

Crime Laboratory Directive No. 98-12
Effective Date: July 30, 1998

TO: Laboratory SAC=s and Supervisors

FROM: Assistant Director Jerry Richardson

SUBJECT: Language Used in Laboratory Reports - Updated

Official laboratory reports issued by the Crime Laboratory Division of the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation will contain only factual and accurate accounts of the results of analysis/examination of the evidence submitted, and will not be used to communicate other information or issues to the submitting officer, district attorney, or other individual(s).

For example, statements such as ANumerous attempts have been made to contact the officer to obtain...@ or ADue to the inappropriate packaging/handling of...@ are not appropriate to be placed in an official laboratory report. If, in the opinion of the analyst, information such as this needs to be communicated, a separate letter on Bureau letterhead (mailed in a separate envelope), that has been reviewed and approved by the Special Agent in Charge, will then be directed to the appropriate party(ies).

Informing submitting officers of our concerns regarding the inappropriate collection, packaging, or submission of evidence (or the omission of critical standards) is important to their future success as a law enforcement officer; however, such communication is not appropriate in the official laboratory report of analysis/examination.

As a general rule, observations about the condition of evidence or the lack of required standards should be documented in *case notes* - not in the body of the laboratory report. Information related to attempts to contact a submitting officer should be documented on an approved telephone/communication log and not in the body of the laboratory report. The completed log should then be stapled to the inside front cover of the case file folder.

Each Special Agent in Charge and Supervisor should take the necessary steps to ensure all laboratory personnel are aware of this directive and that report reviews include a check for *editorializing* and inappropriate language.

cc: Director Robin P. Pendergraft

