

CALIFORNIA CRIME LABORATORY REVIEW TASK FORCE

Minutes: March 5, 2009

**California Department of Justice Jan Bashinski DNA Laboratory
1001 W. Cutting Blvd., Richmond, CA 94804**

Member Present: Dane Gillette (Chair) Barry Fisher (Vice Chair), Dolores Carr, Elizabeth Johnson, Jennifer Friedman, Jennifer Mihalovich, Jim McLaughlin, Arturo Castro, Robert Jarzen, William Thompson, Jeff Rodzen

Staff Present: Mike Chamberlain (DOJ - Staff Counsel)

Members of the Public: Clay Larson (Dept. Public Health); Kevin Davis (CHP), Bill Phillips (DOJ – BFS), Kurtis Smith (DOJ – BFS), Joe Fabini (Santa Clara County DA Crime Lab), Paul Holes (Contra Costa Sheriff's Crime Lab), Mary Gibbons (Oakland PD Crime Lab), Cecilia von Beroldingen, Linton von Beroldingen (DOJ-BFS), Ken Konzak (DOJ-BFS)

Chair Dane Gillette called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m. Chair Gillette welcomed attendees, and thanked the Department of Justice laboratory staff for hosting the meeting and offering tours of the facility.

Department of Justice representative Ken Konzak also welcomed attendees and provided a brief overview of Richmond Laboratory operations.

Minutes

By motion and vote, the minutes from the February 2009 meeting were approved as amended.

Chair's Report

All laboratory director interviews have been completed and reports submitted with the exception of those for the DOJ-Santa Rosa and Eureka and Santa Clara DA labs. DOJ staff will provide Task Force members with a consolidated collection of the interview reports on CD once all final reports are received.

Forensic Science Education

Dr. Cecilia von Beroldingen, the Director of the California Criminalistics Institute (CCI), described CCI's history, mission, instructors, facilities, program areas, course offerings, budget and funding, future goals, and challenges. A copy of her PowerPoint presentation is appended to these Minutes, and incorporated by reference.

Among other topics, Dr. von Beroldingen discussed the potential for increased coordination between U.C. and C.S.U. programs and CCI. Of particular value

between fundamental scientific research and technique validation should be recognized and those subjects addressed separately in the final report.

The report will describe and endorse FEPAC (“Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission”) standards, and provide a history of FEPAC and its effects on forensic science education.

The Task Force debated the concept of a forensic science “finishing school,” and whether such a program would provide pre-hire or on-the-job training. In theory, this training would bridge the gap between undergraduate science studies and employment as a criminalist, and would expedite later in-lab training. The “police academy” concept was noted as a potential model. Members generally agreed that entry-level forensic “academy” training, if offered through CCI, should be available at several locations statewide to reduce travel costs for students. Cooperation with universities could be a key component of this educational system.

Ideally, CCI funding would come from the state or federal government, and not from local laboratory assessments. Lab training budgets are often very lean, and are among the first items to be cut in difficult economic times.

Chair Gillette thanked Bill and Arturo for their diligent efforts.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.