

Statement of Amanda Jane REEVES (née STORER)

I, **Amanda Jane REEVES (née STORER)** of [REDACTED] in the State of Queensland, state:

A. Preparation of Statement

1. I have prepared this statement in the time that has been made available to me. I have not had an opportunity to refer to many emails and other documents that I feel would have assisted me in the preparation of this statement. I am aware of documents of this type that would support much of what I have said in this my statement.
2. Being mindful of the very short timeframes within which the Commission of the Inquiry is working, I have endeavoured to keep my comments confined to the Terms of Reference, only. I am happy to further assist the Commission of Inquiry by elaborating on any points I have made in this my statement, and/or by identifying any relevant documents, emails, etc, or my expert scientific commentary on areas within my expertise.

B. Whistleblower Status

3. Pursuant to Public Interest Disclosure reference #10515, on 13 December 2022, I received formal confirmation of whistleblower status from Jess Wellard, Executive Director of the Office for the Commission of Inquiry. Exhibited hereto at **AJR-01** is the letter from Jess Wellard.
4. The whistleblower status remains current.

C. Conflict Declaration

5. I developed a close personal relationship with Vicki and Shannah Blackburn when I met them through the first Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland (**Sofronoff Inquiry**).

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6. I have taken great care to maintain appropriate boundaries with respect to my personal dealings and professional obligations and have formally registered this potential conflict with my employer.
7. I worked with Kirsty Wright from 2003-2007. Kirsty and I were professional acquaintances during this time; [REDACTED]

D. Qualifications and Experience

8. I hold the following formal qualifications:
- a. Bachelor of Science (microbiology/immunology) from the University of Queensland (1997)
 - b. Master of Science (forensic biology) from Griffith University (2001)
 - c. Diploma of Management from TAFE Queensland (2015)
 - d. Graduate Certificate in Policy Analysis from Griffith University (2022)
9. I worked in Forensic DNA Analysis (Queensland Health) for almost 15 years, from 15 December 2003 – 29 March 2018 and held positions as a sampling forensic scientist (2003-approx 2004/5), reporting forensic scientist (approx. 2004/5) and senior/supervising reporting forensic scientist (approx. 2006-2018).
10. I have maintained continuity of employment with Queensland Health from 2003 to current. Exhibited hereto at **AJR-02** is my Curriculum Vitae as at June 2023.

E. Employment History

11. I am currently employed as Executive Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer of Forensic Science Queensland (**FSQ**), Professor Linzi Wilson-Wilde OAM (**Prof W-W**). FSQ is temporarily nested in Queensland Health (**QH**) while the legislation

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establishing FSQ as a statutory agency nested within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General is being prepared.

12. In my capacity as the Executive Advisor, I have the responsibility together with one other person (Ms Hannah Jarman) to advise the CEO (Prof W-W) on the initiatives that are being undertaken to implement the Recommendations of the Sofronoff Inquiry (**Recommendations**) as well as to advise Prof W-W in relation to related scientific matters. In order to properly advise Prof W-W, I am required, together with Hannah Jarman, to be across all areas of the projects and programs in the laboratory and to be in regular discussion with the project teams and higher management. Exhibited at **AJR-03** is my current Role Description.¹

F. Comment on public statements about Project 13 (Term of Reference 8(a))

13. I note Term of Reference 8(a) of this Commission of Inquiry's Terms of Reference which requires a review of recent public statements and other documents in relation to Project 13. I have followed the public debate and media in relation to the forensic lab with great interest. I now make the following comments and observations in relation to some of the public statements that have been made about the forensic centre and the post-Sofronoff response to Project 13. I have endeavoured to confine my comments to those public media statements that I feel warrant some comment. I do so below under a series of sub-headings:

14. Article: "The catastrophe called Project 13", *Weekend Australian*, 9 September 2023

- a. **Statement:** *"About 100,000 crime scene samples would have been processed using variations of the automated method, which saved the lab time and was*

¹ Specifically, my Role Description provides that one of my key responsibilities is to "Collaborate with other scientific line managers and teams to ensure the role and operations of the Office of the CEP are strategically integrated with those of the FSQ to achieve its service delivery goals and to lead the developed of service improvement initiatives to ensure the provision of quality scientific services to clients and stakeholders."



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implemented in a period of intense pressure from the courts, government, media and public to deal with testing delays and backlogs, Dr Wright said."

b. My response/comment:

- i. I don't know the basis of the calculation of the "about 100,000 crime scene samples". I agree with Dr Wright's assessment of the prevailing conditions.

- ii. Forensic Biology/DNA Analysis in Queensland has long had a turbulent history. Certainly, in the time since I commenced, the transition in management in 2004 from Chief Scientist Leo Freney to Vanessa Ientile was, in my view, a significant turning point for the lab. Leo Freney was an expert reporting scientist with very substantial experience in Court matters and a deep understanding of the Court's requirements and expectations regarding forensic evidence. Although a qualified scientist, Vanessa did not come from a similar reporting background, and the need for the laboratory to provide a proper service for the requirements of the justice system became less emphasised, in favour of a greater focus on throughput and cost. This, in my view, directly led to a number of resignations by very senior reporting scientists, including those of Deanna Belzer and Kris Bentley.

- iii. In late February 2005, Opportunities for Quality Improvement (OQI) 11401 (the 'Belzer report'), was leaked to Hedley Thomas of the *Courier Mail*. Around the time of the leaking of the Belzer report, Kris Bentley's resignation letter was also leaked to Mr Thomas.

- iv. The central concerns of those who resigned, and many of the reporting scientists who remained, related to allegations of poor/inadequate new instrument validations; inadequate staff training; massive 'blowouts' in the turnaround times for major crime cases ('backlogs'); quality

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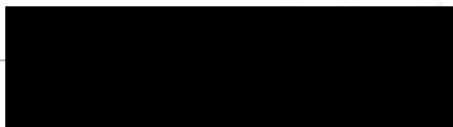
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assurance concerns; and “a highly political climate of disharmony and divisiveness”.² Further, Ms Bentley described “panic management”, and “scientific prowess being downgraded in favour of management skills”. My own recollection of the cultural environment in the lab at this time (2005) accords with what Ms Bentley had described in her resignation letter. Exhibited hereto and marked **AJR-04** is a copy of the article from which the above quotes have been taken.

- v. The intense media coverage around this time created a sense of political pressure, and the then-Health Minister Gordon Nuttall ordered a Ministerial Review (**Taskforce Report**).³ The Taskforce Report was subsequently reviewed by Peter Forster ('the Forster review'), who made further recommendations.
- vi. Taskforce Report Recommendation 1 (of 65) proposed the QHSS be removed from Pathology and Scientific Services, and be established as its own Institute within Queensland Health. Notwithstanding that recommendation, the Director-General retained the existing governance structure.
- vii. In August 2005, the incumbent Executive had already commenced implementing the Forensic Biology Enhancement Project (**FBEP**) with consultant Raymond den Otter.
- viii. On 11 October 2005 Health Minister Stephen Robertson released a media statement announcing \$6.3M across 2005-6 to implement reforms, together with \$2.4M in recurrent funding. Key reforms were listed. These included (but were not limited to) the following:

²Article: Fresh Swipe at DNA labs by Hedley Thomas and Renee Viellaris, Indymedia 7 March 2005.

³ Refer Ministerial Taskforce Report [October 2005] and Actions from Review of QHSS, 2005.



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1. appoint a new Director to take charge of the reforms and to prepare for scientific services to be separated from pathology services as soon as practical. Mr Greg Shaw, from South-West Pathology (NSW), was recruited into this position. Mr Shaw did not implement the recommendation to separate QHSS from Pathology and Scientific Services and to establish QHSS as its own Institute within Queensland Health;
2. maintain the current governance structure within Queensland Health;
3. identifying ways to make DNA profiling processes more efficient within an on-going business enhancement project (BEP); and
4. *“eliminate the backlog of DNA and crime scene sampling”*.

c. In December 2005, a Forensic Initiatives document was created by Vanessa Ientile. According to it, one of the business initiatives was to *“manage the reduction in backlog in forensic sciences”*. The ‘measure’ for this particular business initiative was expressed as *“robotics installed by Dec 2005, commissioned and validated by June 2006”*. However, the automated DNA IQ extraction process was still not implemented as late as October 2007. Given that I was aware of the requirement for 6-monthly reporting of the progress of the BEP to Cabinet, this was something of a “pressure point” for the lab, as it was obvious that the DNA IQ extraction process was well behind its target date.

d. Following the leaks to the *Courier Mail* of Ms Bentley’s resignation letter and the Belzer Report, disharmony among some of the professional staff in the laboratory intensified. The relationship between the senior executive and some

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reporting scientists was becoming decidedly antagonistic. For example, I was present at staff meetings in which Executives made threats, maligned staff in the open meeting, and described some recently departed staff as 'disgruntled'.

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- e. I also recall that the senior Executives commenced targeted audits of the OQI management system during the intense media coverage in an effort to identify the leaker. Around this time I recall feeling very threatened, and even took the precaution of hiring a lawyer to assist me to deal with these workplace issues, given that I was, by this stage very concerned, given the tone of the workplace, that I may be accused of being the source of the leaks. The accusatory and combative approach by management to staff having raised concerns regarding the impact of the changes on the quality of the output of the laboratory, coupled with the perception that there was no support to be found from senior executives, really created an environment of fear amongst the staff in the laboratory. It is fair to say that management were aware that there were ongoing morale problems in the lab, and some team bonding and culture exercises were instigated at the time in attempt to deal with these issues. However, these responses were insufficient to address the root issues, as the concerns that had been expressed by staff continued, without resolution. In my view, there was a pervasive culture of control within the laboratory at the time and it became exceedingly difficult for professional scientists to raise important issues going to the quality or efficacy of the work being performed within the lab. This was hardly conducive to the necessary collaborative, collegiate environment that underpins effective scientific inquiry and practice.

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- h. **Statement:** *"The new boss of the lab, Professor Linzi Wilson-Wilde, agreed with Dr Wright's main contention about Project 13, its catastrophic yield failure and the deeply misleading summary in the report that backed the automated method. "The entire project wasn't scientifically valid," Professor Wilson-Wilde said. "There is a significant potential and a real-world outcome that introducing a method with such a significant difference in the yield of DNA that it would have had an impact on the ability to identify and retrieve DNA from crime scene samples.""*

- i. **My response/comment:** I agree that Project 13 was deeply flawed.

- j. **Statement:** *"Dr Wright said that in 2012-13, it was recovering four times less DNA than another extraction method used in the lab. ""So we know that it was still failing in 2013,"" she said."*

⁴ Expert Report of Dr Bruce Budowle, 15 September 2023, [12]. The final elution volume of 100 microliters was the extreme high-end of the manufacturer's recommended range. Varying the final elution range was not explored in Project 13.

⁵ Expert report of Dr Bruce Budowle and Johanna Veth, 23 November 2022, [3].



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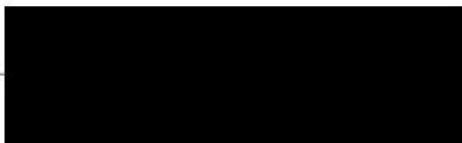
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k. **My response/comment:**

i. It is now a matter of record that Project 13 was failing in 2013. In my professional view, there was not enough time during the Sofronoff Inquiry to thoroughly review material relating to this claim. I think that this was recognised by Commissioner Sofronoff, and I expect that it is the reason why Recommendation 105 was framed in the manner that it was. In other words, these issues were flagged for further investigation in the future.

ii. Recommendation 105 cannot be actioned in a vacuum. Given the recent past history of the laboratory and the significant and transformational changes that are being actioned in the aftermath of the Sofronoff Inquiry, there are a number of antecedent matters that need to be addressed, before Recommendation 105 can be pursued. For example, the laboratory is still in the midst of recruiting and embedding appropriately qualified staff, and is still in the process of setting up processes and procedures to ensure that the lab is a world-class institution and will not drift from its purpose, as happened previously. It is still less than one year since the handing down of the Sofronoff report. Nearly two decades of mismanagement now need to be addressed by the new CEO. Very considerable progress has already been made, however, it is a mammoth task, and there is still a great deal more to do.

1. **Statement:** *"She [Kirsty Wright] was astounded to find scientists involved in the project decided to change critical settings that the manufacturer recommended for the method to work. "They didn't only change those settings a little bit, they drastically changed two or three key settings, and I believe that's the reason why this method was failing," she said."*



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m. **My response/comment:**

i. I agree with Dr Wright that critical settings were changed. However, I agree with Prof W-W's observation that changing the manufacturer's protocol is not, in and of itself a problem, and is within the bounds of accepted practice. However, if changes are made to manufacturer's protocols, these should be properly and incrementally validated.

n. **Statement:** *"Mr Sofronoff KC found that under managing scientist Cathie Allen's leadership in the lab prioritised speed of testing, to the detriment of victims of crime who were denied crucial evidence. The automated method was introduced before Ms Allen- who was suspended and then sacked in May- became managing scientist in July 2008. Previous managing scientist Vanessa Ientile, who is listed as one of the Project 13 report's authors, this week declined to comment."*

o. **My response/comments:** The prioritisation of speed and cost at the expense of quality was a phenomenon that was not confined solely to the period of Cathie Allen's stewardship. This problem pre-dated Cathie Allen, and was also a problem during Vanessa Ientile's period of leadership.

p. **Statement:** *"I don't believe the automated method and the manual method for Project 13 were comparable," Professor Wilson-Wilde said. "The abstract was clearly contradictory to the body and the results of the project. Why that's the case, I do not know. "I believe that project was flawed from the beginning. The report was insufficient and not fit for purpose to implement that method in its entirety. "A change of that magnitude should have required a full validation, a full, in-depth project to study all aspects of the method to identify limitations, to optimise it thoroughly."*

q. **My Response/Comment:** I have read both of Prof W-W's reports to the Sofronoff Inquiry. I agree with all of the comments made therein by Prof W-



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W, and I also agree with the media comments excerpted above. However, I do consider that Prof W-W's reports to the Commission of Inquiry did adequately identify and raise these concerns, particularly in the context of the timeframes and circumstances applicable during the Sofronoff Inquiry. I further note that these issues were also addressed by Dr Bruce Budowle in his report dated 15 September 2022 stating that the final extraction volume "*needs to be urgently revisited by QHFSS*".⁶

15. Article: "DNA lab staff 'raised concerns' about flawed method" – *The Australian*, 19 September 2023

- a. **Statement:** *"An explanation for the lab's actions might lie in a ministerial taskforce report from October 2005, unearthed by The Australian, which recommended crucial validation of new robotic equipment be rushed through to save time. The Taskforce was formed to look into serious concerns being aired in courts and the media over delays and backlogs in testing crime-scene samples."*

- b. **My response/comment:** The statement expressed above accords with my views regarding the source of the problem. I provided a range of information to the Sofronoff Inquiry at the pre-hearing stage, which included information about this issue from the relevant time about the perception from many staff that validations were rushed and poorly executive. As at the time of preparing this my statement, I do not have a copy of the Quantifiler document prepared by me during the relevant period. However, I can obtain this document if required.

⁶ Expert Report of Dr Bruce Budowle, 15 September 2023, [12].



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16. Article: Queensland DNA lab’s new chief faces tough questions – The Australian, 5 October 2023

- a. **Statement:** *"Forensic biologist Kirsty Wright discovered the Project 13 report and its misleading summary after the end of the inquiry and has expressed alarm at the Wilson-Wilde expert report."*

- b. **My response/comment:** I agree that the summary of Project 13 does not reflect the body of the report. However, Prof W-W did raise the flawed Project 13 report in her expert report to the Sofronoff Inquiry.⁷

17. Article: "DNA lab chief Linzi Wilson-Wilde in the spotlight over what she left out of report" – The Australian, 19 September 2023

- a. **Statement:** *"This is research Wright has conducted since retired Judge Walter Sofronoff's inquiry ended, and which escaped the attention of the inquiry."*

- b. **My response/comment:** That is factually incorrect. Prof W-W’s report to the Sofronoff Inquiry identified the issues with Project 13, as did Dr Budowle’s report of 15 September 2022 and also the Dr Budowle/Ms Veth report dated 23 November 2022.

- c. **Statement:** *"It's a blow for Wilson-Wilde because the highly regarded new chief of the lab was engaged last year as an expert by Sofronoff's landmark forensics inquiry to examine the initial use of the automated DNA extraction method, and failed in her report to detail serious problems she now says she was aware of."*

⁷ Expert Report of Dr Linzi Wilson-Wilde, 20 October 2022, [31]-[32].



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- d. **My response/comment:** See my comment in paragraph 17.b.
- e. **Statement:** *“Wright says it's the key flaw that may explain why Blackburn's killer was never identified, and that it's crucial knowledge for solving many other crimes.”*
- f. **My response/comment:** This key flaw is identified with clarity at point 3 of the executive summary of the Dr Budowle/Ms Veth report to the Sofronoff Inquiry dated 23 November 2022. The Final Report of the Sofronoff Inquiry notes that Dr Budowle and Ms Veth, during their review of the relevant documentation, requested further data from 2012-2013 *“to assess whether what was observed in the Blackburn case samples was reflected over a longer period.”*⁸ I further note that Recommendation 105 in the Sofronoff Report states *“The laboratory should conduct a retrospective review of positive control extraction batches processed by the MultiProbe® II instrument to determine if this extraction method was performing sub-optimally, and if so, the period of time in which a sub-optimal method was used and whether there is utility in retesting or re-analysing any potentially affected samples”.*⁹
- g. **Statement:** *“Trials of the new method in a misleading verification report examined by Wilson-Wilde had found it was recovering up to 92 per cent less DNA than a manual method, but it was still introduced because of speed efficiencies. By not including in her report this catastrophic issue, Wilson-Wilde did not raise what Wright says is the most alarming part of the whole lab debacle and the root cause of the failures in the Blackburn investigation.”*
- h. **My response/comment:** See my comment in paragraph 17.b.

⁸ Expert report of Dr Bruce Budowle and Johanna Veth, 23 November 2022, [41].

⁹ Sofronoff Inquiry Report, 13 December 2022, page 365.



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- i. **Statement:** *"Wright is on the record as being fully supportive of Wilson-Wilde when she was appointed but now regretfully holds serious reservations. "I was just delighted. I just felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders," Wright recalls of Wilson-Wilde's recruitment. "And it really does upset me to say this; seeing her failure to disclose this really important information, I now have serious concerns. It raises some extremely serious questions."*

- j. **My response/comment:** See my comment in paragraph 17.b. Since the Sofronoff Inquiry, these issues are being progressively identified and logged as part of a comprehensive response to the problem.

- k. **Statement:** *The late discovery of the problems with the extraction method offered an explanation, but the inquiry was on a tight deadline and time had run out. Sofronoff at that point already had all he needed from other shocking issues to detonate the lab and start afresh. In his 500-page report, he recommended the lab find out how long the extraction method was performing sub-optimally, and if there could be retesting.*

- l. **My response/comments:** See my comment in paragraph 17.f

- m. **Statement:** *"There was no mention in Wilson-Wilde's report to the inquiry that the Project 13 report had a plainly false abstract, or executive summary, that appeared designed to mislead anyone reading it."*

- n. **Statement:** *"But in her actual report, she does not address the critical yield issue or the false claims in the abstract that she is now calling out. Her report, with its milder observations that verification was insufficient and not consistent with expected good practice, sank almost without trace at the inquiry."*

- o. **My response/comment:** See my comment in paragraph 17.b.

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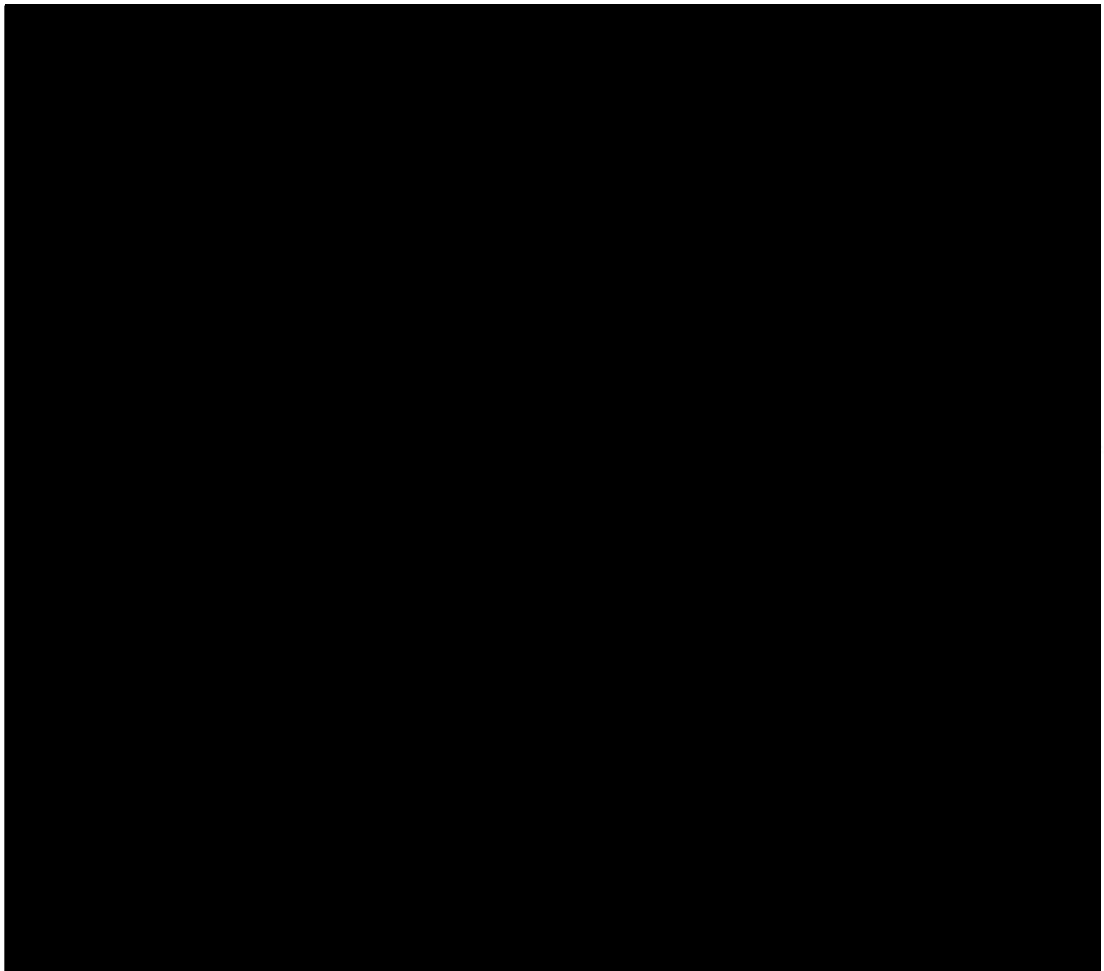
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18. Article: "DNA scientist Kirsty Wright excluded from interim Queensland advisory board" – The Australian, 5 October 2023

a. **Statement:** *Dr Wright said she was "shocked and confused" at the inquiry's recommendation that the board include two or three eminent forensic scientists "from jurisdictions other than Queensland".*

b. **My response/comment:** I can well-understand the reasons for this recommendation. My interpretation of this is that it was to provide a level of confidence for scientists working in the lab that there were independent experts available to them for consultation, if required. As an internal whistleblower, I certainly appreciated this recommendation.

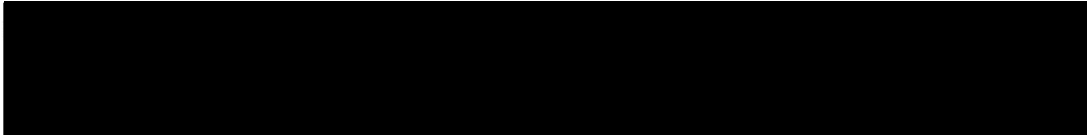


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19. Article: "Qld DNA lab rebuild continues with \$100m committed, 30 scientists recruited" – The Daily Telegraph, 18 September 2023

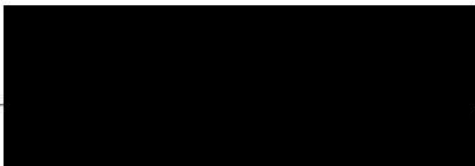
- a. **Statement:** *"The first progress report to track the transformation of the embattled lab in the aftermath of a commission of inquiry reveals more than 70 per cent of the recommendations are either completed or under way."*
- b. **My response/comment:** See my comments in 14.k.i - 14.k.ii.

20. Article: Evidence pall over DNA lab's new chief - The Australian, 25 September 2023

- a. **Statement:** *"Dr Budowle was asked to look at something entirely different and as a result was not given the Project 13 report by the inquiry. But Professor Wilson-Wilde was provided with the Project 13 report and was asked to respond to direct questions about the reliability of the DNA samples relating to Project 13."*
- b. **My response/comment:** I do not agree with this assertion. Dr Budowle had to look at the ‘appropriateness of not concentrating low *quantity* DNA samples’ in order to provide his expert evidence and, as such, identified by means of an alternate avenue, one of the key shortcomings of Project 13 for the Sofronoff Inquiry. Having considered the evidence of Prof W-W, I consider that she also identified and raised the inadequacies of Project 13.

G. Leadership of Professor Linzi Wilson-Wilde OAM

21. As a long-term employee of QH, and repeat whistleblower, my position is that:



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- a. Prior to my return to FSQ in February 2023, I had never met nor worked with Prof W-W.
 - a. I have confidence in the direction that Prof Wilson-Wilde is taking the laboratory.
 - b. My current assessment is that the new governance framework and revitalised leadership team is more than adequate to allow for the Recommendations and any other associated matters to be implemented and for historical casework to be addressed.
22. In my professional opinion, the recent criticisms levelled at Prof Wilson-Wilde by *The Australian* regarding her report¹⁰ with respect to Project 13, along with accusations of unprofessional conduct and undue influence with respect to the Interim Advisory Board such that whistleblowers are unable to access the members of the advisory board, are ill-informed criticisms.

H. Implementation of Recommendations in the Sofronoff Report (Term of Reference 8(b))

23. It is my experience from working closely with Prof Wilson-Wilde that when the lab identifies any scientific quality issues with its processes or methodology, a proactive and measured approach is taken towards achieving an appropriate resolution.
24. If a situation were ever to arise where issues were identified and there was no apparent intention by the lab to address or investigate these issues, I would, as I have always done in the past, escalate my concerns via the proper channels.
25. I am aware as a result of an update received on 16 October 2023 from the Implementation Manager, Rhiannon Hunter, that once the quality positions have been

¹⁰ Expert Report of Dr Linzi Wilson-Wilde, 20 October 2022.

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filled (addressed in Recommendation 48)¹¹, Recommendation 105 is to be the first project undertaken by the Quality Coordinator-Biology. As at 12 September 2023, the onboarding of the quality team was moved to ‘in progress’, and included links to Project 13 and continual review of historically affected casework in accordance with Recommendation 105.

26. In my opinions, the cultural and leadership problems in the lab that enabled Project 13 to become a problem are no longer present in the lab today.

1. Project 13 and Associated Issues

27. In my professional view, there are two factors that resulted in the poor-quality implementation of the DNA IQ automation process (i.e. Project 13). These are:

- a. the governance and management framework in the lab at the time; and
- b. the consequential cultural norms and practices in the lab.

28. In my view, the source of the problems associated with the implementation of the automation extraction platforms was that these robotic platforms were purchased in advance of any proper consideration/assessment¹² of the accompanying extraction chemistry package.

¹¹ “Queensland Health should establish a *Quality Lead* role within each of the laboratory teams who should:
a. have the primary focus of their role on the quality of the team;
b. continue to perform, and remain sufficiently connected to, casework to maintain contemporary knowledge;
c. support the team to align practice to policy to ensure quality;
d. be connected to the *Quality Manager* and escalate matters if required; and
e. provide mentorship to junior staff on quality issues and promote an attitude among staff that treats the integrity of the work and the results of that work as paramount.” Sofronoff Inquiry Final Report, 13 December 2022, page 128.

¹² This assessment was Project 9.



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Signed by

Amana Jane Reeves

at Brisbane

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27 October 2023

BEFORE ME:

Caitlyn Alyce Wessels

Lawyer
Macpherson Kelley

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[signature of witness]

27 October 2023

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AJR-02	Curriculum Vitae of Amanda Reeves as at June 2023	5-11
AJR-03	Role Description – Executive Advisor, Forensic Advisor	12-17
AJR-04	Article: Fresh Swipe at DNA labs by Hedley Thomas and Renee Viellaris, Indymedia 7 March 2005	18-25

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13 December 2022

Amanda Reeves

By email: [REDACTED]

Dear Amanda,

Thank you for providing information and assistance to the Commission of Inquiry into forensic DNA testing in Queensland (the Commission).

As the Commission draws to a close, there are some matters which require me to write to you formally to advise of next steps.

In your communications with the Commission, you raised a number of concerns which included the following actions by Ms Cathie Allen, Mr Justin Howes and other members of the FSS management team:

- Making, ignoring or unreasonably failing to identify serious flaws in scientific process, including in the validation of equipment and application of operational guidelines, or failures to conduct validations or amend operational guidelines where the need to do so was reasonably apparent to a competent forensic scientist or manager.
- Applying arbitrary, incorrect or misleading thresholds to limit or cease DNA testing and analysis (the 2018 Options paper);
- Ignoring clearly incorrect outcomes of forensic tests or contamination events and failing to establish and rectify the extent of issues including where re-testing was reasonably required;
- Enabling, encouraging and requiring the untrue reporting of forensic outcomes to the QPS and to the Courts in witness statements;
- Significant bullying, including bullying over a sustained period that was particularly focused on officers who made complaints or raised the above concerns;
- Malicious and discriminatory action being taken you following you raising scientific issues.

While you have also raised other issues with the Commission, these are the issues that I consider to be the most serious.

At the time that these allegations were brought to the Commission, it was not initially clear to me whether the conduct as described would meet the requirement in s15(1)(c) of the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* (CC Act). However, given the evidence that has been heard through public hearings of the Commission, I now hold a reasonable suspicion that the above allegations meet this definition and am required to refer these allegations to the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC).

I have also decided that this information you have provided to the Commission meets the definition of a public interest disclosure under s13(1)(a)(i) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010* (PID Act).

Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland

Ph 07 3003 9722 | enquiries@dnainquiry.qld.gov.au | PO Box 12028, George St Qld 4003 | www.dnainquiry.qld.gov.au

What happens next

The determination of whether these allegations constitute corrupt conduct by any public officer will now be made by the CCC. This is because, although Commissioner Sofronoff made adverse findings about Ms Allen, he was not applying the specific test for corrupt conduct that the CCC will apply. He also chose not to make adverse findings against others, partly for this reason.

The CCC has informed me that it intends to investigate the allegations further, and the Commission has provided the CCC with the documents in the Commission's possession which may assist such an investigation. Please rest assured that, where this includes any documents or information you have provided the Commission, the CCC has been informed of the need to treat this information sensitively.

The CCC may reach out to you if further information is needed in the course of its investigation. You can seek help and advice from within Queensland Health, including from the Ethical Standards Unit and the Legal Unit, should you wish to have any support in engaging with this process. You can also seek advice from the CCC.

How your PID will be managed

As the Commissioner's terms of reference expire on 13 December 2022, I need to determine how best to manage your PID. Your PID effectively remains live while the CCC investigation into possible corrupt conduct remains ongoing.

Under s31 of the PID Act, I can refer a PID to another agency if the disclosure is about that agency or its officers, and where there is not an unacceptable risk of reprisal due to the referral.

As your PID relates to the conduct of FSS officers, I am satisfied that QH is the appropriate agency to manage your PID. While the CCC will be actually investigating the allegations, the PID management normally sits with the employer agency who are best placed to protect against reprisal.

In forming the view that your PID can best be managed by QH, I have taken into account the concerns you and others have raised throughout the Commission process about reprisal, and the evidence you have provided in support of these concerns. I am satisfied at this stage that there is not an unacceptable risk of reprisal from referring the management of your PID to QH, largely because you are not currently working for QH.

However, ESU will be responsible for an ongoing assessment of the risk of reprisal to you, and for taking reasonable steps to mitigate this risk.

Although ESU will write to you directly about this matter, in the interim I can confirm you can make direct contact with Mr Ashley Macfarlane, Principal Complaints Officer

Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland

Ph 07 3003 9722 | enquiries@dnainquiry.qld.gov.au | PO Box 12028, George St Qld 4003 | www.dnainquiry.qld.gov.au

on telephone [REDACTED] or Ms Jess Byrne, Director ESU on [REDACTED]. The ESU can also be contacted confidentially via email at [REDACTED].

Having spoken with Ms Byrne, I have confirmed that ESU will provide you with advice of the outcome of the CCC investigation in due course. The information that can be provided to you at this time may be limited as it may relate to action taken against another public service officer. However, you will certainly be informed at a minimum that the investigation of the allegation has concluded and whether the allegation of corrupt conduct was substantiated or not substantiated.

Should you believe at any time that you are suffering reprisal that the ESU is not able to resolve, you should also be aware that the oversight agency for reprisal matters is the CCC. The CCC is aware of your involvement with the Commissioner and your status as a PID discloser.

Disclosures to the Commission were protected

For the avoidance of doubt, to the extent that any documents or information provided to the Commission belonged to your agency, the disclosures were protected under the *Commissions of Inquiry Act* and in many instances were compelled via notice. Your evidence as given before the public hearings of the Commission was also protected.

The Commissions of Inquiry Act protects such disclosures and prevents any action (disciplinary or otherwise) being taken against you as a result of disclosures you made to the Commission.

Thank you again for your assistance to the Commissioner.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Jess Wellard
Executive Director
Commission of Inquiry into DNA Forensic Testing in Queensland

Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland

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Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Jess Wellard
Executive Director
Commission of Inquiry into DNA Forensic Testing in Queensland

Exhibit AJR-02

Amanda Reeves

Forensic science and policy expertise

Key Skills

- ✓ Extensive forensic biology expertise
- ✓ Extensive forensic biology leadership and management experience

- ✓ Strategic policy expertise
- ✓ Excellent understanding of contemporary health care environment
- ✓ Record of success working across sectors
 - ✓ Ethical decision-making
 - ✓ Reflective leadership
 - ✓ Relationship building
- ✓ Excellent communicator
 - ✓ Personal resilience

- ✓ Stakeholder engagement and management
 - ✓ Strong experience in developing and presenting correspondence
 - ✓ Project management
 - ✓ Program coordination
 - ✓ Service procurement

Career Snapshot

As a leader, I strive to 'lead from the front'. I ensure that I cultivate authentic working relationships, approach people and situations with respect and empathy, and reflect on my own behaviour and approach. I take care to ensure that the teams I lead have a shared vision, clarity of purpose, and that each person has a line of sight in connecting their own roles and responsibilities to organisational outcomes. I endeavour to support staff to identify their strengths and areas for further development, provide ongoing constructive formal and informal feedback, and actively seek feedback on my own performance. I communicate clearly and openly, and I strive to promote positivity, collaboration, and continuous improvement to both my team and to my managers.

Education

Graduate Certificate

Policy Analysis

Griffith University

2020-2021

GPA 6.75

Diploma of Management

Southbank TAFE

2016

Master of Science

(Forensic Science - Biology)

Griffith University

1999 – 2000

Bachelor of Science

(Microbiology, virology,
immunology)

University of Queensland

1994 - 1997

Professional Memberships

- ✓ Australia and New Zealand Forensic Science Society member
- ✓ I am currently serving as one of the FSQ representatives on the Forensic Medical Examination Advisory Sub-Committee, established under COI Recommendation 97.

Professional Workshops

- ✓ People Matters Leadership Program, (August 2023)
- ✓ STRMix Training Workshop, 2023
- ✓ Getting Your Point Across, LOD Law, 2022
- ✓ Domestic and Family Violence Manager and Supervisor Training,

Forensic Expertise

FEBRUARY 2023 - PRESENT

Executive Project Lead | Forensic Science Queensland

I am currently employed as the Executive Project Lead in the Office of the Chief Executive Officer in the newly established Forensic Science Queensland. This role:

- ✓ contributes to activities to support, monitor, and report on the implementation of identified recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing (COI) and the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Hear Her Voice 2 Report (HhV2).
- ✓ leads or participates in the development and implementation of identified projects or activities as directed by the Chief Executive Officer, Forensic Science Queensland.
- ✓ provides high-level authoritative advice to senior management, partners, and other stakeholders to support effective system responses to the needs of forensic, health and justice stakeholders, and those of the wider community who access these services.
- ✓ contributes to the broader strategic direction of FSQ.

Many of the recommendations in the COI Final Report and the HhV2 Report relate to issues with sexual assault examinations in Queensland and particularly criticise the current the Sexual Assault Investigation Kits (SAIKs) and Just-In-Case Kits (JICKs).

The project that I am currently completing contributes to the resolution of these recommendations by co-ordinating the implementation of new forensic DNA-grade modular forensic evidence collection kits to facilitate best-practice sexual assault evidence collection in Queensland.

This project is subject to considerable time and political pressure, and involves:

- ✓ Consultation, negotiation, and close collaboration with key stakeholders involved with sexual assault examinations and investigations in Queensland and liaison with interstate colleagues.
- ✓ Application of forensic expertise to identify suitable kit configuration and componentry to minimise DNA contamination and maximise evidentiary potential in sexual assault cases.

- Australia's CEO Challenge, 2019
- ✓ Nailing the Policy Analysis, Anna Moynihan and Rachel Healy, 2019
 - ✓ People Matters, Performance Conversations, Australian Institute of Management, 2019
 - ✓ Resilience Workshop, Benestar, 2019
- ✓ Executive Correspondence, Queensland Government, 2018
 - ✓ Domestic and Family Violence Bystander Training, Queensland Health and Griffith University, 2018
 - ✓ Building Effective Relationships Through Trust, Franklin Covey, 2018
- ✓ APNA Blood Borne Virus Course, Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine, 2018
 - ✓ Mortuary Awareness, Queensland Health, 2017
 - ✓ Biological Exposure Response, Queensland Health, 2016
- ✓ Risk Assessment Training, Forensic DNA Analysis (FDNA), 2014
- ✓ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Practice Program, Queensland Health, 2013
- ✓ Managers and Supervisors Occupational Health and Safety Training, FDNA, 2013
- ✓ Understanding ISO 17025 and ISO 15189, QHFSS Quality, 2011
 - ✓ Practical People Management Program, Queensland Government, 2008

- ✓ Application of forensic and sexual health expertise to draft the new Forensic Medical Examination Record (FMER) and Forensic Paediatric Medical Examination Record (FPMER) that sexual assault examiners will use to document the findings of their examination and direct laboratory testing.
- ✓ Application of forensic expertise to draft sampling guidelines to assist clinicians with decision-making in adult and children/young people victim-survivor examinations and adult persons of interest examinations.
- ✓ Supportive handover of the new kits and documentation to the Clinical Forensic Medicine Unit, who are responsible for education and training for clinicians who will use the new kits.
- ✓ Procurement of a suitably accredited Australian-based supplier that can ensure a reliable ongoing supply of quality forensic DNA grade evidence collection kits.
- ✓ Supporting the laboratory studies being performed by a Griffith University colleague to verify certain kit components.
- ✓ Coordination of the storage and logistical aspects of new kit roll-out and old kit destruction.
- ✓ Preparation of briefs and other correspondence relating to the progress of the project
- ✓ Review and evaluation of the new kits post-implementation

I recently led a workshop for CFMU clinicians at FSQ, designed to re-establish professional relationships and ensure engagement with and understanding of the new kits and processes. The workshop was very successful, with the following feedback received:

'Thanks again for the session on Wednesday – it was incredibly helpful and interesting, and very well run. Thanks for all the effort and time you put into it, and to your team for showing us around' – CFMU.

The project is currently on-track for the anticipated deployment of the new kits in July 2023.

2020 AND 2021

Guest Lecturer | University of the Sunshine Coast

I provided an online lecture in 2020 and 2021 about forensic biology to second and/or third year undergraduate students completing the CRM203

- ✓ Project Management Skills, KPMG Workshop, 2008
- ✓ Recruitment and Selection for Panel Members, CorporateLink, 2007 and 2008
 - ✓ Moot Court Training Program, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, 2007
- ✓ Tension Management for the Expert Witness, Kash Thomson, 2007
- ✓ National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) Forensic Science for Young and New Practitioners Workshop, Forensic Science Symposium 2000, Gold Coast

Referees

Professor Linzi Wilson-Wilde OAM
Chief Executive Officer
Forensic Science Queensland
(Current supervisor)

Professor Cindy Shannon AM
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion
Griffith University
(Chair, Sexual Health Ministerial
Advisory Committee)

Ms Cathy Green
Director
Queensland Law Reform
Commission
(Past supervisor)

Homicide, Investigations and Forensic Science Course at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

DECEMBER 2003 - APRIL 2018

Supervising Reporting Forensic Scientist | Forensic and Scientific Services, Queensland Health

My career as a reporting forensic biologist in Queensland spanned approximately 15 years prior to departure from the lab in 2018. I was, and remain, a demonstrably ethical, capable, tenacious, and resilient expert forensic practitioner.

- ✓ I am a gazetted State DNA Analyst
- ✓ I have extensive experience in all aspects of forensic biology casework, including:
 - ✓ case examination strategy
 - ✓ examination and interpretation of biological evidence
 - ✓ complex mixed DNA profile interpretation, including use of STRmix
 - ✓ identification work in Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) and coronial cases
 - ✓ criminal paternity casework
 - ✓ provision of expert testimony in Queensland courts on all case types, including complex, high profile criminal cases and STRmix casework.
- ✓ I have provided authoritative expert advice to Queensland Police Service (QPS), Department of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Defence and other professionals as required via
 - ✓ meetings and case conferences
 - ✓ authoring reports, evidentiary certificates, and Statements of Witness
 - ✓ delivery of training and presentations.
- ✓ I was the first Queensland scientist employed to conduct whole item evidence recovery on behalf of a reporting scientist when I commenced in the laboratory in 2003.
- ✓ I went on to become a reporting scientist myself and became a supervising reporting scientist in 2006.
- ✓ I was the first Queensland reporting DNA scientist to 'hot tub' with QPS Scientific expert witnesses in court – this means that I remained sworn on the witness stand, whilst four Queensland Police Scientific witnesses were sworn in and out alongside me for the dual provision of expert testimony.

- ✓ I introduced familial screening to the laboratory, and I was the first reporting scientist in Queensland to perform a familial screen on an NCIDD (National Criminal Investigative DNA Database) candidate list for casework. In 2018 I applied the technique successfully to assist the QPS in solving a Cairns murder case.
- ✓ I was the forensic DNA Analysis representative on the state-wide cold case initiative – then known as 'Project Recognition'.
- ✓ As the supervisor of Reporting Team 1, I was responsible for the direct supervision, training, and mentoring of a team of reporting scientists to ensure the effective, efficient, and sustained output of quality reporting casework.
- ✓ I also established casework rosters to ensure efficient and equitable case allocation, liaison, and negotiation with Scientific Services Liaison Unit (SSLU), DPP and QPS regarding casework timeframes, and follow up to ensure that the promised targets were met.
- ✓ I was a member of the DNA Analysis Management Team involved in troubleshooting quality issues, critiquing project plans, and providing constructive input into process improvement. I was an active and persistent advocate for reporting staff, quality and laboratory outputs and impacts in this forum.

Other Professional Experience

APRIL 2022 – FEBRUARY 2023

Research Officer | Queensland Law Reform Commission

The Queensland Law Reform Commission (QLRC) was asked by the Attorney-General (under terms of reference) to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland and to prepare draft legislation to give effect to its recommendations. The development of the new framework required the QLRC to consider, among other things, how general laws apply to sex work and to identify whether any specific laws or other measures are needed to address particular issues.

I was approached by the A/Director of the Queensland Law Reform Commission (QLRC) to complete a secondment within the QLRC during the decriminalisation of sex work review, following my work in Communicable Diseases Branch developing COVID Safe Industry Plans for the sex work industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a research officer within the secretariat of the QLRC, my role was to collate and synthesise evidence and options relating to the legislative impacts on sexual and public health within the sex work industry for the Commission Members, chaired by the Honourable Justice Peter Applegarth AM, to consider in their deliberations, and contribute to the writing of the final report.

These evidence-based health recommendations are featured in Chapter 4 'Health, safety and worker rights' of the 'A decriminalised sex-work industry for Queensland' report, which has been broadly accepted by Government.

https://www.qirc.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/763383/qirc-report-80-a-decriminalised-sex-work-industry-for-queensland-vol-1-.pdf

APRIL 2018 - APRIL 2022

Manager, Engagement and Strategy | Communicable Diseases Branch, Department of Health

I transferred into the Manager Sexual Health Strategy (in 2021 renamed Engagement and Strategy) position within the Blood-Borne Virus and Sexually Transmissible Infections (BBV/STI) Unit of the Communicable Diseases Branch.

I very quickly developed a thorough understanding of the sexual health sector and established excellent working relationships with stakeholders across its breadth, including other government agencies, non-government organisations, and interstate agencies and colleagues. I attained formal policy qualifications in 2021, with a GPA of 6.75.

I provided leadership to the Sexual Health Strategy / Strategy and Engagement team, and support and collaboration to/with the broader BBV/STI team members in the co-ordination and development of sexual and reproductive health related policies, strategies, services, and programs. I exercised Band 7 HR delegations and Band 8 financial delegations, and was the authorised card supervisor for a Corporate Card.

I led the implementation of the *Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 2016-2021* (Strategy), a broad cross-sector strategy that included health, education, and sexual violence prevention, along with the associated action plans, and managed an annual program budget of approximately \$1 million.

I also led the provision of secretariat support to the Chair (Professor Cindy Shannon AM) and other members of the multi-disciplinary team of government and non-government experts in Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee (Committee), with whom I established and cultivated excellent working relationships.

I delivered high level strategic advice to the office of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, the Departmental Executive, and a range of key internal and external stakeholders, and I produced high quality correspondence in the form of reports, briefs, papers, cabinet submissions and presentations.

In supporting the work of the Committee and the implementation of the Strategy I developed several important initiatives:

- Established, planned and event managed the annual Committee stakeholder engagement forum (opened by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) for sexual and public health clinicians, ministerial staff, policy makers and Hospital and Health Service Executives from across the State.
- Procurement and assistance with the development of community-based program designed to support the delivery of teacher- and parent-led relationships and sexuality education for young people in Queensland, in partnership with True Relationships and Reproductive Health (*Relationship Ready*)
<https://www.true.org.au/education/programs-resources/for-schools-teachers/relationship-ready>
- In partnership with Clinical Excellence Queensland, assisted with the establishment of the Statewide Sexual Health Clinical Network <https://clinicalexcellence.qld.gov.au/priority-areas/clinician-engagement/queensland-clinical-networks/sexual-health>

- In partnership with the Australasian Society of HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM), developed the Sexual Health Research Fund
<https://www.ashm.org.au/programs/shrf/>
- Established the web page and corporate identity for the Committee, led the work to re-appoint the Committee for each successive new term.
- Authored the enduring *Queensland Sexual Health Framework*, which replaced the time-limited *Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 20162021* and took effect on 1 January 2022.
https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0026/1150694/queensland-sexual-health-framework.pdf

Following the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, I was approached by the Minister's office, as restrictions were beginning to ease, to take on the responsibility of assisting the Queensland sex industry (sex workers, licensed brothels and sex-on-premises venues) to establish a COVID Safe Industry Plan, which was designed to help the industry understand and comply with the prevailing Health Directions.

<https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/covid-safe-checklist/queensland-sex-industry>





Role description

Executive Adviser, Forensic Science

Status	Permanent flexible full-time	Job ad reference	
Branch and Division	Office of the CEO Forensic Science Queensland	Contact details	
Classification	HP6	Salary range	
Location	[REDACTED]	Closing date	

Your opportunity

The Department of Health (the Department) has a diverse set of responsibilities, and a common purpose of providing highly effective health system leadership. The Department is responsible for the overall strategic leadership and direction of the public health system in Queensland. We strongly believe in the need to work with people that value the goals of our organisation and who will thrive in our workplace.

About Forensic Science Queensland

Located at Coopers Plains in Brisbane, FSQ operates specialised Forensic Biology and Forensic Chemistry functions support the criminal justice and coronial systems in Queensland.

Forensic Chemistry provides analytical and advisory services principally to the Queensland Police Service in the areas of (i) illicit drug analysis, which involves the analysis of both known and emerging novel drugs, (ii) clandestine drug laboratory investigation, which involves both attendance at crime scenes, and analysis of exhibits to provide expert opinion to the courts, and (iii) and trace evidence examinations, which cover oil spill investigations, lubricant analysis, explosives, and fibres, which are often associate with serious crimes such as sexual assault and murder. Our scientists provide expert impartial scientific advice through the provision of formal statements and evidence in court.

Forensic Biology provides analytical and advisory services principally to the Queensland Police Service in the areas of evidence recovery, DNA analysis and result interpretation culminating in expert advice and evidence. In general, the Evidence Recovery team conducts examinations of exhibits, biological material screening and recovery of samples for further testing, the

Analytical Team conducts DNA analysis, including interpretation of samples submitted, and the Reporting Team conducts DNA interpretation, statistical interpretation and the development of statements for court, including giving evidence in court.

Our work at FSQ involves exposure to material related to deaths and criminal offences that may be confronting, due to its graphic and personal nature. Sensitive and professional management of exhibits and information is a critical requirement of this role. The successful candidate will have personal qualities that include well developed resilience, tact and effective strategies for managing themselves and their ability to support colleagues in situations that may be distressing and stressful.

Please note that proposed legislative and structural changes may result in Forensic Science Queensland being moved to another agency within Queensland Public Sector.

Our values

Our values are those of the Queensland public service



Customers First



Ideas into action



Unleash potential



Be courageous



Empower people

These five values underpin behaviours that will support and enable better ways of working and result in better outcomes for Queenslanders.

About the role

Purpose

The Executive Adviser provides specialist scientific advice and support to the Chief Executive Officer, Forensic Science Queensland on a range of critical strategy, policy and engagement matters to support FSQ's vision of becoming a world-class leader in the delivery of quality, timely and innovative forensic services, that ultimately supports the integrity of the Queensland justice system.

This role will apply an expert level of knowledge, skills and experience in the area of Forensic Services and operate as a statewide reference point for forensic advice and advocacy. This role will lead the development and implementation of key research, policy and projects within FSQ and is responsible for ensuring effective and efficient strategic business planning, program monitoring and evaluation that will ensure achievement of organisational objectives.

Your key responsibilities

- Adhere to defined service quality standards, health and safety policies and procedures relating to the work being undertaken to ensure high quality, safe services and workplaces.
- Provide high level specialist advice in the development, management and review of the Office of the CEO's strategic direction, particularly with regards to research, development and innovation.
- Provide expert strategic advice on policy development and implementation and prepare complex papers, briefings, reports, governance, submissions and FSQ correspondence.
- Contribute to the scientific robustness, effective management, professional policy development and strategic direction of the Office of the CEO.
- Review and develop policies, operational standards and procedures relating to the strategic direction of FSQ in collaboration with the FSQ leadership team.
- Lead strategic planning processes, including research and evaluation, to identify ongoing opportunities for improvement and innovation in the delivery of forensic services.
- Develop and coordinate complex projects and programs of work with significant scope that will require expert consultation with a range of internal and external stakeholders as required by the CEO.
- Represent the CEO on relevant internal and external committees and forums, and pass on knowledge gleaned from these committees or forums to support the development of the scientific knowledge and expertise of FSQ staff.
- Foster relationships and effectively liaise with industry, government departments, professional and scientific bodies and the wider community.
- Collaborate with other scientific line managers and teams to ensure the role and operations of the Office of the CEO are strategically integrated with those of FSQ to achieve its service delivery goals and to lead the development of service improvement initiatives to ensure the provision of quality scientific services to clients and stakeholders.
- Review and advise on current standard operating procedure with the laboratory to drive improvements in compliance, performance and best practice.
- Professionally and effectively lead and contribute to development of a positive organisational culture and create a safe and innovative environment for staff

Reporting/work relationships

The position reports to the Chief Executive Officer, FSQ.

Mandatory qualifications, registrations and other requirements

- Mandatory possession of a bachelor's degree or higher in science, forensic science, applied science, or a relevant field from a recognised tertiary institution.
- While not mandatory, relevant postgraduate research qualifications and a recent history of publishing on significant forensic science initiatives and professional topics (not associated with obtaining academic qualifications) in peer reviewed publications would be well-regarded.

- It is a condition of employment for this role for the employee to be, and remain, vaccinated against the following vaccine preventable diseases during their employment (Health Employment Directive No. 01/16):
 - hepatitis B
- It may be a condition of employment for this role for the employee to be, and remain, vaccinated against COVID-19 ([Health Employment Directive No. 12/21](#) and [Queensland Health Human Resources Policy B70](#)).
- It may be a condition of employment for this role for the employee to be, and remain, vaccinated against the following vaccine preventable diseases during their employment ([Health Employment Directive No. 01/16](#)):
 - measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
 - varicella (chicken pox)
 - pertussis (whooping cough)
 - tuberculosis
- Please detail any visa conditions you may have if you are not a permanent resident of Australia.
- We understand that some people may require adjustments to the workplace or the way the work is performed. All applicants are encouraged to advise the panel of any support or reasonable adjustments (i.e., building access, wheelchair access, interpreting services etc.) that may be required.
- Further information regarding Queensland Health and the benefits of the role can be found in the Information for Applicant booklet.

Role fit

The essential requirements for this role are:

- Proven expert ability to source, critically analyse and interpret research including both qualitative and quantitative information to underpin the development of strategic priorities.
- Demonstrated ability to provide specialist authoritative advice and support to the CEO to drive the development and implementation of initiatives and complex projects improving delivery of FSQ services to the Queensland Police Service, the Coroners Court, Hospital and Health Services and other government agencies.
- Proven specialist level knowledge, skills and experience in the field of Forensic Science.
- Highly developed conceptual, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Highly developed interpersonal and negotiation skills, and verbal and written ability to impart specialist knowledge to diverse groups.
- Proven experience in complying with the legislation, regulations and standards that apply to a forensic laboratory organisation.
- Proven ability to influence and implement contemporary and innovative scientific processes, procedures and concepts and to encourage their application and acceptance by staff and clients.

- Substantial knowledge of contemporary forensic sciences professional standards, service delivery requirements and management techniques, including knowledge and understanding of quality systems and national accreditation programs.
- Demonstrated ability to contribute to effective strategic leadership of forensic services in complex service delivery environment.

Behavioural Competencies Required

We are all leaders at FSQ, regardless of role or classification level. The department is committed to leadership at all levels of our organisation, in this role you will be required to display the following leadership behaviours:

- Stimulates ideas and innovation – Gathers insights and embraces new ideas and innovation to inform future practice.
- Makes insightful decisions – Makes considered, ethical and courageous decisions based on insight into the broader context.
- Drives accountability and outcomes – Demonstrates accountability for the execution and quality of results through professionalism, persistence and transparency.
- Demonstrates sound governance – Maintains a high standard of practice through governance and risk management.

How to apply

Please provide the following information to the panel to assess your suitability:

- A short-written response (maximum 1-2 pages, dot points acceptable) on how your experience, abilities, knowledge and personal qualities would enable you to achieve the key responsibilities and meet the skill requirements of the role.
- Your current CV or resume, including two referees who have a thorough knowledge of your capabilities, work performance and conduct within the previous two years. It is preferable to include your current, immediate or past supervisor.
- Late applications cannot be submitted online. For a late application to be considered, please arrange approval and submission via the contact person.
- Applications will remain current for 12 months or for the duration of the vacancy. Future vacancies of a temporary, full time and part time nature may also be filled through this recruitment process.
- Only those persons eligible to work in Australia may be employed by Queensland Health. Prospective employees are required to provide proof of identity and documentary evidence of their right to work in Australia.

Additional information

Discover more about working at the Department [here](#). Of note:

- The information you provide as an applicant is used in adherence with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.
- All roles within the Department are subject to employment screening.
- Successful applicants may be required to provide consent and a DNA sample upon commencement which will be retained for reference and comparison purposes.
- The nominated applicant will be required to disclose any serious disciplinary action taken against them in the Queensland public sector.
- To be appointed permanently, you must be an Australian citizen, have permanent residency status or have a visa permitting you to work permanently in Australia. For temporary appointments, you must have a visa permitting you to work for the length of the temporary appointment.
- The Department aims to maintain a safe, healthy and secure work environment for all employees, clients, visitors and contractors. Achieving this aim is the responsibility of all.
- Applicants may be required to disclose any pre-existing injury or medical condition of which they suspect would be aggravated by performing the role. Details are available in section 571 of the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 (<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2003-027#ch.14-pt.1-div.1>)
- We are committed to building inclusive cultures in the Queensland public sector that respect and promote [human rights](#) and [diversity](#). We encourage everyone to apply for our advertised roles, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, age, language, sexual orientation, and disability or family responsibilities. We recognise the value of diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.
- The Department values and respects the diversity of its workforce and believes that all its employees should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. All employees of the Department must show respect for each other, visitors, the general public and contractors by treating them fairly and objectively, ensuring freedom from discrimination, sexual harassment, racial or religious vilification, victimisation and bullying. The Department of Health is an equal opportunity employer.

To demonstrate support for a safe, secure and supportive workplace, the Department is a White Ribbon Australia accredited workplace. For more information visit [here](#).

- The Department acknowledges the challenge for its staff in balancing work, family and community life successfully. To help them achieve this, we encourage conversations between managers and staff about implementing [flexible working arrangements](#) to manage their paid work commitments with their career goals, personal, community and cultural responsibilities. Through flexible working arrangements, there is an opportunity to match the individual's requirements with those of the workplace to achieve agreed work goals and objectives.

Fresh swipe at DNA labs

Hedley Thomas and Renee Viellaris | 07.03.2005 00:51 | [Analysis](#) | [Technology](#) | [London](#) | [World](#)

It is essential, however, that scientific staff have confidence that the review will examine not only the processes but whether the system on which Queensland relies is in fact the best and most appropriate for the state.



AUSTRALIA: ANOTHER leaked document from a quitting scientist at the troubled forensic laboratories at the John Tonge Centre slams management and processes.

Scientist Kris Bentley, whose departure yesterday follows that of forensic biologist Deanna Belzer after concerns about "inaccurate" DNA results and unvalidated equipment, issued a scathing resignation letter leaked to The Courier-Mail.

She described a "highly political climate of disharmony and divisiveness" and said concerns over inadequate staff training and new instrument validations were being brushed aside.

She said the concerns had been vindicated by the resultant excessive rate of sample retesting with massive "blowouts" in the turnaround times of major crime cases and quality assurance concerns.

Ongoing "panic management" was disrupting already-overstressed staff while scientific prowess was being downgraded "in favour of management skills".

Health Minister Gordon Nuttall has ordered a review of the management and scientific processes at the centre.

A spokesperson said Ms Bentley was a "very well respected forensic biologist".

A scientist's report leaked to this week was criticised by Griffith University's Forensic Studies director, Associate Professor Dennis Burns, who said there was no scientific basis for claims of flawed DNA profiling in criminal cases.

Professor Burns, who said he was more experienced than the author of the report, rejected concerns that the process described as flawed could call into question the evidence in court cases.

"The quality of a forensic DNA profile produced from a sample does not depend on an exact determination of the amount of DNA to be used in the analysis," Professor Burns said.

"While a narrow range of DNA amounts works best for optimal results, it does not follow that the alleged inaccuracies in DNA quantitation, even if true, will compromise the quality of the DNA evidence obtained."

Courier Mail: Confidence in forensic tests fundamental Editorial: 05mar05

BY WHATEVER measure, confidence in the integrity of DNA tests at Queensland Health's forensic laboratories, at the John Tonge Centre, and appropriate management of the centre's huge backlog has fallen well short of community standards.

It is not only the publication this week of an internal report highlighting inconsistent evidence results and unreliable testing processes which has raised serious concerns.

The resourcing of the centre and its ability to overcome the log jam hampering the work of police and the courts has been high on the complaints list for much of the Beattie Government's period in office.

The proposed review announced by Health Minister Gordon Nuttall this week only days after Queensland Health defended the system is welcome.

However, it must also be recognised as a tick for an effective campaign by the Opposition, which has been consistent in highlighting management issues at the centre.

Mr Nuttall acknowledges a climate of uncertainty has settled on the centre and says an expert from New Zealand's Environmental Science and Research facility will provide an independent review of scientific processes and management.

It is essential, however, that scientific staff have confidence that the review will examine not only the processes but whether the system on which Queensland relies is in fact the best and most appropriate for the state.

Queensland Health concedes that it does not have the cutting-edge technology often needed to determine forensic qualities necessary for a police investigation and routinely sends samples interstate.

Even putting aside the possibility that courts could raise the question of whether there was the potential for samples sent south and out of the control of the John Tonge Centre to be compromised, Queenslanders will question - as the Opposition has - the Government's resourcing priorities.

Is that a question open to the independent inquiry to comment upon? It is fundamental to the process of justice for both victims of crime and those accused of an

offence that the forensic evidence on which so many outcomes rely is accurate, reliable and provided quickly.

Yet last year it was revealed that a backlog of 11,000 samples had grown to 13,995, despite a \$5 million funding injection, and subjective judgments were being made to ensure work on "major crimes" was treated as a priority.

Some samples probably will never be tested. In last year's election campaign, the Government promised \$11 million additional funding over three years to speed up DNA profiling.

It promised a \$2.6 million link to the national DNA database and legislated to require DNA samples to be taken from all serious offenders in Queensland jails to help police in their work.

Now it must ensure that the fundamental processes and equipment at the centre can guarantee the integrity of forensic tests as well as face up to the appalling backlog by examining staffing levels, management, morale and resources at the centre.

Forensic test review ordered
Hedley Thomas 04mar05

A SWEEPING independent review of the quality and management of crucial DNA work at the State Government's troubled forensic laboratories was ordered yesterday amid fears of a walkout by scientists.

Health Minister Gordon Nuttall said late yesterday that an overseas expert would review the John Tonge Centre in Brisbane to "clear the air".

Mr Nuttall said that a scientist from New Zealand's Environmental Science and Research facility would make recommendations "that will enhance the valuable work being currently undertaken".

In an internal report leaked to The Courier-Mail this week, forensic biologist Deanna Belzer said she feared that she and other scientists were breaking the law by falsely declaring that DNA evidence was accurate.

Her report stated that a tool in the DNA measuring process had been proved to be inaccurate despite being used since last April. The concerns of scientists struggling with a huge backlog of samples at John Tonge throw into doubt evidence in hundreds of criminal cases.

Queensland Health initially played down the concerns but other scientists at the centre have now held talks with management and planned to down microscopes until the problems were resolved.

A number of scientists were angry that Ms Belzer's professionalism and her report were called into question in a closed-door meeting with state manager Peter Lewis-Hughes.

At the meeting Ms Belzer, who had begun a PhD with the Queensland Institute of Medical Research before going to John Tonge, was described by management as disgruntled.

"Queensland Health managers regard themselves as gods - and they always shoot messengers if they don't like the message," a scientist at John Tonge said. A Queensland Health spokesman said last night he was unaware of any proposed industrial action.

Mr Nuttall said a climate of uncertainty had been created and... "it is important for us to reassure the public that they can have faith in forensic sciences".

Mr Nuttall and Premier Peter Beattie previously had pledged to fix fundamental problems at John Tonge by spending more money on staff and equipment.

"I believe the review is in the best interests of the justice system and the people of Queensland,"

Mr Nuttall said. Tiny amounts of DNA are extracted from crime scenes by scientists and technicians at John Tonge who compare them with the DNA of suspected rapists and killers.

Ms Belzer's leaked report stated guidelines had clearly been breached when "a critical instrument in the DNA analysis procedure has not been validated and, further, proven to be inaccurate.

"I question if we are breaching the Justice Act when we sign statements which declare all information in the foregoing pages are accurate to the best of the scientists' knowledge," she wrote.

DNA evidence at risk of unravelling
Phil Bartsch and Greg Stolz 04mar05

A CONVICTED armed robber's application for a royal pardon because of alleged faults with DNA evidence could be the first of many calls for clemency from people jailed in Queensland based on flawed scientific evidence, it was claimed this week.

Several high-profile lawyers said that as a result of allegedly inaccurate testing of human DNA at the troubled John Tonge Centre in Brisbane, "many injustices may have already occurred".

The claim follows revelations in The Courier-Mail from a leaked document exposing "inconsistent" evidence results and concerns of centre staff that the strict regulations of Australia's peak scientific testing body NATA had been breached.

"DNA is a very precise and expert science. Judges and barristers and juries don't know anything about DNA,"

Gold Coast barrister Sean Cousins said. "So when an expert tells you 'X, Y and Z' you just accept it.

But what we're now discovering is that errors are being made."

Premier Peter Beattie said he had been assured the testing process was not compromised, that the equipment had been extensively tested and validated and the facility was subject to regular inspections by NATA.

Police Commissioner Bob Atkinson also backed Police Forensic Services Laboratory director Superintendent Paul Stewart.

"He has absolute confidence in the quality of the testing regime at the John Tonge Centre and that's good enough for me,"

Mr Atkinson said. However one of Mr Cousins' clients, Marc Renton, has claimed for the past eight years that he had been convicted of two armed robberies based on flawed DNA evidence from the John Tonge Centre.

Renton was jailed for 14 years in April 1997 for what were dubbed the "Bonnie and Clyde Robberies" - a series of armed hold-ups he allegedly committed in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast with a female accomplice.

The backlog at John Tonge has also led to a huge backlog in lower-priority cases. Desmond Caling, of Sunnybank in Brisbane, said after 10 months he was still waiting for DNA testing which could nab thieves who broke into his house and stole \$50,000 in cash and jewellery.

Police found a stolen car with some of his property dumped at Redbank Plains in Ipswich, but the trail went cold until a neighbour found a bag in a nearby park with more of Mr Caling's property in it.

"There was a bloodied bandage which we took to police to see if it could be DNA-tested," he said.

"We were told it would take five months before they heard anything back because (John Tonge) had to prioritise murders and rapes first."

Gold Coast lawyer Chris Nyst said potential flaws in DNA testing had long been a concern.

Mr Nyst, a founding member of the Innocence Project which works to free wrongly convicted prisoners from state jails, said the centre had been "surprisingly reluctant" to provide DNA samples.

From: Alison Walsh, Springwood NSW Comment:

Re Hedley's 'Forensic Lab review' story.

It amazes me that a review of this type, which is many years overdue, is to be done by an 'overseas expert'. Is this a ploy to keep the whole matter quiet within Australia?

We have an abundant supply of internationally renowned scientists here.

Is the QLD Government too parochial to accept help readily at hand?

Other states would have to speak for themselves, however, in NSW, Dr Brian McDonald or Prof Barry Boettcher are much closer and amply qualified for this task.

Professor Boettcher has offered to assist the Attorney General, the Premier and the Governor of Qld understand the errors made (at the John Tonge Centre) in the Wayne Butler case.

He has received no feedback re this offer. Why?

We know we have one innocent man in prison because of mistakes made: given the contents of Ms Belzers' leaked report, there are likely to be more.

I would venture to guess that a complete whitewash will be the outcome of this review, if indeed it ever takes place. Come on, Mr Welford, have the courage to do the right thing, and quickly.

Subject: Forensic test review ordered :
04mar05 From: Lincoln Hudson,

Brisbane Comment: Regarding the accuracy or otherwise of DNA evidence at a crime scene, did anyone else see the ABC program recently that showed how easy it is to frame someone else with DNA evidence?

All that you need is a DNA sample from the person that you want to frame, for example a piece of hair taken from their jacket collar.

Then in a process that's said to be easier than brewing up a batch of ecstasy, you replicate the DNA from the sample so that you end up with lots of it (and we know that this will be relatively easy given the numbers of garage drug labs around).

Put the brew in a spray bottle, and at your crime scene, spray every surface that you might have put some of your own DNA on (even blood stains).

The police come along and take samples, and all they can see in their testing is the DNA that you brewed up from the person you wish to frame. Because the police and the legal profession have minimal understanding of the technology, they are reluctant to question its accuracy, and treat the DNA evidence as faultless.

The recipe for the perfect crime perhaps?

DNA test doubts Hedley
Thomas 01mar05

A LEAKED document exposing flaws in the testing of human DNA at the troubled John Tonge Centre in Brisbane has thrown into doubt the evidence in hundreds of criminal cases.

Scientists at the centre fear they are breaking the law by falsely declaring in evidentiary certificates that accurate results are being produced and that the equipment is reliable.

The centre's scientists and technicians extract tiny amounts of DNA from crime scenes and compare them with the DNA of suspected rapists and killers.

But officials have expressed concern that the strict regulations of Australia's peak scientific testing body NATA, which can strip the centre's accreditation, have been breached.

In an internal report, forensic biologist Deanna Belzer recommended a major independent audit of "inconsistent" evidence results for the past 12 months as well as the testing process.

The concerns follow pledges by Premier Peter Beattie and Health Minister Gordon Nuttall that the centre would be fixed with more funding and staff to cope with a huge backlog.

People accused of serious violent crimes have been convicted and sentenced on the strength of compelling evidence from the centre, which was promised an extra \$11 million in funding plus extra scientists and equipment.

In her internal report dated February 12, Ms Belzer wrote of "repeated suspicions and concerns of staff" regarding the accuracy of a fundamental process in the testing of DNA.

Her report states that a study presented to staff on January 5 had vindicated scientists concerned about the accuracy of the testing process, known as quantitation.

"Clearly, NATA guidelines in this instance have been breached when a critical instrument in the DNA analysis procedure has not been validated and, further, proven to be inaccurate.

"I question if we are breaching the Justice Act when we sign statements which declare all information in the foregoing pages are accurate to the best of the scientists' knowledge."

A Brisbane-based forensic analysis expert consulted by The Courier-Mail yesterday, Carol Mayne, said the internal report was of serious concern and should prompt a top-down review at the centre.

She had previously studied Ms Belzer's scientific work and found it highly professional.

Ms Belzer wrote that the use of the testing kit since April last year before it was validated had led to "an overwhelmingly high financial cost and an inefficiency in reporting results within reasonable turnaround times".

Sources close to the John Tonge Centre said Ms Belzer's decision to resign last week was influenced by her concerns.

She has refused to comment. Queensland Health described the testing system as "non-essential" and said it had no bearing on the DNA profile or result.

A statement did not address concerns whether the Evidence Act was being breached or whether results were being found to be "inaccurate".

"The equipment was introduced to save money and time in processing crime scene samples," the statement said.

Senior police have been alerted to the concerns and sought further details.

A statement said Police Forensic Services Laboratory director Superintendent Paul Stewart had "every confidence in the procedures".

Under the Evidence Act, a DNA analyst must produce an evidentiary certificate for any sample used in criminal proceedings.

The certificate confirms "that the records indicate that all quality assurance procedures for the receipt, storage and testing" of the evidence were followed.

It also confirms that the equipment used is taken to give accurate results.

The National Association of Testing Authorities had not been forwarded the report by Ms Belzer nor heard the concerns of staff over the testing process, sources said.

Related:

DNA leads 'CSI' cold-case squad to first arrest?

I agree it looks bad. A bunch of NSW cops in the media spotlight to solve old cases for which a lot of the evidence will be gone and no one will be able to confirm alibis any more. Sounds like a recipe for dodgy investigations and unsafe convictions to me. But that's hardly anything new in this state.

More: <http://www.melbourne.indymedia.org/news/2005/01/86408.php>

Hedley Thomas and Renee Viellaris

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