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**7 May 2004**

Dear .....

**CONFIDENCE IN THE SCOTIISH FINGERPRINT SERVICE**

Thank you for your letter of April 2004, which has been brought to my attention after a short period away from the office.

I acknowledge your comments regarding the Scottish Criminal Justice system and would reinforce that it is in the best interests of everyone that public confidence in the integrity and professionalism of the Scottish Police Service is demonstrated in a transparent and open manner. This is perhaps not best achieved by regular correspondence within the columns of newspapers such as The Herald, who would appear to have a less than objective editorial position. Whilst, if appropriate, I will take the opportunity to rebut and refute ill-informed and unsubstantiated allegations, I am constrained by an ongoing civil litigation process.

Both I and the Service look forward to providing a very robust evidential defence of the integrity of the Service during that litigation process and it is right and appropriate that this detailed scrutiny should occur in an independent judicial environment and not within the letters columns of a national newspaper.

**Yours sincerely**

**I Latimer**

**Chief Constable**