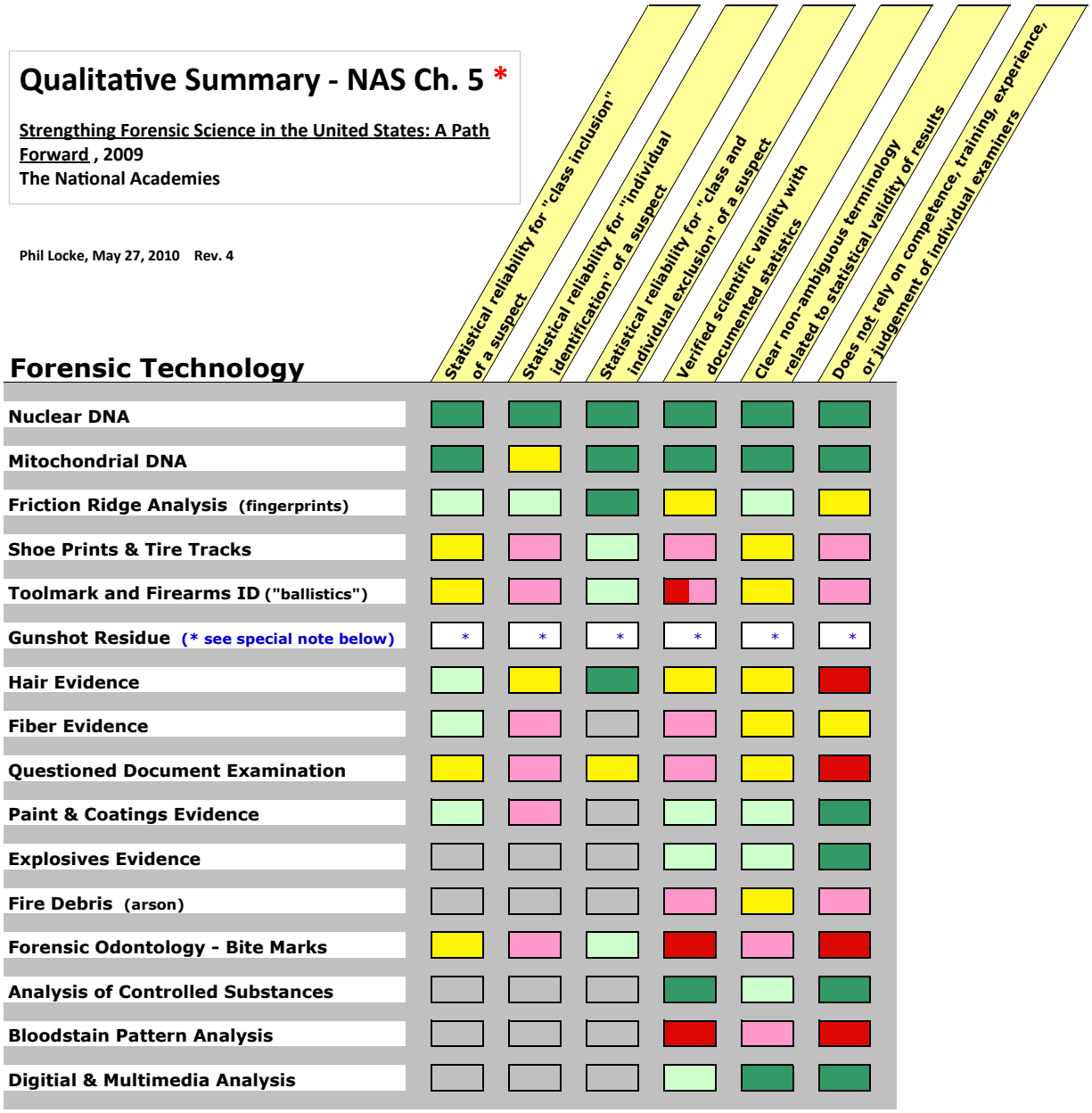
Qualitative Summary - NAS Ch. 5 *

Strengthing Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward , 2009
The National Academies

Phil Locke, May 27, 2010 Rev. 4



*** Gunshot Residue (GSR)**

Current analytical methods employing SEM/ EDS (scanning electron microscope and energy dispersive spectrography) can reliably identify gunshot residue. The samples acquired from suspects should then be compared with samples from known case-specific durable items (weapon, shell casing, victim's clothing, etc.) to confirm the source. Lacking that, the question that cannot be reliably answered is - where did the GSR come from? Issues with sample collection protocols and the likelihood of contamination from law enforcement environments and environmental sources overwhelm all other factors.

- Statistically valid
- Anecdotally accepted - lacks true statistical validation
- Exercise caution and skepticism
- Questionable
- Not good
- Not appropriate for this category

* This summary is my interpretation of NAS Chapter 5. The scores in the table are my judgement based upon my study of the technologies involved and my own scientific, technical, and statistical knowledge and experience.

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