

**New claims of a cover-up in the Shirley McKie fingerprint case have emerged at the Court of Session in Edinburgh.**

The former Strathclyde Police officer was cleared of perjury after being wrongly accused of lying about leaving her fingerprints at a murder scene.

Ms McKie is now seeking permission to sue the Scottish Executive for £850,000 damages.

Her lawyers said five experts disagreed with the fingerprint evidence but the difference in opinion was kept hidden.

Fingerprint evidence from the Scottish Criminal Records Office (SCRO) led to the arrest and trial of Ms McKie in 1998.

**Misidentified the print**

Her thumb print was said to have been found at the scene of a murder in Ayrshire, despite her protestations that she had never entered the room.

She was tried at Glasgow High Court in 1999 and was cleared after evidence by two independent American witnesses proved the print did not belong to her.

Ms McKie was outraged by her treatment and launched an action suing the Scottish Executive, which is responsible for the SCRO, for damages.

"This should have been dealt with years and years ago," she said.

"I should have been compensated, the people responsible should have been tried in the court the way I was.

"Quite frankly, they should be in jail for what they've done to me but they're pulling the wool over the public's eyes and they've been allowed to get away with it."

Her lawyers told the court on Thursday that five experts at the SCRO disagreed right from the beginning with colleagues who said that the fingerprint belonged to Ms McKie.

Their concerns were hidden, the lawyers said.

In a document presented to the court, Ms McKie's lawyers said a subsequent investigation into the SCRO recommended the fingerprint experts who misidentified the print should be prosecuted.

However, the lord advocate refused to prosecute them, the lawyers claimed.