
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 11 February 2013 5:07 PM
To: Cathie Allen
Cc: Greg Shaw; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing

Cathie

I realise how dedicated you and your staff are. Our respective organisations could never have achieved all that we have without a mutual desire to serve the community by solving crime in a timely manner. I am in no doubt that you managed the implementation of this very substantial change in manner that is entirely appropriate. I will look into what is going on with the sample submission and take action from my end as I don't want our practices to impact negatively on you at a time when you need it the least (i.e. during such change).

I have sent information out to the SOC officers today in relation to making sure that the quality of samples that they send is high. We already had a policy in place in relation to touch DNA for property crime which seems to have been left by the way.

When I indicated I would get Inspector Carstensen to monitor the situation, I intended that this would predominantly involve him looking at the type and quantity of samples we submit and how that impacts on turnaround times. I am hoping that he would be in a position to assist you.

Your previous correspondence detailed the significant challenges you are facing with the implementation of PP21. I will make sure that we do our best from our end to assist.

David Neville

Acting Superintendent

Forensic Services Branch

[REDACTED]



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From: Cathie Allen [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: Monday, 11 February 2013 1:22 PM
To: Neville.DavidH[OSC]
Cc: Greg Shaw; Carstensen.AnthonyL[OSC]
Subject: RE: Briefing

Hi David

All DNA Analysis staff are cognisant of turnaround times with respect to their effect on the Queensland Community and the potential for offenders to re-offend. Each member of DNA Analysis is working as efficiently and effectively as they can to process results for the QPS.

Due to the large number of items received in January, I've now had an opportunity to look at the items received in the first part of the year and have noted that a large number of those items appear to be from old cases (ie about half of what was submitted for the year appears in this class). One example is [REDACTED]. Additional item was submitted on 23rd Jan 2012, however all previous items were submitted in June 2012. This case already had a link generated for it (in August 2012). I'm sure you will be able to find more examples from an audit of the Forensic Register.

I am concerned that 'cleaning out property points', submitting items 'for completeness' or 'prior to holidays' has adversely affected the throughput of DNA Analysis. I would appreciate your comments on the items submitted for January and their relevance to ongoing, immediate investigations. From my perspective, it appears that non-relevant items have been submitted, meaning that DNA Analysis resources have been spread across those items as well as relevant items that could provide intelligence to the QPS.

Cheers
Cathie

Cathie Allen BSc MSc (Forensic Science)
Managing Scientist, DNA Analysis,
Forensic and Scientific Services

Health Services Support Agency | Department of Health

PO Box 594
ARCHERFIELD Queensland 4108

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>>> < [REDACTED] 11/02/2013 10:28 am >>>

Cathie

Thankyou for your advice on this issue. I understand that this has been a significant change and that it having an unavoidable impact on laboratory throughput. However, I am cognisant that the turnaround times are growing. It is imperative to police that offenders are identified rapidly so that they are arrested and prevented from creating more victims.

I am very interested to know when you think you will be positioned to provide the same turnaround time as previously enjoyed.

I would ask that you keep in close liaison with Inspector Carstensen so that he is abreast of what is happening. He will be monitoring the situation closely from our end. I will be asking him to report to me on a regular basis on turnaround times.

David Neville

Acting Superintendent

Forensic Services Branch

[REDACTED]



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From: Cathie Allen [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: Friday, 8 February 2013 3:35 PM
To: Neville.DavidH[OSC]
Cc: Greg Shaw
Subject: Briefing

Hi Dave

As discussed during our phone conversation, the following information was provided to Insp Carstensen by Justin Howes regarding our current situation.

- Implementing PP21 and STRmix is the biggest change to forensic biology
- Implementing a new profiling kit hasn't been done since early 1999
- Implementing a new statistical software program for mixture interpretation has never been coupled with a new profiling kit
- Queensland is the only jurisdiction to implement by the ANZPAA deadline of end of Dec 2102
- the mandatory closure of the FSS campus over the Christmas period 2012 meant that in the first week of January 2013, DNA Analysis received almost 1,000 items (which is double our weekly average). DNA Analysis received 2,660 items for January (Jan 2012 figures were 2,954)
- whilst staff have been deemed competent, they are still training in the new processes so will take longer to complete results
- focussed on major crime over volume crime, as the QPS has previously directed DNA Analysis
- as more major crime is finalised than volume crime, smaller numbers of profiles are added to NCIDD and major crime profiles don't generate large number of links (like volume crime profiles do) - this explains the lower numbers of links received in January
- as expected, mixed DNA profiles are more prevalent and need to be processed through STRmix, which takes longer
- the outstanding number of results is not insurmountable and have been allocating resources to this area
- as staff become more familiar with the processes, they will become faster
- lower numbers of items have been submitted for February - which will assist in this situation

I provided you with my opinion / advice on the following:

- provide feedback to SOCOs and Scientific Officers regarding taking samples from common items, given the sensitivity of PP21 (gave the example of an item from a Poker Machine chair - and that the resulting profile looked like a ladder used in our process, indicating a large number of contributors - these types of samples do not provide intelligence to the QPS)

- after a period of time (ie 3 or 6 months), conduct a post implementation review on the types of results obtained from Trace DNA samples so that SOCOs and Scientific Officers can see the trend (as those officers have shown over the past 4 years that they are actively looking at their results and taking appropriate measures to obtain better samples for DNA)

If you have any further queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Cheers
Cathie

Cathie Allen BSc MSc (Forensic Science)
Managing Scientist, DNA Analysis,
Forensic and Scientific Services

Health Services Support Agency | Department of Health

PO Box 594
ARCHERFIELD Queensland 4108



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