

SPSA 'Shambolic'.

These continuing failures to create a reliable management system for our forensic services leads to fears about the quality of the evidence being produced. This is often crucial evidence when our courts are deciding on guilt or innocence.

Less than 6 months after the HMCIC's 2000 finding that the SCRO was no longer 'effective and efficient' the same office stated that the necessary remedial work had been completed and things were back on an even keel.

Thereafter - year after year - successive HMCIC's confirmed this 'fact' and it was only in 2006 following research related to the up and coming parliamentary enquiry that it was revealed that in fact little had changed and staff morale in particular was at rock bottom.

On 21/04/2006 the Scottish Government announced,

'An action plan to develop the Scottish Fingerprint Service and ensure it is benchmarked against the best of the rest of the world was published today. Drawn up by Deputy Chief Constable David Mulhern, interim Chief Executive of the Scottish Police Services Authority, the plan aims to ensure the service adopts the very best practice at all levels - from science and processes through to organisational culture.'

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2006/04/21101601>

The following year the much vaunted launch of the Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA) took place with claims that it would soon be a 'world class' service.

From Eddie Barnes's article it is clear that once again, to the forensic scientists at least, this is far from the case and that in management terms at least it is 'shambolic' and that discontent is at an all-time high.

For years I have been warning that failure to root out those ex-SCRO experts who still adhere to their colleagues two wrong fingerprint identifications and either re-train or remove them would lead to yet further divisions within the service.

In this I have been proved right but now the sickness appears to have spread to the other forensic scientists employed by the SPSA.

I continue to wish the new service well but until the rotten apples are cleared from the barrel and a new culture developed we can look forward to years of discontent and mounting challenge to the forensic evidence being placed before our courts.