6.2 FINGERPRINT EXPERT QUALIFICATION

This is a burglary prosecution. The case is now on trial. As part of the prosecution's case-in-chief, you intend to call Charles Henderson, a fingerprint expert, who will testify that he made a comparison of a latent fingerprint found at the burglarized premises with the known fingerprints of the defendant. According to Henderson, the latent fingerprint was made by the defendant.

Henderson has previously told you that he graduated from high school ten years ago, attended the local community college for two years, and then joined the local police department, where he was assigned to the crime laboratory. He has been assigned to the fingerprint unit for seven years. During the first three years he was assigned to the classification section (where he classified approximately 50 sets of fingerprints each day so that the fingerprints could be indexed in a master filing system), and thereafter began work in the identification section (where he compares latent fingerprints with known fingerprint cards, approximately 10 to 30 each day). He remains there to this day.

Henderson says he is a member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and has read the major professional literature in the field. He says that his specialty is a "learn-by-doing field, where you learn by working as an apprentice in each section for at least two years under established experts. Only then can you begin doing your work independently."

Henderson says he now trains new personnel at the crime lab as well as lectures on the basics of fingerprint identifications at the crime laboratory. He has two articles (on the iodine vapor method of raising latent fingerprints on papers and documents) published by the American Academy of Forensic Scientists in its quarterly publication. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant one year ago. He has testified for the prosecution in criminal cases about five times per year since being assigned to the identification section.

1. For the prosecution, conduct a direct examination of Charles Henderson, limited to qualifying him as an expert in the appropriate field.
2. For the defense, cross-examine Henderson on his qualifications.