DNA: Steps for Profile Interpretation- Step 2

Step two *Estimate the minimum number of contributors.*

Multiple contributors

The following components of the mixture should be examined to estimate the minimum number of contributors:

- the locus (or loci) that contain the greatest number of alleles
- the presence of peak height ratio imbalance at more than one locus
- possible peaks that fall below the 50 RFU detection threshold
- elevated stutter peaks

If possible, the analyst should assume a specific number of contributors for the mixture or for a component of the mixture. If necessary, the analyst can interpret a profile using more than one assumption about the number of contributors. Any assumptions about the number of contributors should be documented in the notes and stated in the report.

At times, for samples with very little DNA, there may be so much allele dropout that it is difficult to estimate the number of contributors. If the number of contributors cannot be reliably estimated, the profile may be determined to be inconclusive.