

**Sir Roy Cameron QPMBA MPhil
HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary
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**27 Donnini Court,
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26 May 2003-05-25

Dear Sir Roy,

INSPECTION OF THE SCOTTISH CRIMINAL RECORDS OFFICE

Sincere thanks for forwarding a copy of your report.

I was gratified to see **'openness'** highlighted as an outstanding key issue although I suspect it is not related to the issues of openness that I feel are so crucial to the future of ethical and accountable forensic and fingerprint services.

Much good work has been done in the wake of my daughter's case but bluntly there will be no real moving on until the 'errors' made by the Scottish Criminal Records Office are admitted.

The SCRO experts have already been conclusively proved wrong in the Scottish courts, by the independent international experts brought in by your predecessor, by his official report on his 2000 Inspection of SCRO and by the international fingerprint community.

In addition these same experts have been proved wrong in their identification of the related 'Marion Ross' print used to convict David Asbury of murder. His conviction has now been quashed because of 'unreliable fingerprint evidence'.

Two 'errors' in one case still not admitted by SCRO. A fact conveniently forgotten in all previous reports.

The more I have looked into the circumstances surrounding these 'errors' the more I become convinced that criminality and 'cover up' are still the most logical explanations.

Unfortunately it appears as if these matters will not be settled until the ongoing civil action comes to court and many people within the Scottish Justice system are finally forced to speak the 'truth and nothing but the truth'. Much as it hurts to see Shirley have to endure further trauma we are as a family determined to see the court case through if this is required.

At a UK level the picture is becoming more and more complicated as possible miscarriages of justice are being examined in England and two fingerprint appeals are pending.

From my 6 years struggle it is clear that there will be no moving on until the growing number of current controversies throughout the UK are dealt with and ethical practice is adopted nationally.

A number of major players – individuals and organisations including the **Fingerprint Society** and the **Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners** - are caught up in these controversies. Their credibility has been damaged, undermined or is threatened because of their failure or perceived failure to take appropriate remedial action.

A further complication is that internationally the UK system is becoming isolated simply because of its failures to act in an ethical and open way in dealing with errors. (see Internet sites onin.com and clpex.com)

The underlying issues about integrity, openness and accountability are not going to go away no matter how many reports are written, fingerprint experts recruited or improvements implemented.

For real change to take place the cancer deep within the culture of SCRO and some other forensic organisations in the UK must be excised, the guilty punished and a totally new way of maintaining forensic services created.

I do not believe that fingerprinting will ever be universally accepted as a Forensic Science while the Police Service continues to exert such overwhelming influence over the profession.

Time is long overdue for fingerprinting to join the other forensic sciences within the **Forensic Science Service** in England and for Scotland to establish its own Forensic Service independent of the Police control, culture and philosophy.

On a personal level I believe you have the personal skills and the integrity to move matters forward perhaps only the will is required.

Sincerely,

Iain A J McKie