



Wednesday, May 9 2007

Calif. panel calls for better forensic training

Forensic errors are a major contributor to wrongful convictions, according to a California commission, prompting it to call for better training.

The report, the fifth of its kind from the Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice, cited the Innocence Project at New York's Cardozo Law School, which identified forensic science testing errors in 63 percent of a set of nationwide DNA exoneration cases analyzed, the Los Angeles Times reported.

The commission has sounded warnings about false confessions, DNA backlogs in crime labs, the use of police informants and mistaken eyewitness identifications. It has also raised a red flag over the ability of the criminal justice system to expose mistakes in scientific evidence, the Times said.

The report called for the creation of a commission to set standards for analysis and handling of evidence. The Times also reported that the commission recommended that local prosecutors look into allegations of irregularities in expert testimony and that a council set state standards for forensic experts.

The commission is made up of 20 members, including academics, prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges. It is chaired by former state Atty. Gen. John K. Van de Kamp.

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)