

Department of Forensic Science Overview

Linda Jackson, Director
Presented to the Senate Finance
Public Safety Subcommittee
January 24, 2014



Budget

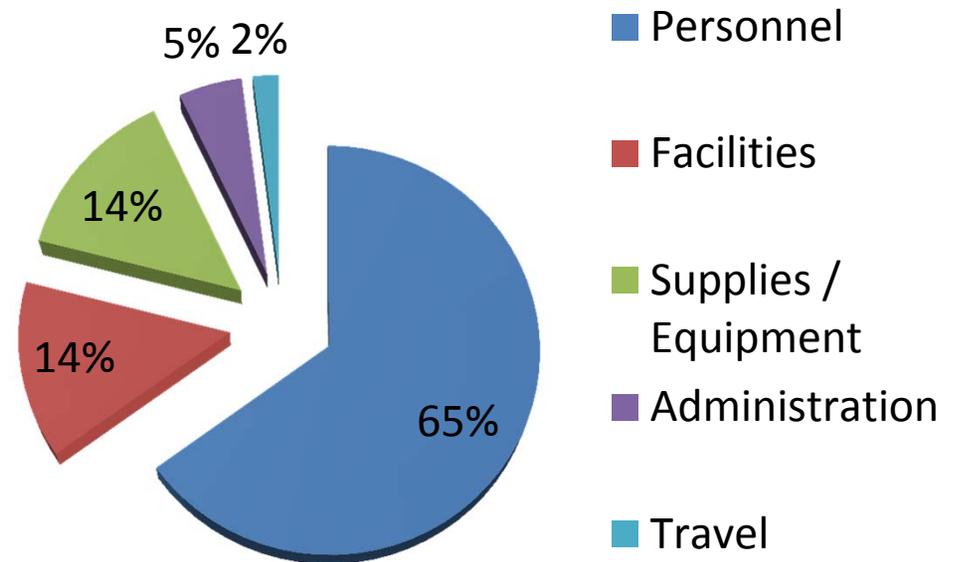
■ Budget

✓ General Fund:
\$37,654,107

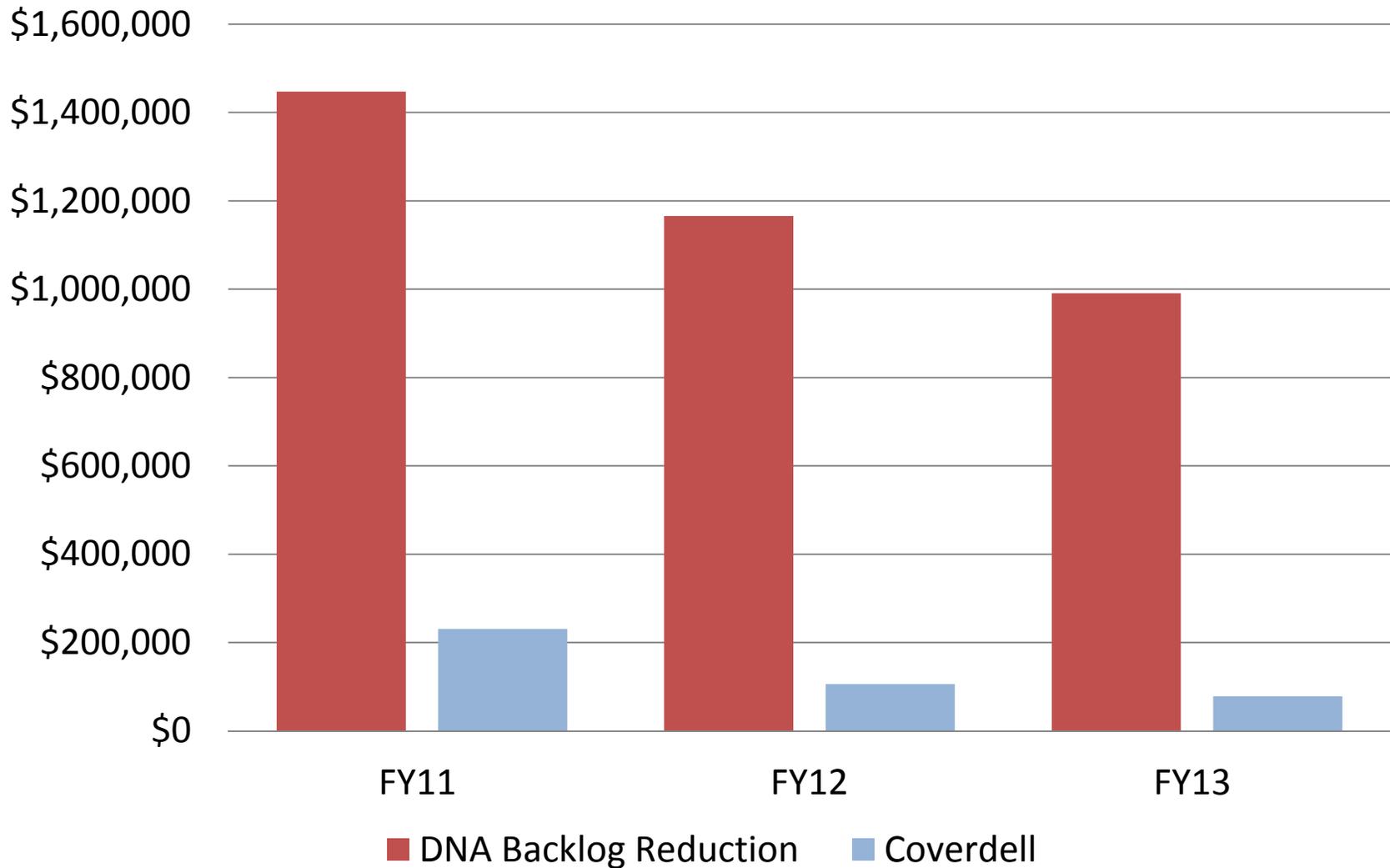
✓ Federal Funds:
\$ 2,506,996

✓ Total Funds:
\$40,161,103

Percent of Total Budget



Federal Grant Funding Trends



Changes to 2015-2016 Budget

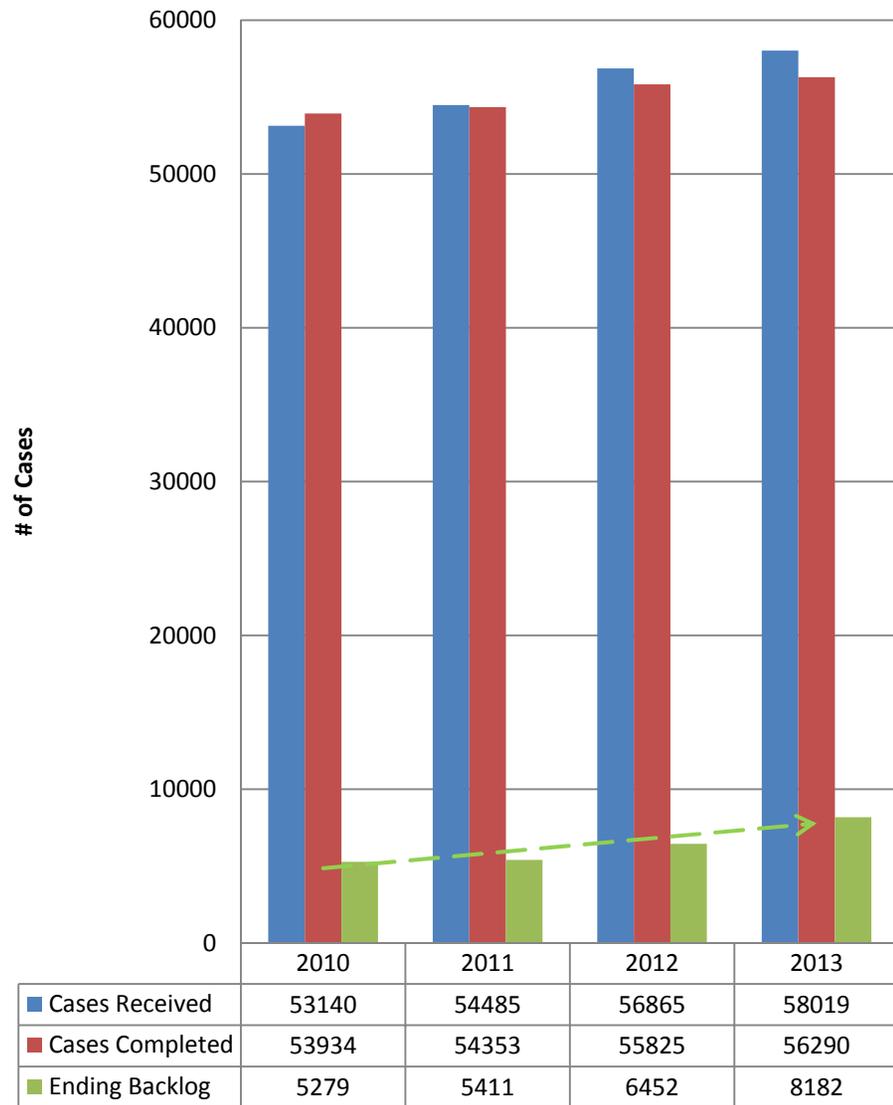
- DFS requested changes to base budget for next budget cycle

REQUESTS	GOVERNOR'S BUDGET
Funding for 7 additional scientists	Funding for 4 additional scientists
Funding for increased operational expenses for Western lab (FY16)	0
One time funding for relocation of Biotech 8 functions (FY16)	0

DFS Case Statistics

FY10-FY13

- Case submissions increased from FY10 to FY13 by 9% system-wide
- Average case turnaround time increased from 43 days in FY10 to 48 days in FY13
- Submissions have increased for the disciplines with the highest number of cases
 - Drugs
 - Toxicology
 - Forensic Biology



Analysis

Why Increased Caseloads?

- Increased submissions
- Increased time away from laboratory in court
- Increased Controlled Substances case complexity due to clandestine laboratories and designer drugs
- Increased DNA case complexity due to DNA mixtures as sensitivity increases

What Strategies Implemented?

- New instrumentation with increased automation
- Sample triage through submission policies and pre-submission conferences
- Team approach for clandestine lab cases and complex DNA statistical analyses

Funding Requests for Positions

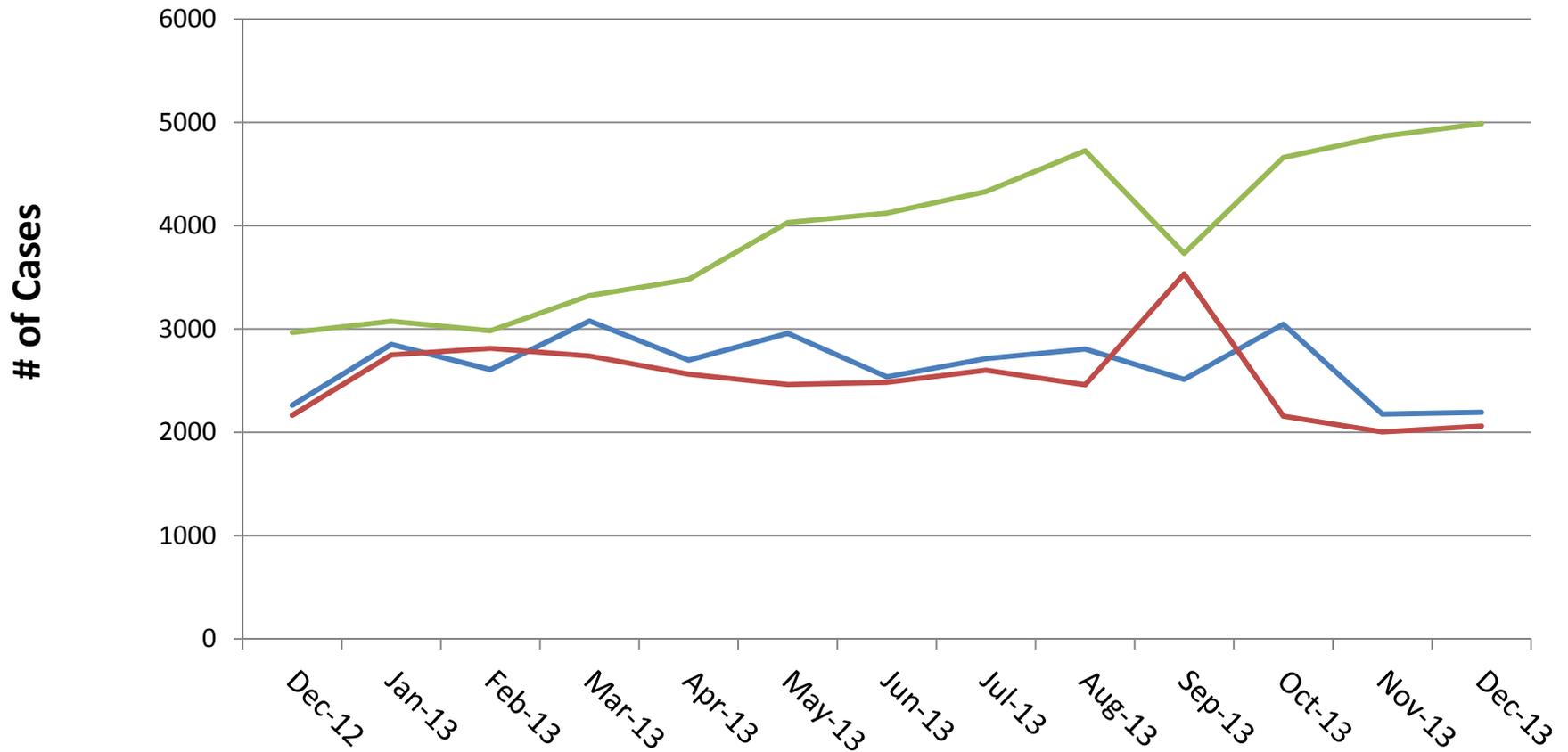
Controlled Substances

- Three positions
 - Scientists complete on average 725 cases per year
 - A minimum of 3.6 additional scientists are required to reduce the current backlog and maintain a case turnaround time of 30 days
- Since FY2011, annual case submissions in this discipline have increased 10%

No additional FTEs

FY15 = \$242,388; FY16 = \$242,388

Controlled Substances Statistics

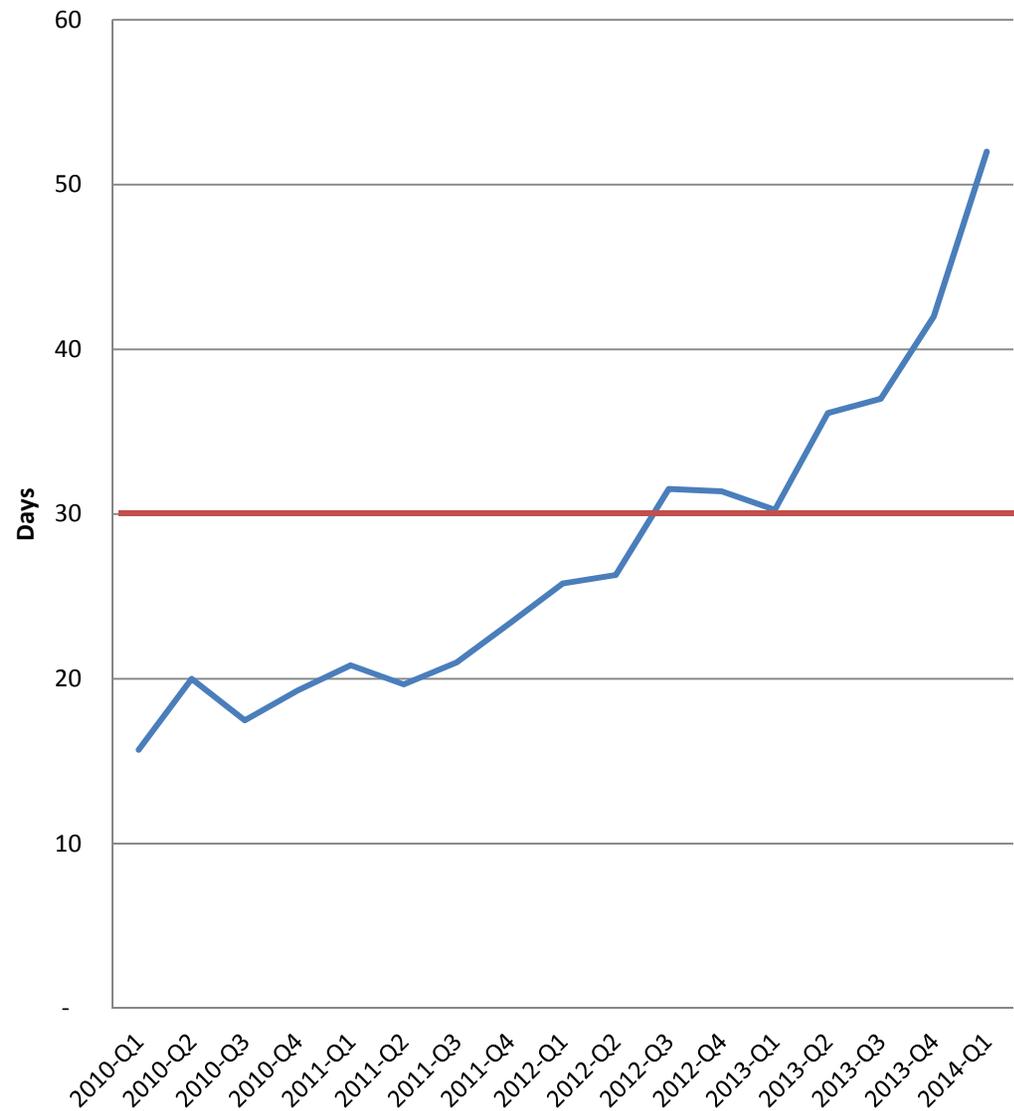


	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13
Total Submissions	2262	2851	2607	3078	2699	2958	2537	2714	2806	2512	3046	2176	2193
Total Completions	2165	2749	2813	2739	2563	2462	2483	2601	2459	3533	2156	2004	2060
Ending Backlog	2967	3075	2983	3323	3480	4030	4121	4330	4726	3731	4660	4866	4988

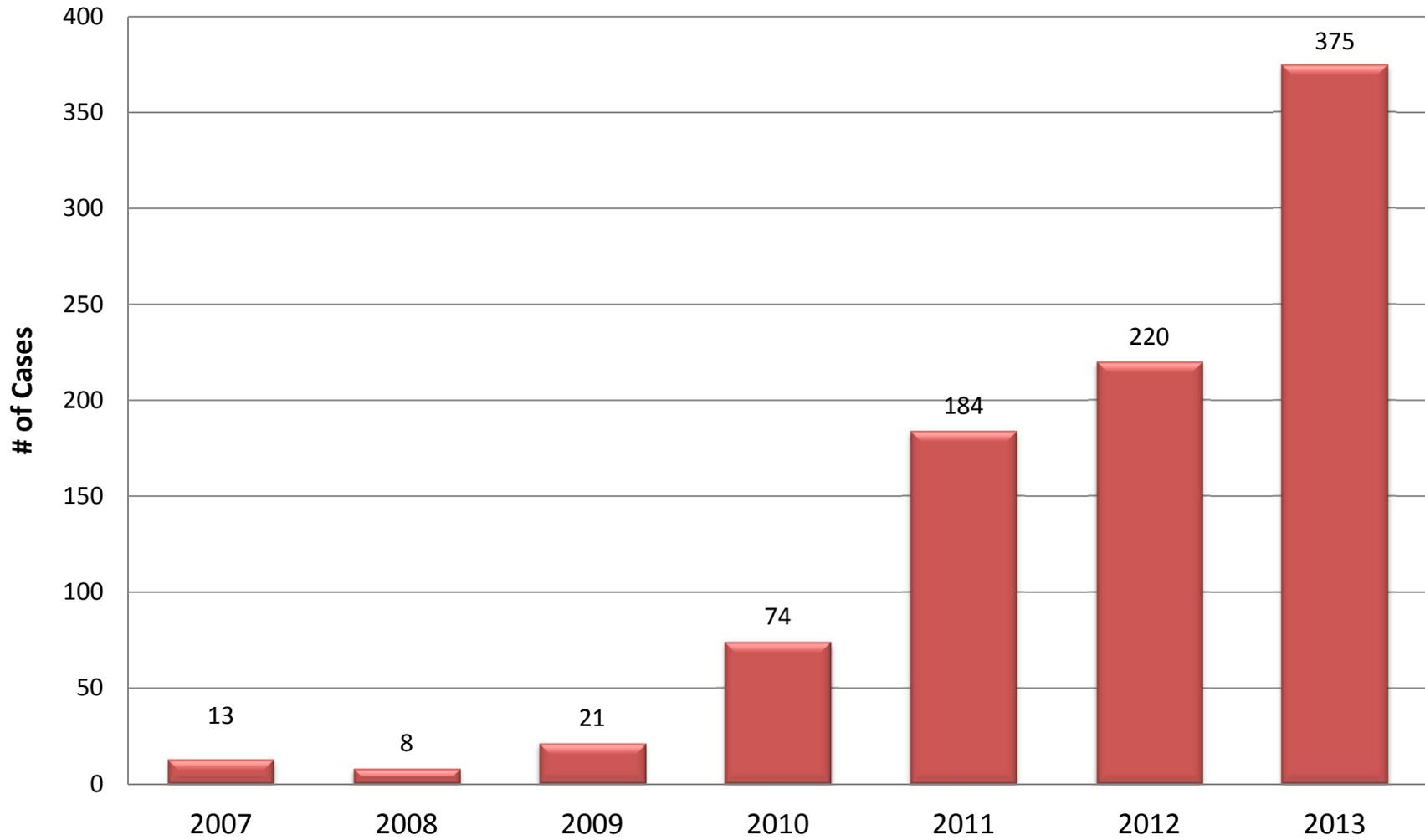
Controlled Substances (Drugs)

- More complicated analyses are required for cases containing clandestine methamphetamine laboratories, synthetic cannabinoids and research chemicals.
- Controlled Substances section continues to receive subpoenas at a high level as compared to pre-*Melendez-Diaz* levels in 2009.

Drug Turnaround Times

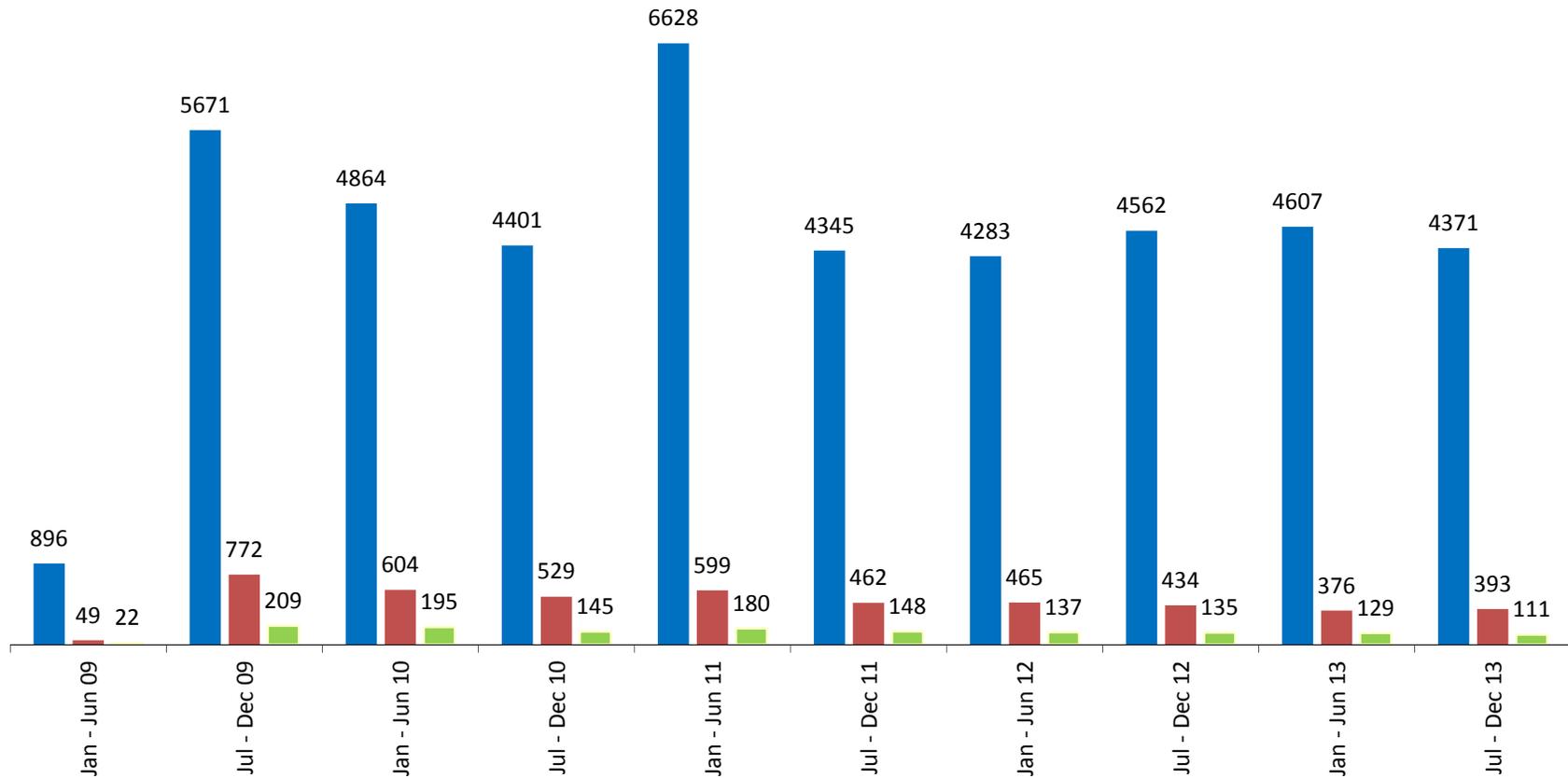


Clandestine Methamphetamine Lab Submissions to DFS CY 2007 - CY 2013



Controlled Substances Subpoenas

■ Received ■ Appearances ■ Testimony



Note: Significant administrative time is spent handling subpoenas, even when travel to court is not required.

Funding Requests for Positions

Forensic Biology

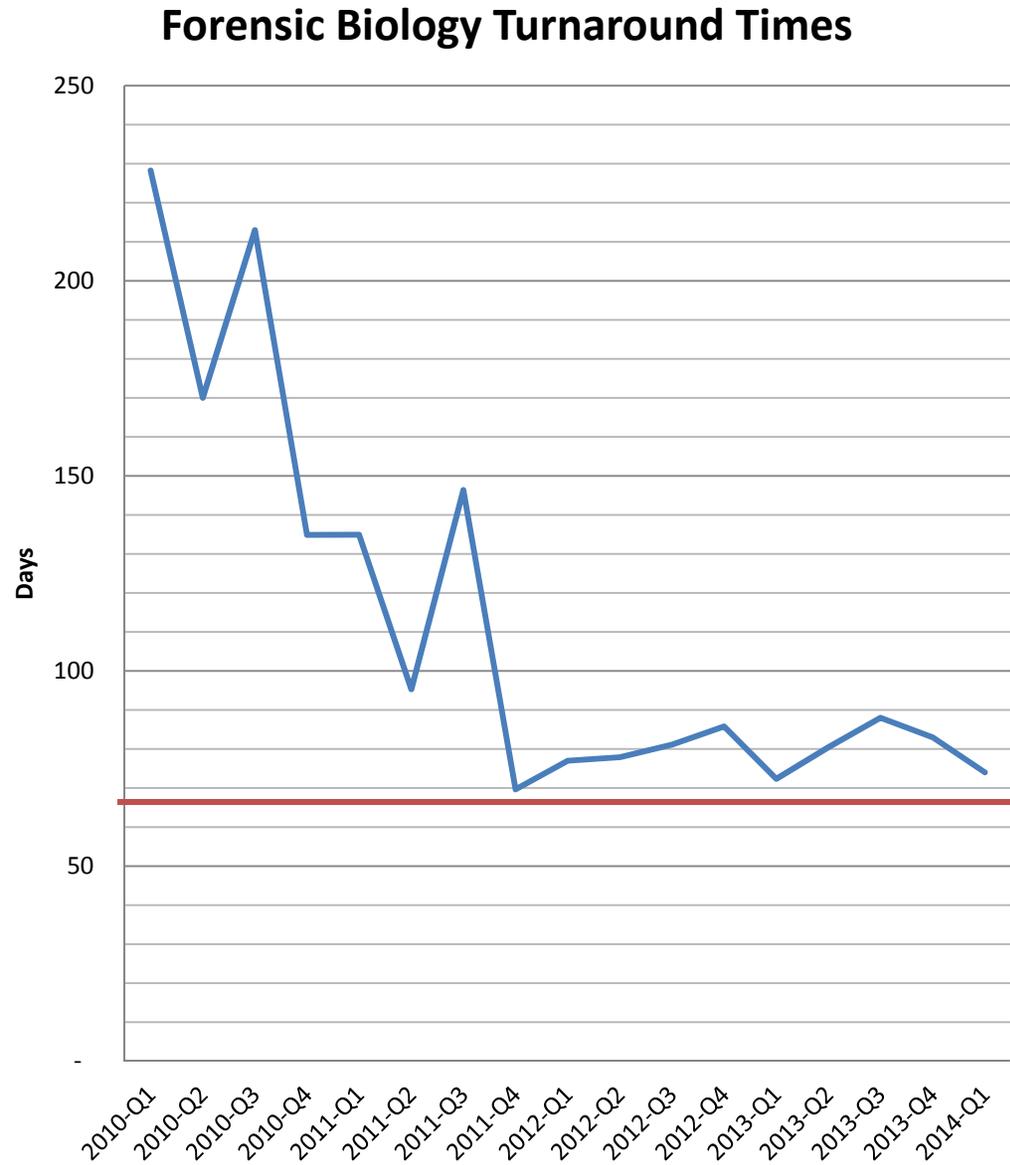
- Two positions requested
 - Scientists complete on average 95 cases per year
 - A minimum of 2.2 additional scientists are required to reduce the current backlog and maintain a case turnaround time of 65 days
- Since FY2011, annual case submissions in this discipline have increased 4%

No additional FTEs

FY15 = \$161,592; FY16 = \$161,592

Forensic Biology

Through efficiencies afforded by new technology and the use of overtime, DFS has made significant progress towards meeting the current average TAT goal of 65 days. However, current staffing levels and technology are not enough to fully meet our TAT goal. Also, the trend of increasing case submissions and new challenges such as complex statistical calculations for mixture interpretations will erode this progress unless additional staff can be funded.



Funding Requests for Positions

Toxicology

- One position requested
 - Scientists complete an average of 526 cases per year
 - A minimum of 0.7 additional scientists are required to reduce the current backlog and maintain a case turnaround time of 60 days
- Since FY2011, annual case submissions in this area have increased 4%

No additional FTEs

FY15 = \$80,796; FY16 = \$ 80,796

Toxicology

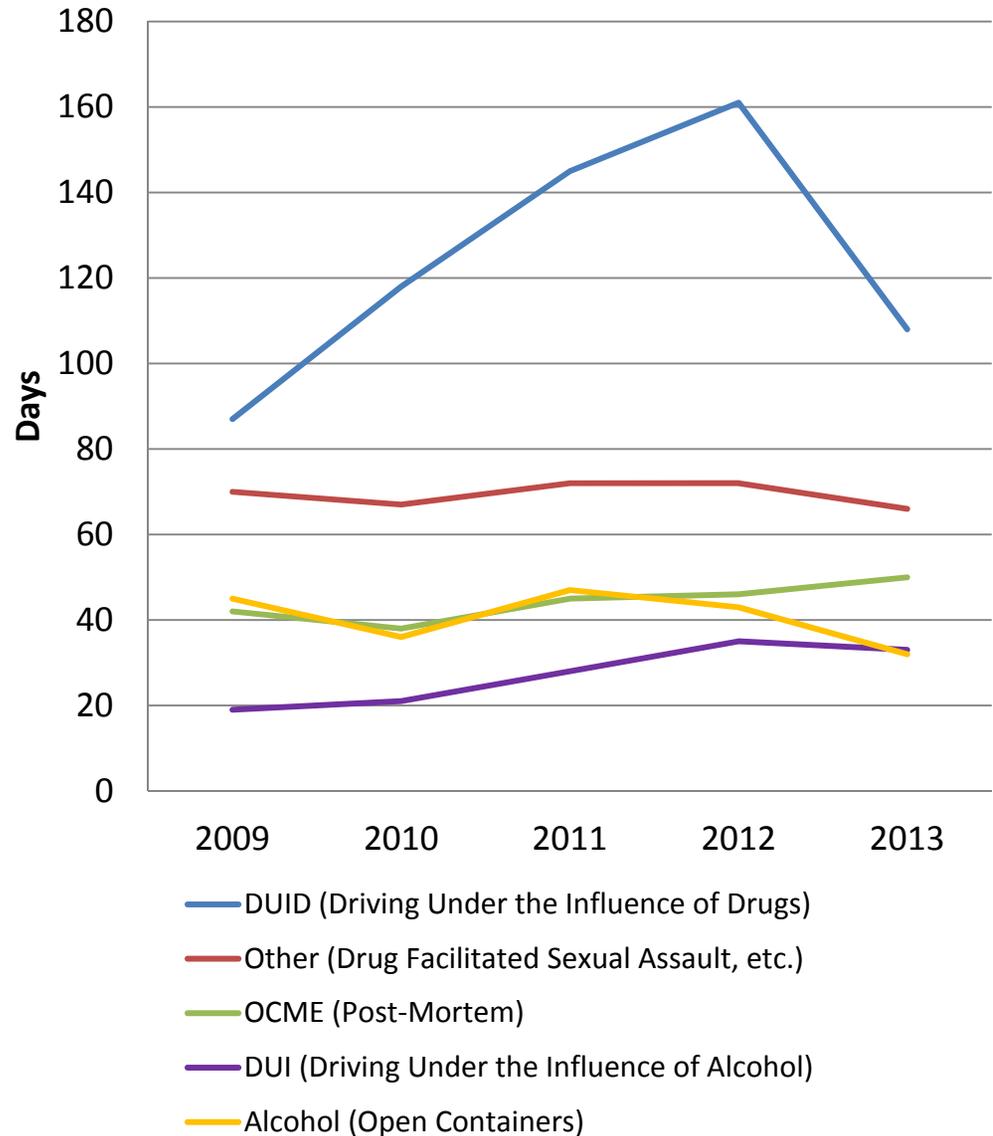
Staffing has been an issue since 2009 when the *Melendez-Diaz* decision increased testimony demands of examiners.

Authorized Positions (including wage)	Fully Qualified Staff	In Training	In Background or Recruit
30.5	20	6	4.5

OCME accreditation requires that 90% of toxicology results are completed within 90 days. DFS is not consistently meeting this requirement.

1/1/13 – 10/31/13	C	N	E	W	Total
Completed <90 days	97%	96%	88%	85%	91%
Completed <60 days	79%	78%	70%	63%	71%

Average TAT for Cases Completed (CY)



Funding Requests for Positions

Trace Evidence

- One position requested
 - Scientists complete an average of 106 cases per year
 - A minimum of 1 additional scientist is required to reduce the current backlog and maintain a case turnaround time of 30 days
- Since FY2011, annual case submissions in this area have increased 0.4% and internal instrument support analyses have increased over 60%

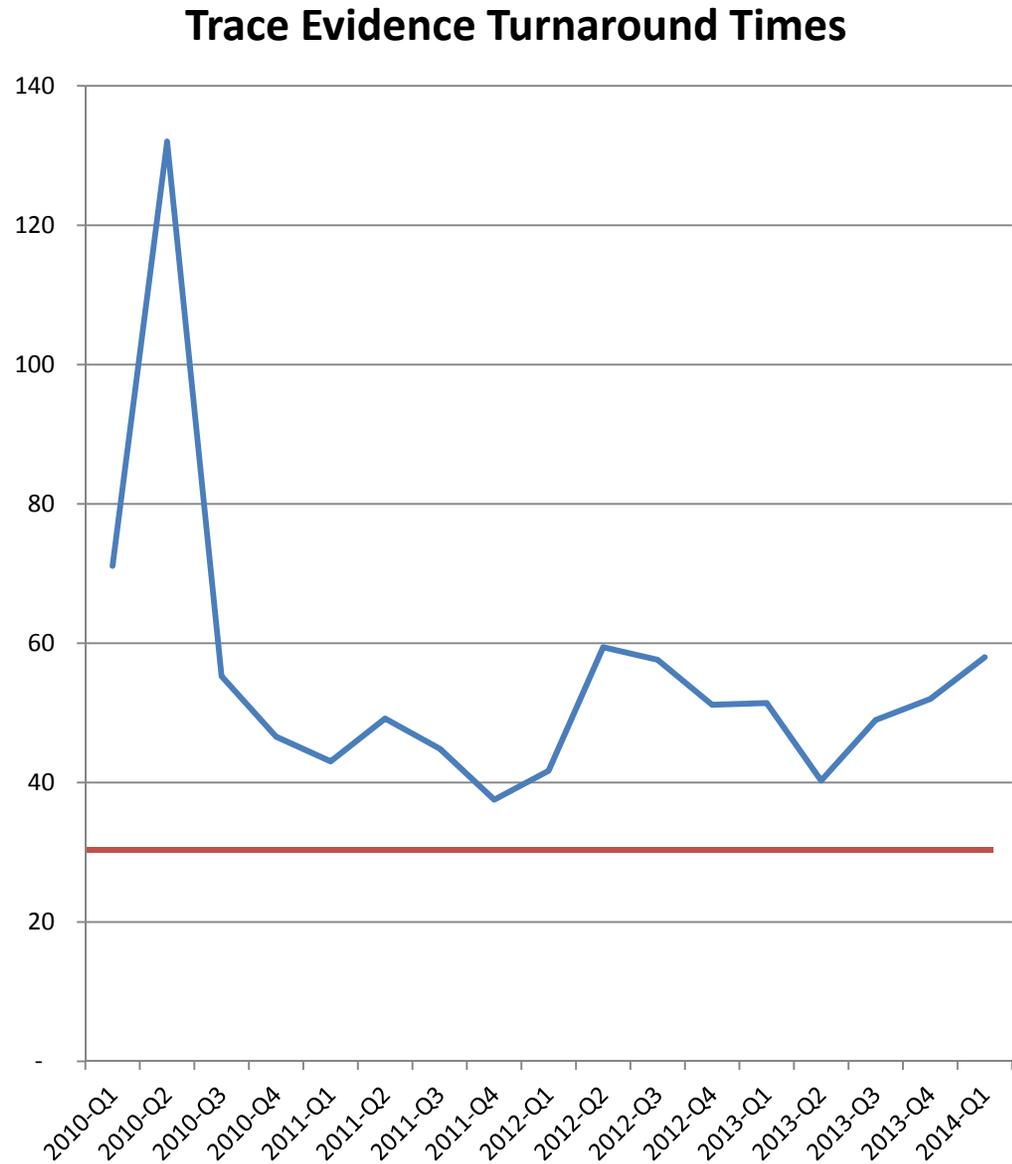
No additional FTEs

FY15 = \$80,796; FY16 = \$ 80,796

Trace Evidence

Trace Evidence identifies the precursor chemicals used in the clandestine manufacture of methamphetamine. These cases increased 70% from CY2012 to CY2013.

This position would be added to the Eastern Laboratory where there is currently only one scientist who must send all cases to another laboratory for review, which increases case turnaround time.



Facilities

Western Lab Expansion / Renovation – Roanoke, VA

- Funds are approved
- Final drawings in production by architect
- Construction manager selected
- Demolition scheduled to begin March 2014
- 24 month project



Facilities

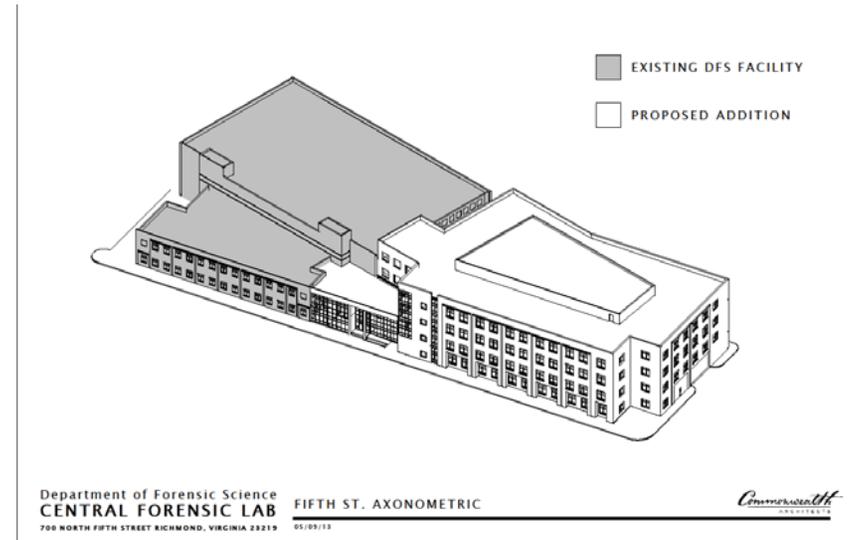
Central Lab Expansion & Renovation – Richmond, VA

- DFS and OCME have shared space in the Biotech 2 facility since 1998. Both agencies have leased space in the adjacent Biotech 8 facility since 2006.
 - DFS staffing in the Richmond location has increased ~50% since becoming a standalone agency in 2005.
 - OCME's current workspace is insufficient to properly house its staff, which has doubled since 1998.
 - OCME's current workspace is inadequate to house both current equipment and newer investigative tools, including the state anatomical program and tissue storage bank.
- Current lease for Biotech 8 expires in 2016 with no prospect of renewal.

Facilities

Central Lab Expansion & Renovation - Richmond, VA

- Submitted capital request to DPB
- Supported by formal Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study
- DFS and OCME - Richmond operations
- Current Space usage = ~150,000 sf
- Projected Need in 2026 = ~280,000 sf



Questions?

