

22 October 2005

- Some interesting responses to last week's review of the **Scottish Fingerprint Service** and confirmation that there are those in the service who are far from happy at the way things are progressing. There appears to be a considerable body of opinion that the **SCRO** has had far too much influence on the development of the new service with little real opportunity for the other bureaux in Scotland to contribute. Given the line of succession of the heads within the SCRO over the past few years this should come as little surprise.
- A correspondent this week summed up exactly the major issues facing fingerprinting in the new millennium.

“The main problem facing our future is the length of transition time from a century of practice that was dominated by inked impressions and manual searching into a new century of computerisation and a modified philosophy based upon science rather than dogma. At the roots of what has occurred in Shirley's case is also a reluctance to be accountable and progressive. There needs to be a new international forum with governing powers for the purpose of improving the progress of transition and correcting poor performance.”

Are there too many leaders within the UK who fear accountability and progression and who prefer to keep their own empires intact no matter the harm being done to the profession?

<http://www.shirleymckie.com/documents/FromaUSattorneydebate.pdf>

Could it be that a major element in the problem is the **Police control** of fingerprint experts and is the time long overdue for Scotland's own **Forensic Service** to have these experts as an integral part?

- Preparation is going ahead for February's **Court of Session hearing** with new and important information being revealed each week. It is certainly clear that the issues within SCRO were much deeper than originally thought and that the malaise has spread much further than was initially evident.
- Controversy in Scotland this week when **The Herald's Lucy Adams** revealed concern about the **Scottish Executive's** plans to retain the fingerprints and DNA of persons not ultimately convicted of any crime or offence. It is claimed that a number of leading legal figures fear that any police database, *‘May be unlawful and could lead to inaccurate prosecution.’*

Given the current state of Scottish fingerprinting there is also a fear about what will be done with that information, how it will be used and who will have access to it.

<http://www.shirleymckie.com/documents/TheHerald17.10.05.pdf>

<http://www.shirleymckie.com/documents/DailyMail18.10.05.pdf>

As we said last week none of the above comments should be seen as an attempt to undermine the **integrity and honesty** of the vast majority of experts but to highlight the problems with policy and leadership.

- Thanks as ever for the messages of support for Shirley and visitors can look forward to regular site updates and remember your contributions and comments are always welcome. If you wish any friends or colleagues to receive this weekly update please pass this update onto them or send their e-mail address to: justiceforshirley@btinternet.com