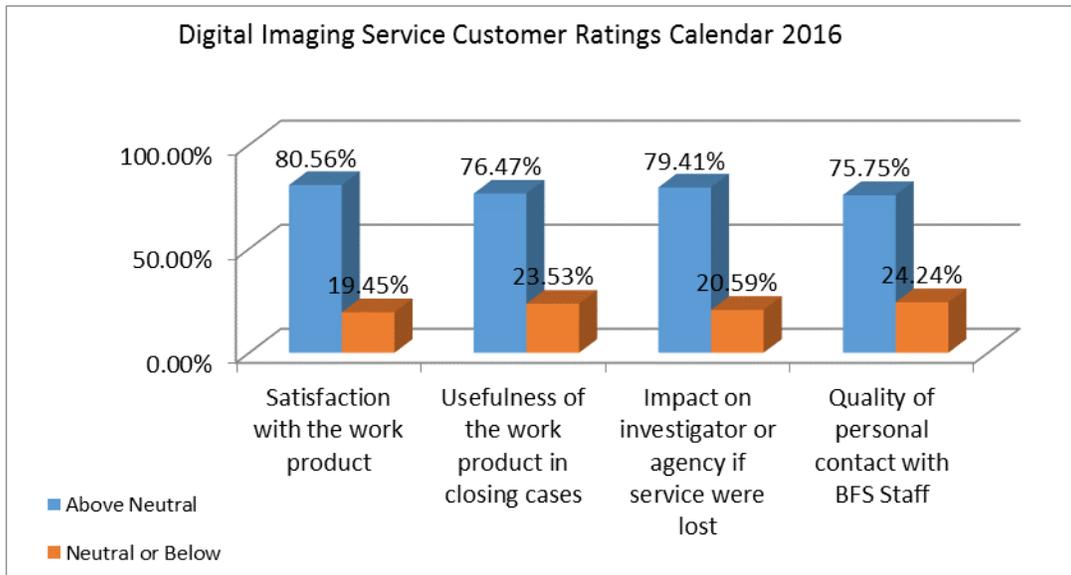
Items sent after May 2012, are stored on a server that is backed up each night on a remote secondary server for Disaster Recovery purposes. The service includes transfer and archival of digital images plus fulfilling requests for reproduction of archived photographs and images. This comprises 29.55% of the service requests processed by the Bureau from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 (2,847 of 9,633 requests). A total of seventy-nine (79) BFAI detectives transferred images to our centrally secure archive. With only a maximum of thirty-five (35) of them responding to this section of the survey it would appear that fewer than half (44.30%) of the BFAI detectives are participating in completion of this portion of the survey and by extension may be a minority of the other respondents to the other portions of the survey.

Digital Imaging Service	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V. High	High	Neutral	Low	V. Low
Satisfaction with the work product	41.67%	38.89%	16.67%	0.00%	2.78%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	35.29%	41.18%	23.53%	0.00%	0.00%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	47.06%	32.35%	20.59%	0.00%	0.00%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	42.42%	33.33%	24.24%	0.00%	0.00%



Because there is minimal interaction between laboratory staff and investigators once the items are archived, investigators may have a greater tendency to view the work in this service area as not affecting them, meeting their needs, or “Neutral”. This is seen in the table and chart below.

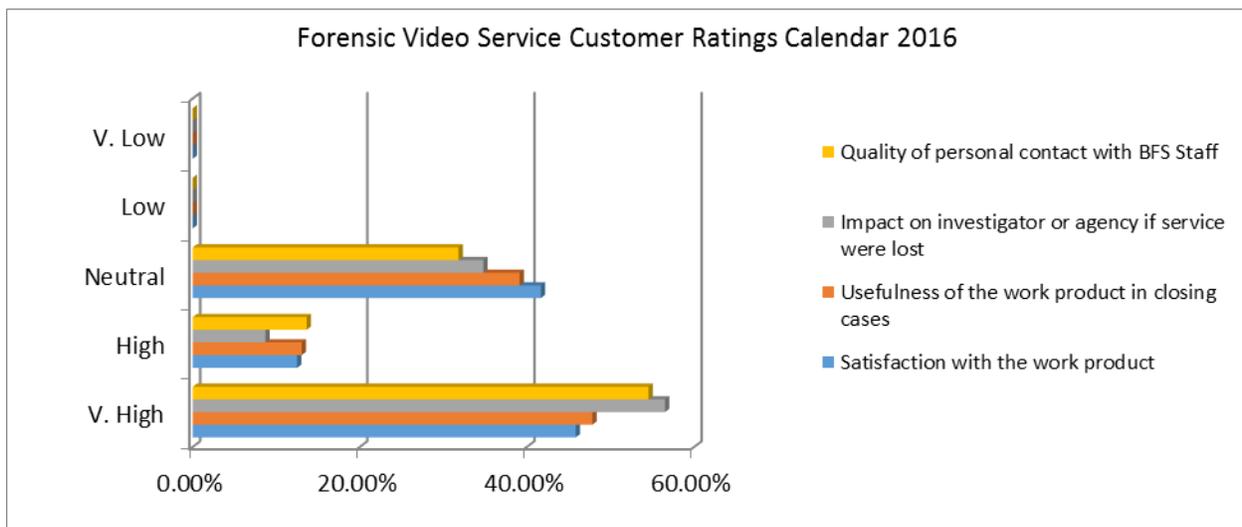
Digital Imaging Service	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V.High + High	Neutral, Low, or V.Low
Satisfaction with the work product	80.56%	19.45%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	76.47%	23.53%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	79.41%	20.59%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	75.75%	24.24%



## Forensic Video

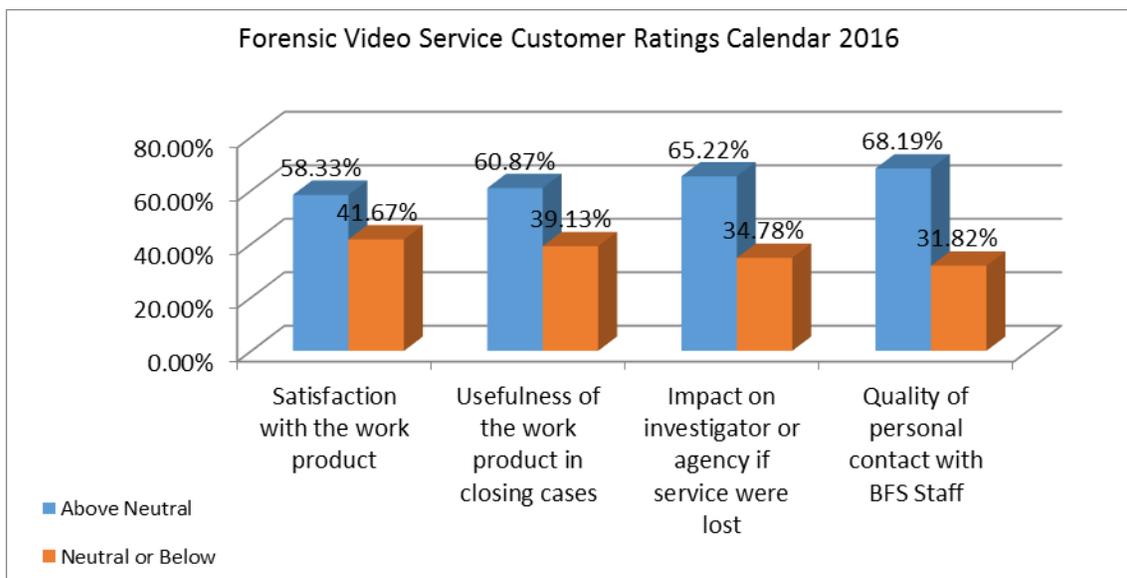
For the review period all official reports from this section were issued as reports from the BFAI detective who performed the examinations or requests for assistance. BFS provides the facility, equipment, and an analyst to assist in this service area and to provide customers with a consistent point of contact who can often provide immediate information, submission advice, or results from cases which are complete.

Forensic Video Service	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Ranking	V. High	High	Neutral	Low	V. Low
Satisfaction with the work product	45.83%	12.50%	41.67%	0.00%	0.00%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	47.83%	13.04%	39.13%	0.00%	0.00%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	56.52%	8.70%	34.78%	0.00%	0.00%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	54.55%	13.64%	31.82%	0.00%	0.00%



The value of the service and the information it can provide to the investigator is acknowledged by the customers. However, the ability to process and manage video is severely limited by the quality of the original camera that captured the image or the resolution of the data as it was stored. A low quality and low resolution camera will not capture images with sufficient detail to have evidentiary value. At the same time the storage capacity of digital systems can become an issue even when a high quality camera is used. In order to increase the number of hours of video that can be recorded on a drive or tape, the owner of the security system will lower the resolution. Thus, it is common to not be able to provide the investigator with all the information requested or to completely process the video. These are the direct component causes whereby this service has higher “Neutral” rankings. However, while the value of the service itself was only ranked from 58% to just over 68% “High” and “Very High”, the ratings for the quality of contact with the personnel in the section was the highest at 68.19% “High” plus “Very High”.

<b>Forensic Video Service</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>V.High + High</b>	<b>Neutral, Low, or V.Low</b>
Satisfaction with the work product	58.33%	41.67%
Usefulness of the work product in closing their cases	60.87%	39.13%
Impact on investigator or agency if service were lost	65.22%	34.78%
Quality of personal contact with BFS Staff	68.19%	31.82%



## **The Survey:**

Input and comments from the customers were solicited in the last two questions. This report will provide an overview or synopsis of the most pertinent findings.

### **Question 6: Are there any BFS personnel you would like to identify regarding their work or contacts with you (positive or negative)?**

There were no negative comments listed out of fifteen (15) responses to this question. The fifteen were all positive comments. There were nine (9) comments praising Bureau staff in general for their willingness to assist customers in answering various questions and their degree of professionalism. Several staff members were listed specifically in the remaining six (6) responses. Everyone had positive comments about their ability, willingness to help, or professionalism. They are:

- Carl Lugviel (3 positive)
- Perry Koussiafes (Mike) (1 positive)
- Melissa Stephens (1 positive)
- Lance Tomkins (1 positive)
- Carl Chasteen (1 positive)

Other members of staff who were not specifically named are either new analysts or other staff with only minimal, or no contact, with customers.

**Question 7: Do you have any general comments or complaints regarding the work, personnel, or consultations? Do you have any suggestions for improvements we can make or additional services you would like to see?**

While the majority of the twenty-four (24) comments provided were positive commendations and praise for the Bureau and staff, six (6) comments need to be addressed. The responses *in italics* are the comments of Chief Chasteen:

1. I would like more forensic work in the area of digital photography. Image correcting and enhancement.

*We are limited by the software we have and the training we can arrange for Brock, Melissa, and eventually Lance. It is an area we would like to go to, but must be very careful to adopt the prevailing standards of work and analysis. It is possible that this may dovetail with future work for the Fraud side of the house.*

2. Since, the Bureau lost its accreditation, we had to find another lab to process our samples. We fear that the loss of the accreditation would severely affect our ability to prosecute cases. It is the hope that the lab will regain their accreditation status and we would be able to return to the use of the lab.

*The laboratory regained its full accreditation in fire debris, low explosives and unknown chemicals by the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB-International, now ANAB) in November 2016 and since then has added full accreditation in fire debris analysis, low explosives and unknown/clan lab chemicals in February 2017 by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA). At this time, we believe we are the only public laboratory in the nation that is dual accredited by the two separate accrediting bodies. I think your concerns may be set aside for now. We cannot control those who complain or have an agenda against us, but we have always sought to provide exceptional service, reliable results, and a timely response.*

3. I have always found the work product of the lab accurate and timely. The temporary loss of accreditation would not have been a big deal, HOWEVER, the failure to inform submitters of this issue in a timely manner caused serious damage to the laboratory with federal, state, and local partners. As an investigator, to first hear of an issue with the laboratory you submit to on the local news, throws cases into question and terrifies State Attorneys. The fact that this information was not sent to us first gives the "appearance" of an attempt to hide the issue.

*I understand your frustration. An examination of a short history shows the source of our frustration. We underwent a full re-accreditation inspection where all aspects of the laboratory were examined by a former Director of the Michigan State Police Laboratory system and a current senior analyst with the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives Laboratory System in April, 2015. We received notification of*

*our full and unquestioned re-accreditation on May 6, 2015. On May 7, 2015 we were informed that an individual had filed a complaint stating that we were not properly using scientific methods for fire debris analysis because he disagreed as to the findings we had on a single case. We felt that our position that the complaint was without merit should have been clear due to our just completed full reaccreditation where our entire lab and processes were examined. In addition, the case that the complainant disagreed about was also examined by a private ASCLD/LAB accredited laboratory which agreed with our findings. We cooperated with the investigation and agreed to a special on-site assessment which occurred in January 2016. When the assessors left, we understood that they had some issues with some of our processes, but did not anticipate that the report would be as negative as it was and that the reaction of ASCLD/LAB would be so severe.*

*We were informed of the report and that we were to be sanctioned by temporary suspension of our accreditation in fire debris analysis on March 7, 2016. It would seem that the media and those who made the original complaint against us were advised of the sanctions at the same time as were we. The issue was communicated to the Assistant Director of the State Fire Marshal Division. The process to contest the sanction required that we be given 30 days to craft a response and after that we were to be given a hearing. We requested a 30-day extension which was granted. During that period, we requested that ASCLD/LAB remove the posting of our sanction from their website since we were exercising our right to an appeal. They declined. In July when we had not received any response from ASCLD/LAB, we found out that the entire appeal structure had changed since their merger with the accrediting body, ANAB, in April 2016. On August 3, 2016, as soon as our appeal was scheduled an advisory letter was sent to all State's Attorney's Offices, Sheriff's Offices, and Fire Departments explaining our issues to the entire ASCLD/LAB process to that point as well as the extraordinary lengths we were seeking to ensure that our work continued to meet our expectations of quality which we had met all the time since our original accreditation in 2010 and our renewal in 2015.*

*The Appeal Panel was assembled in mid-August and we were given 30 minutes to plead our case with a 10-minute rebuttal. The result was that almost all of the findings were upheld by the appeals panel. We were informed that there were some news stories, interviews with individuals, and television stories which overstated and sensationalized the issue and neglected to show what we were doing to meet the ASCLD/LAD requirements for restoration of our accreditation. Another letter containing the results from the appeals panel as well as our further activities to ensure a quality product was sent to the same customer group as before on August 31, 2016. On December 3, 2016, the third letter was sent to the customer group informing them of our re-accreditation.*

*You are correct that the laboratory did not issue a communication to our customers. We are part of an organization which has multiple requirements for public communications which must be met. In retrospect, I should have done a better job of asking that communications to be sent earlier. In the beginning I was working under the assumption that this would be resolved readily. I can only apologize to my customers for this oversight. Please rest assured however that most of you were using this laboratory*

*before it voluntarily sought and received accreditation in 2010. The analyses and processes remained the same. All that changed was a greater requirement for documentation in which we sometimes feel we are drowning. Our scientific basis for analysis of fire debris remains the same now as before.*

4. I think there are many who do not know about the services provided by BFS..

*We maintain a website and depend on our customers to let others know about what we do. In the past we were asked to provide speakers for the FACAP, IAAI, and Florida Arson Seminar. We always enjoyed this and had an excellent exchange with our customers. We have not been invited by those organizations in years. While we are a very small group, we are happy to provide speakers when possible and when the requesting organization can cover the costs of sending the person to the meeting. If close by and we can make it a day trip we can provide a speaker as well.*

5. Something very minor, make sure all employees use a signature on their emails.

*Most staff uses the signature feature of Outlook to provide their name, address, and telephone contact information. When case reports are scanned and sent, the report has the analyst's actual signature and if it is a multi-page report, it will have additional initials as well. The submission form is also scanned and sent which has the signatures of our staff when they sign the chain of custody. Are you asking for a written signature to be incorporated?*

This ends the report on the responses to the survey for January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016.

*This report may be used in the Bureau's Business Plan, Management Review, or to answer other questions regarding a statistical evaluation of the bureau's customers or their opinions on the quality of service received.*