

# STANDARDS AND INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

AES27-1996  
r2007; s2012



## **AES recommended practice for forensic purposes - Managing recorded audio materials intended for examination**

Users of this standard are encouraged to determine if they are using the latest printing incorporating all current amendments and editorial corrections. Information on the latest status, edition, and printing of a standard can be found at:  
<http://www.aes.org/standards>

**AUDIO ENGINEERING SOCIETY, INC.**  
551 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10176, US.

Document preview:  
for full document, go to  
[www.aes.org/publications/standards](http://www.aes.org/publications/standards)



The AES Standards Committee is the organization responsible for the standards program of the Audio Engineering Society. It publishes technical standards, information documents and technical reports. Working groups and task groups with a fully international membership are engaged in writing standards covering fields that include topics of specific relevance to professional audio. Membership of any AES standards working group is open to all individuals who are materially and directly affected by the documents that may be issued under the scope of that working group.

Complete information, including working group scopes and project status is available at <http://www.aes.org/standards>. Enquiries may be addressed to [standards@aes.org](mailto:standards@aes.org)

The AES Standards Committee is supported in part by those listed below who, as Standards Sustainers, make significant financial contribution to its operation.



audio-technica



CLAIR



WEISS



LAWO



This list is current as of 2019/6/30

# AES recommended practice for forensic purposes — Managing recorded audio materials intended for examination

*Published by*

**Audio Engineering Society, Inc.**

Copyright ©1996 by the Audio Engineering Society

## **Abstract**

This document specifies recommended practices for safekeeping, conveyance, inspection, description, and labeling of audio recordings offered as evidence in criminal investigations, in criminal or civil proceedings, or in other forensic applications. It does not cover analysis of magnetic tapes or other recording media for the purposes of authenticity determination, talker identification, copyright violation, enhancement of oral conversations or other signals, or otherwise characterizing signals recorded on such tapes.

An AES standard implies a consensus of those directly and materially affected by its scope and provisions and is intended as a guide to aid the manufacturer, the consumer, and the general public. The existence of an AES standard does not in any respect preclude anyone, whether or not he or she has approved the document, from manufacturing, marketing, purchasing, or using products, processes, or procedures not conforming to the standard. This document is subject to periodic review and users are cautioned to obtain the latest edition.

## Contents

<b>Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Foreword .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Scope.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2 Normative references.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3 Definitions .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4 Preparation of evidence for submission .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5 Evidence management .....</b>	<b>8</b>

Preview only  
www.aes.org/standards

## Foreword

[This foreword is not a part of *AES recommended practice for forensic purposes — Managing recorded audio materials intended for examination*, AES27-1996.]

This document was developed by a writing group of the WG-12 Working Group on Forensic Audio of the Audio Engineering Society Standards Committee. It is the result of a call for comment by the entire AES membership published in the 1994-12 issue of the *Journal of the Audio Engineering Society*. Thus it results from an international consensus and is not intended to reflect the practice of any single nation. As an AES standard, it is an international professional society's statement of technical good practice, but its use is entirely voluntary and it does not have the status of a governmental regulation. Nevertheless, any claim to voluntary compliance with the standard implies acceptance of its mandatory clauses.

In 1991, WG-12 was organized at the request of a community of engineers from the AES, the Acoustical Society of America, various law enforcement agencies, and groups concerned with testimony. The group concerns itself with the handling, authentication, and enhancement of audio recorded materials basing itself on methodologies such as developed from those described in Bolt, Cooper, Flanagan, McKnight, Stockham, and Weiss, *Report on a Technical Investigation Conducted for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia by the Advisory Panel on the White House Tapes. May 31, 1974.*

At its first meeting in New York on 1991-10-05, individuals from industry, private engineering firms, law enforcement agencies, and several manufacturers were in attendance. A scope was defined, as well as subgroups being appointed, including the writing group for this document. Several writing group meetings to discuss this document were held according to AES rules and procedures in addition to the working group meetings at AES Conventions in North America and Europe. The first draft of the document was compiled by M. Chial of the University of Wisconsin from the proceedings of these meetings.

Tom Owen, chairman  
WG-12 Working Group on Forensic Audio  
1995-08

[This page left intentionally blank]

Preview only  
www.aes.org/standards

# AES recommended practice for forensic purposes — Managing recorded audio materials intended for examination

## 1 Scope

This standard specifies recommended practices for safekeeping, conveyance, inspection, description, and labeling of audio recordings offered as evidence in criminal investigations, in criminal or civil proceedings, or in other forensic applications. For the purposes of this document, magnetic tapes include audio recordings and video recordings based upon magnetic transcription principles, regardless of the physical size, packaging, recording format, recording type (such as analog, digital, frequency-modulation), or recording speed of the tapes. Special practices for nonaudio portions of such recordings are beyond the scope of this standard.

This document does not cover analysis of magnetic tapes or other recording media for the purposes of authenticity determination, talker identification, copyright violation, enhancement of oral conversations or other signals, or otherwise characterizing signals recorded on such tapes.

This standard is intended for use by audio engineers, public and private investigation agencies, attorneys, and others who wish to safeguard the integrity of recordings used in forensic applications. The goals of the practices described are

- a) to insure the chain of custody of audio evidence which may be the subject of examination for forensic purposes;
- b) to properly identify such evidence;
- c) to maintain the physical integrity of such evidence;
- d) to document all technical and non-technical actions taken with such evidence.

This standard is intended as a guide based on good engineering practice for handling tape that may be used in evidence. It is not intended to be a document binding on law enforcement agencies. Persons handling evidence tapes should first obtain and follow the rules of the legal jurisdiction or jurisdictions involved. When a jurisdiction provides instructions, those should be followed. Only in the absence of such instructions should the recommendations of this standard be followed with the approval of the jurisdiction.

## 2 Normative references

The following standards contain provisions that, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this document. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this document are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the indicated standards.

1) IEC 94-1, *Magnetic tape sound recording and reproducing systems — Part 1: General conditions and requirements*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Electrotechnical Commission, 1981.