

Fingerprint experts in McKie case suspended

The Herald. Glasgow (UK): Aug 4, 2000. pg. 2

Copyright Scottish Media Newspapers, Ltd. Aug 4, 2000

FOUR fingerprint experts involved in the perjury trial of a former Strathclyde Police detective are being suspended on full pay, it emerged last night.

The Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (Acpos) confirmed the Scottish Criminal Records Office (SCRO) workers were being "precautionarily" suspended from duty but said it did not represent disciplinary action.

The move follows an inquiry, launched in February after concerns over disputed fingerprint evidence used in the criminal prosecution of Ms Shirley McKie.

Ms McKie had been assigned to a 1997 murder case in Ayrshire in which David Asbury was jailed for life for killing Ms Marion Ross. Ms McKie was accused of perjury when she denied a thumb print found at the crime scene was hers. At her trial last year, she was cleared by a jury.

In June, a police inspectorate report exonerated Ms McKie and criticised the SCRO Fingerprint Bureau, which was involved in analysing prints in the case, as "not fully effective and efficient".

Earlier this year, the SCRO said its executive committee had decided to invite the Chief Inspector of Constabulary to carry out an independent assessment of the evidence used in the case against Ms McKie.

Ms McKie, who resigned from the police after the trial, welcomed the latest development.

She told BBC Scotland: "I had faith the Acpos investigation would be positive and this is taking a step in the right direction."