THE FORENSIC SCIENCE SERVICE®

Annual Report and Accounts 2000-2001

Forensic excellence worldwide

The FSS Vision is

"to realise the full potential of forensic science to contribute to a safer and more just society."

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OUR ROLE – A KEY SERVICE PROVIDER

The Forensic Science Service (FSS) is an internationally recognised centre of excellence for forensic casework and research. It aims to serve the public by contributing to the administration of justice as an integral part of the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

A national service

The FSS is an Executive Agency of the Home Office, providing a national service to the 43 police forces of England and Wales, the Crown Prosecution Service, HM Customs and Excise and other agencies. It also contributes to the investigation of international and organised crime. The FSS promotes an impartial, balanced approach in the interpretation of scientific evidence - working for both prosecution and defence - provides an intelligence-led approach to its work for customers and aims to achieve its purpose with maximum benefit, without a profit motive.

The specialists

The FSS supports customers from beginning to end - the crime scene to the giving of expert evidence in court. It carries out work in a wide range of forensic science disciplines, including DNA profiling, fibre, tool mark and footwear mark comparison, fingerprint enhancement and drugs analysis. Other areas covered include toxicology, road traffic accident investigation, fraud investigation, document examination, video enhancement and fire investigation.

The FSS Mission is

"to provide forensic science information and expertise to support the investigation and detection of crimes and the prosecution of offenders; and to contribute to the prevention, deterrence and reduction of crime."

OUR PRINCIPLES

In providing our services, the FSS will:

- Maintain impartiality, objectivity, and integrity of work.
- Provide the range, quality and speed of response required.
- Improve value for money.
- Recover the full costs of services.
- Make the best use of human and physical resources.
- Invest in systems and assets.
- Improve service through research and other developments.
- Encourage an entrepreneurial culture and environment to support competitiveness.

THE FORENSIC SCIENCE SERVICE®
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2000 - 2001

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OUR PROGRESS

In the last year the FSS has….	In the last 10 years the FSS has….
increased its output by 34 per cent	increased its output five-fold
dealt with a record number of 124,000 cases	seen its caseload nearly treble
continued to develop better and more effective forensic science techniques	invested £23.7 million on scientific research
passed the landmarks of one million suspect and criminal profiles on the National DNA Database®, and 100,000 profile matches	set up the National DNA Database®, managing it with integrity and efficiency, giving customers confidence in its ability
introduced new services to help tackle crime	built up strong partnerships with the police and other customers
seen its scientists appear as expert witnesses in court on over 2,700 occasions	become an integral part of the Criminal Justice System
attended 1,600 crime scenes	become an important part of criminal investigations, providing both intelligence to the police and evidence to present in court
increased the number of staff by 29 per cent	supported a quadrupling of its workforce

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT

Dr Janet Thompson CB, Chief Executive

This Annual Report is our tenth as an Executive Agency and my last as the Chief Executive of the Forensic Science Service. When I became Chief Executive Officer in 1988, I did so knowing that forensic science was vastly underused and its benefits were not well understood. To an extent that is still the case. I therefore thought I would try and detail the progress we have made not just in the last year - but in the past decade. I quickly realised that this would be impossible. The organisation today is so vastly different from the one I joined that I would soon run out of space. This Report shows that the FSS has realised much of its potential against a backdrop of changing requirements and new technologies. A constant factor has been the commitment, professionalism and vision of my FSS colleagues, and the FSS's success is their success. They are to be congratulated on what has been achieved.

A decade of growth and development

The FSS became an Executive Agency of the Home Office on 1 April 1991. Development and growth in the subsequent 10 years has been catalysed by the delegated responsibilities and accountabilities of Agency status and the change to direct charging. These brought about a different customer relationship based on service, and the ability to grow and change in response to customer demand. Significant factors have been new DNA technology - pioneered by the FSS - and the National DNA Database; the merger with the Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory (MPFSL); and the move to Trading Fund status. These developments and growth have brought considerable benefits in terms of improved customer service levels; better and stronger customer relationships; and the development of new services in partnership with customers. Staff numbers have risen greatly over the 10 years - from about 350 to over 2,500 - in response to the increasing challenges facing forensic science and the customers' acknowledgement of the value it adds to investigations.

Important changes have been made in the way that forensic science is used in the investigation. The traditional use of forensic science as a corroborative tool is being complemented by its use in providing information at the start of an investigation to help identify suspects. This means that forensic science has a role to play at every stage, and great strides have been made in speeding up the way vital information is provided to the police investigators.

2000-2001 Our performance

Our performance this year has been robust - in an environment of continued growth and change. The FSS achieved revenue in excess of £100 million, up 34 per cent on last year. The FSS achieved seven out of eight agency targets, falling slightly short of its efficiency gain three-year target, although performance has been strong since Trading Fund was established (10 per cent efficiency gain over two years).

We have been able to meet demand and improve our timeliness through rapid expansion of our capacity. This has only been possible because of our investment in quality, training, new buildings and equipment, new technology and, of course, our people.

Quality

Quality is a key target and our investment in our quality management systems; the importance we attach to identification of risks; their management; and our wide range of assurance audits has paid off. We could not have grown so quickly and so safely without this investment. We have given full support to the Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners - which was launched in October - having been one of the main drivers behind its establishment.

Training of new recruits

Over the last year we recruited and trained nearly 500 people - a huge investment. No-one joins the FSS with forensic science skills; these are just not available. The FSS has had to create some excellent training modules to develop our new scientific recruits at both graduate level and below and invest extensively in coaching and mentoring.

Buildings and equipment

The FSS has made its biggest ever investment this year - a complex of three laboratory buildings on the outskirts of Birmingham. This state-of-the-art facility houses Research and Service Development, our new automated DNA line and IS/IT. The development illustrates just how seriously we take investment in the future.

New technology

We have continued to invest in new technology through automation, miniaturisation, crime scene technology and information. These are the foundations for the development of new services to take forward the ACPO/FSS development strategy. We are developing these in partnership with police forces to support an intelligence-led approach particularly in the investigation of crimes such as burglary and car crime but also violent crime. A major project funded by the Home Office - Pathfinder - is developing new technologies and services. We will start piloting some new services later this year. I am confident that our continued and increasing investment in research will deliver applications that will transform our contribution over the next 10 years.

Investing in our staff

The expertise, experience and commitment of staff is at the centre of the FSS's success, and priority has been given to personnel development. The success of the FSS last year - and since becoming an Executive Agency - could not have been achieved without the commitment and professionalism of our staff. We made staff development a priority - and listened to views through staff surveys and meetings. Some of what we wanted to do in terms of staff development and motivation has had to be sacrificed in the interests of customer demand and timeliness. We are determined to get this right in the coming year.

Responding to our customers' and stakeholders' requirements

The FSS has focussed on supporting Government aims in the areas of crime reduction and prevention. We strengthened our already strong partnership with the police through work with ACPO and with individual forces. We have worked particularly closely on the recommendations contained in the report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary - *Under the Microscope* - which showed just how important forensic science has become to modern day policing. The money provided by Government for DNA expansion, and our own achievements in service development and delivery in this area, were supported by awareness training for police forces in the capabilities and use of our service.

Timeliness is a key issue; the information we can provide is needed as early as possible in an investigation. It can make all the difference in solving crime and making best use of police resources.

Our evidence also needs to be provided in a manner which supports the greater emphasis on speeding up the criminal justice process. We are setting ourselves challenging targets over the next three years with our customers and stakeholders. Much of our work will need to be delivered in a matter of days and will involve significant extra growth and many more staff moving on to extended day and weekend working patterns.

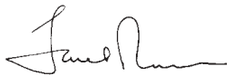
We aim to share abroad the work we do in this country - the setting of quality standards, service delivery, and partnership working. Our priority is to support wider UK Government aims - for example in areas such as organised crime. We have already helped a number of countries improve their own forensic science provision. We have also shared and learnt about good practice through our work within the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes which includes many Eastern European countries, and more widely.

Independence and impartiality

The FSS prides itself in the impartiality and integrity of our work on behalf of the CJS. This is a key responsibility of our Chief Scientist, who is independent of the Senior Management Team, and reports directly to me. The Chief Scientist is also the appointed Custodian of the National DNA Database on behalf of ACPO and ourselves.

Investing in the future

The FSS will continue its strategic role in realising the potential of forensic science with customers and stakeholders. We will look for improvements in our service - both in what we provide and the way we provide it. We have shown that forensic science can be used to provide vital intelligence as well as corroboration, meeting the needs of the investigators. We're looking to increase our dialogue with customers to ensure we're delivering to their priorities, and they're aware of what exactly we can provide for them.



Dr Janet Thompson CB, Chief Executive

"I'm proud that we have realised a great deal of our potential. As I prepare to hand over the reins of such a dynamic, caring organisation, I still share the excitement of all my colleagues in looking forward to how much can be achieved in such an important area of work."

The FSS Senior Management Team 2000-2001 (left to right)

Mike Loveland	– Director of Quality & Head of Profession	**Gary Pugh**	– Marketing Director
Dr Dave Werrett	– Service Delivery Director	**Trevor Howitt**	– Research and Service Development Director
Ken Gilliver	– Human Resources Director	**Phil Jones**	– Customer Relations Director
Dr Janet Thompson CB	– Chief Executive	**Rod Anthony (not present)**	– Finance Director
		Colin Bradley (not present)	– Information Systems Director (Interim)

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF SUCCESS

The FSS gained Executive Agency status on 1 April 1991. Four years later the National DNA Database® was launched. The FSS became a truly national service on 1 April 1996 when it merged with the Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory. Trading Fund status began on 1 April 1999. The growth of the agency continued, so that the 2,000th employee fittingly joined the FSS in the middle of 2000. A few months later came a further celebration as the one millionth suspect profile appeared on the National DNA Database®. The FSS's emphasis on staff development was recognised in December 2000 when it was awarded Investors in People (IiP) accreditation.

"We've seen a phenomenal increase in work - but with a 'can do' attitude, we're better able to cope. We've put a lot of effort into understanding what our customers need - but also into making them more aware of our capabilities."

Liz Wilson, Senior Training Consultant

"We're a more flexible organisation - both in working procedures and resource allocation - so we can quickly adjust to the requirements and demands of the CJS."

Dave Baldwin, Specialist Adviser (Marks) in Research and Service Development

"We're more proactive in suggesting to the police ways in which we could help solve their more notorious, serious cases - going back 10, 20 even 30 years - and with the power of DNA on our side we're doing it. The FSS is also more open - so the public has a better understanding and appreciation of our work."

Dave Loxley, Specialist Adviser

"We've moved from the testers of an hypothesis to suppliers of information, I hope the next 10 years sees us move to the provision of solutions. Just think 10 years ago the word customer was unheard of!"

Dave Werrett, Service Delivery Director

"Over the last 10 years, the use of forensic science by the police forces of England and Wales has grown enormously. In addition to the wide range of services offered by the FSS, the creation of the National DNA Database was a notable milestone in its history. The FSS rightly enjoys a reputation as the world's foremost provider of forensic science. Since becoming an Executive Agency of the Home Office and then a Trading Fund, the FSS has cut its average turnround time by 41 per cent, and, in spite of an enormous growth in demand, has increased its overall efficiency by seven per cent. On behalf of the forces in England and Wales, I congratulate the FSS on being a world leader and for the significant results achieved."

Ben Gunn, Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Constabulary and ACPO spokesman on forensic science matters

Cases of the Decade - DNA Intelligence

The FSS's first mass intelligence screen helped solve a savage knife murder in 1995.

Hazel Johnson, who received a police commendation for her work leading to the conviction of Edwin Hopkins for the murder of 15-year-old Nuneaton schoolgirl Naomi Smith, said: *"I was initially deluged with potential weapons, clothing and footwear to examine. The breakthrough was identifying saliva from a body swab from which my Wetherby colleagues were then able to gain a DNA profile.*

Hundreds of young men in the area were asked to come forward to provide a sample for DNA profiling - and this resulted in a match with Hopkins. This proved crucial in court and Hopkins was sentenced to life imprisonment.

"This new screening service came on the back of our advances in DNA profiling - and is now a tried and tested part of the crime investigation tool kit."

OUR PERFORMANCE

Performance - an overview

This was the Agency's second year as a Trading Fund, and performance has been robust. Both financial performance and service levels have improved.

Our driver is the service we provide to customers. It's vital that we provide the service they require in the time that they require it.

Trading Fund status has enabled us to plough back surpluses into developing the organisation - for example research, equipment or staff - to provide a better customer service.

Rod Anthony,
Finance Director

Agency targets

Finance

Target: A 10 per cent return on capital employed
Achieved 11.3 per cent

Target: A minimum 10 per cent efficiency gain over three years
*Achieved 9 per cent (10 per cent since 1 April 1999)****

Agency targets

Service delivery

Target: A 24 day turnround time (adjusted to 27 on a like for like basis)
Achieved 26 days

Target: 90 per cent of agreed delivery dates met
Achieved 93 per cent

Target: Pilot a target in the first half of the year to exceed 99 per cent of urgent and critical classified cases
Pilot achieved: Pilot successfully carried out highlighting procedural changes needed for implementation

Target: Put in place service level agreements with police forces
Target achieved

Target: Demonstrate year on year improvement in police (customer) satisfaction
Target achieved

Target: External quality accreditation to ISO 9000 and NAMAS standard
Target achieved: Accreditation maintained and widened to cover new areas during the year

Agency targets 2001-2002

Finance

Achieve a 10 per cent return on capital employed

Achieve a three year rolling target of a minimum 10 per cent efficiency gain

Service delivery

Achieve a 26 day average turnround time (normalised)

Meet agreed delivery dates in 97 per cent urgent and critical, 100 per cent persistent young offenders

Achieve 93 per cent of agreed delivery dates in all categories

Put in place agreements on service levels with 90 per cent of police forces

Establish a baseline overall measure for putting into place routine and robust customer satisfaction measurement processes based on transactional approach, and for demonstrating year on year improvements in police (customer) satisfaction

Conduct a biennial customer satisfaction survey

Maintain external quality accreditation to ISO standards

Achieve 50 per cent accreditation to the Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners in areas in which it is registering people

Service first

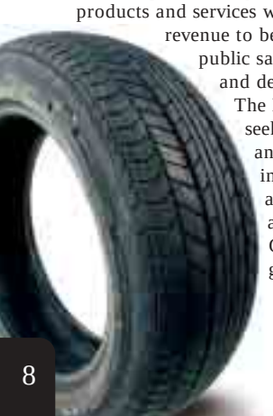
The FSS applies the relevant Service First principles by:

- Setting standards of service - and monitoring and reviewing performance.
- Consulting and involving customers - through regular liaison and surveys.
- Putting things right when they go wrong - and learning from the experience.
- Using resources effectively - so customers receive best value for money.
- Innovating and improving - both in forensic science techniques and in quality of service.
- Working with other providers - through regular formal and informal contact.

Providing services to wider markets

One of the FSS's key objectives is to increase public safety - by developing products and services which will generate revenue to be re-invested in public safety-based research and development.

The FSS continues to seek opportunities and ways to exploit intellectual property and assets in accordance with Government guidance.



That's our business

As an integral part of the CJS, the FSS works to meet challenging targets to ensure that forensic science plays its full part in the criminal process. Forensic science has a role to play in cracking down on all areas of crime:

Tackling violent crime

Demand for FSS services to support the investigation of violent crime has risen significantly, with submissions up 12 per cent on last year. There has been a 10 per cent rise in the use of the Major Crime Service (MCS) by police forces, who recognise the contribution it makes to complex major investigations, particularly through specialist advisers (SAs). These SAs are experienced forensic scientists who act as consultants to Senior Investigating Officers (SIOs).

The expanded National Services Specialist Location and Recovery teams now provide a national leading-edge approach to the location and detection of marks and fingerprints.

Reaching back into time

The startling impact of forensic science - particularly DNA - has been felt on long-standing unsolved cases. It has brought a renewed sense of optimism to officers working on crimes dating back decades. Material from the original crime scene can be re-examined using the very latest techniques which were unthought of at the time.

Beating burglary and car crime

The FSS played a major role in combating volume crime - burglary and vehicle crime. The number of cases submitted increased by a substantial 25 per cent. This was mostly due to the Government-funded DNA Database expansion programme. The FSS has been working closely with forces to measure the impact forensic science can make by integrating forensic processes with police processes, raising awareness of forensic science and testing out new technology on live cases.

Combating drugs

The FSS has been working on profiling methods and a database so we can provide intelligence information to the police. We have been advising the Home Office and Europe on similar applications involving amphetamines following a Swedish proposal to the European Union on illicit drugs.

Quality matters

Over 500 days of customer training was provided through our regionalised training consultants.

The FSS developed, piloted and implemented an assessment process on behalf of the Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners (CRFP) so that it can receive applications from document examiners. We have progressed towards common standards for European document examiners and set up and run a quality assurance exercise as a part of this process. And a plan has also been implemented for the professional development of already trained document examiners.

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) have been developed for fibres and for blood and body fluids to help improve consistency, backed up by training packages. SOPs are being developed in other areas - including glass, toolmark and footwear mark examination.

The FSS has taken the lead in supplying assessors for the CRFP and has been heavily involved in developing the assessment process and training for assessors.

Historic Summary of FSS Performance

Key Agency Targets		Targets, Outturns & Achievements				
		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Financial						
Full Cost Recovery	Target Outturn	100% 97%	100% 105%	100% 100%	100% 100%	N/A N/A
Return On Capital Employed	Target Outturn	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	3% *5.6%	10% 11.3%
Efficiency						
Annual Efficiency Gain	Target Outturn	3.69% 2.04%	3.90% 5.75%	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
3 Year Rolling Efficiency Gain	Target Outturn	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	9% 6%	10% *8%	10% ***9%
Service Levels						
Achieve 90% Agreed Delivery Dates	Target Outturn	90% 84%	90% 72%	90% 80%	90% 89%	90% 93%
Average Turnround Time	Target Outturn	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	24 days 26 days	**24 days 26 days
Quality						
Maintain External Accreditation	Target Outturn	Maintain Widened	Maintain Widened	Maintain Widened	Maintain Widened	Maintain Widened

Notes: Unit cost is the cost per process output hour (POH), a standardised measure of FSS output.

*Excludes DNA expansion costs £1.1m.

**If the turnround time target is flexed to reflect the actual mix of business against that original assumed when the target was set, the target would have been 27 days.

***The efficiency gain since 1.4.99 when the FSS was established as a Trading Fund is 10%.

SUPPORTING CUSTOMERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The FSS values are "to be a source of pride to our customers, owners and ourselves by upholding the values of integrity, reliability, innovation and responsiveness."

The value of partnership

The FSS is able to play an important strategic role in realising the potential of forensic science to support the administration of justice both now and in the future. As principle supplier to the police of forensic science services, the FSS, in partnership with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and Government departments, aims to contribute at a strategic level to the development and implementation of policy initiatives and performance targets.

This partnership approach enables the FSS to try out new services and to demonstrate the power of forensic science in a range of circumstances.

A number of partnership projects have taken place over the year with individual police forces, including Essex, South Wales, Warwickshire and the Metropolitan Police, all based around using forensic science effectively. These projects are tailored to the needs of the individual force, but common strands are increasing forensic awareness, improving communication and identifying good practice.

Particular emphasis was placed on reducing burglary and property crime, tackling vehicle crime, and dealing effectively with both young and adult offenders by speeding up criminal proceedings and reducing delays. A major part of this has been the expansion of the National DNA Database.

The FSS is also supporting the Government's pledge to halve the time taken to deal with persistent young offenders by 2002. The FSS has targeted 21 days as the reduced turnround time for providing evidence.

The new Bill

The then Home Secretary Jack Straw visited London's DNA unit in January, on the day the Criminal Justice and Police Bill was published. He toured the unit to see first-hand the DNA profiling process, and to hear about safeguards in the system to ensure integrity of samples.

Maximum impact

The thematic inspection report of scientific and technical support *Under the Microscope* by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary reported in July 2000.

It strongly reinforced the value of forensic science, in particular DNA and fingerprints, in helping to detect and prevent burglary and vehicle crime, and made recommendations to help police maximise its potential. The FSS is working closely with ACPO and police to achieve this.

Driving away crime

A pioneering scheme with Greater Manchester Police and Lancashire Constabulary to cut burglary and car crime was launched in June 2000. The Pathfinder project uses a full range of forensic techniques, including the latest DNA technology, to maximise the recovery of forensic evidence from crime scenes and use forensic intelligence databases to link suspects to crimes and identify serial offences.

A major 'Crack Down'

The FSS played a pivotal role in the Metropolitan Police's biggest ever anti-drugs operation. Illegal drugs with an estimated street value of £2.3 million were seized and more than 1,300 people arrested in the second phase of Operation Crack Down.

The operation, which ran for six weeks from mid-January, targeted more than 700 addresses across the capital.

The campaign highlighted the FSS's developing intelligence services. The FSS received more than 370 drugs cases including 126 involving crack cocaine and 102 involving heroin. Many were dealt with out of normal working hours. DNA profiles were checked against the National DNA Database and matches regularly reported to the police along with drugs intelligence.

Phase One of Operation Crack Down had recovered drugs worth around £1.5 million.

Commander Tim Godwin said: "We worked closely with the Forensic Science Service who provided a service specially aimed at supporting the operational objectives. Their input was invaluable in ensuring officers received added support. I would like to thank them for their magnificent efforts."

Fully aware

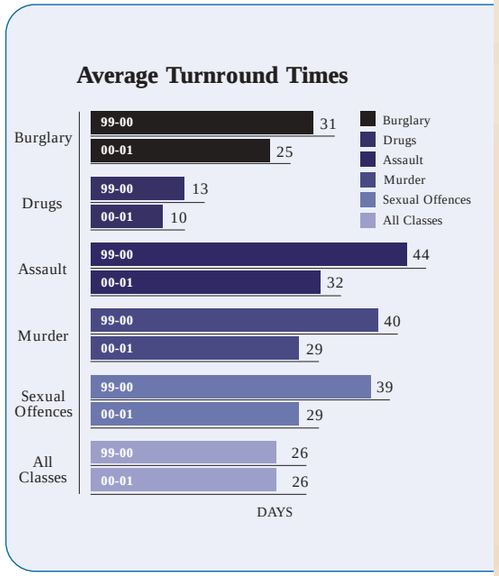
A DNA awareness programme for police customers was carried out as part of the Home Office DNA expansion project. Twenty-four FSS trainers delivered 721 courses for all forces across England and Wales to increase knowledge of the power of DNA profiling as an intelligence tool.

Squad leader

A joint project looking at how forensic science could support the National Crime Squad (NCS) in combating serious and organised crime led to the secondment of an FSS consultant to provide strategic advice on best use and development of forensic science. The consultant has also helped to recruit three NCS forensic investigators, who link into the FSS Major Crime Service and scientists in the complex drugs teams.

Worth investigating

The FSS has provided trainers to support the National Crime Faculty (NCF) SIO development course and helped to set up the new management of linked and series crime course. The FSS has contributed to NCF seminars and co-produces the NCF journal *Spotlight*. The FSS also continues to support the NCF review of several major enquiries.



Spotlight on smuggling

The FSS helps HM Customs & Excise investigate drug smuggling, evasion of excise duty and VAT fraud, and has developed an integrated service, offering consultation and assistance from scene to court. Dedicated HMC&E teams include scientists from varying forensic disciplines plus scene of crime specialists. The most complex cases are assigned a forensic investigator - a senior scientist who advises on how to make the best possible use of forensic science in individual investigations.

World leaders

FSS scientists and advisers travel the world to pass on expertise and encourage others in the use of quality forensic science. The FSS sought to extend services worldwide in support of the wider administration of justice. Senior government officials and police from 29 countries - including Australia, Sweden, Mexico, Turkey and Hong Kong - visited the FSS. The FSS provided a full-time adviser for the European Commission in October, to aid the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU. The project to develop quality systems, introduce new technology and deliver specialist training has already enlisted the help of FSS staff from a variety of disciplines who have been travelling to Prague. And the project in Kuwait to design, build and install a working DNA laboratory is nearing completion.

Cases of the Decade - The Tsar's Bones

A pioneering technique - now a common part of the FSS's DNA service - was used to clear up an international mystery.

FSS experts were called in by Russian officials to examine the bones from nine bodies discovered in Ekaterinberg in 1991. Five of the nine were believed to be Tsar Nicholas II and his family.

Using the newly-developed mitochondrial DNA technique, FSS scientists were able to extract DNA from the bones, despite the bodies having been burnt and doused in sulphuric acid some 75 years before. Profiles were compared with those of living relatives of the Romanovs, including the Duke of Edinburgh. Statistical analysis showed a probability of over 99 per cent that the bones were indeed those of the Tsar and his family.

Dr Peter Gill - Research Consultant, Biological Sciences - who worked closely with Russian counterparts over a period of 18 months said: *"We tested our developing DNA expertise on this high profile case to very good effect. It proved that the technology works not only on minute samples of blood and other biological material, but also on 'dead' material such as bones and hair shafts. This has widened greatly the areas of potential evidence types - giving the police and ourselves far more chance of success."*

INVESTING IN INNOVATION

State of the art labs are new research home

New, purpose-built laboratories on the outskirts of Birmingham represented the FSS's biggest-ever investment and will provide a new home to Research and Service Development (R&SD).
The majority of R&SD staff are relocating to the new site from both the Priory House site in Birmingham and the FSS laboratory in London.

Making the breakthroughs

Renowned across the globe, FSS researchers are constantly on the lookout for new ways to use forensic science to help beat crime.

Development of new services and tests included:

- Development and roll-out of a pilot scheme for heroin profiling in conjunction with the Birmingham drugs team and HM Customs & Excise staff.
- Development of a red hair prediction test through DNA which was completed and introduced as a service in April 2001.
- Improved extraction technology which was developed for DNA casework samples.
- Capillary electrophoresis, an integral part of an automated DNA Database line. This will increase the quality and throughput of DNA samples from 36 (or 48) to 96 at any one time - saving time and money.
- TrueAllele™, launched for DNA Database applications at Priory House this year. It is an extra computerised part of the automated analysis system that halves processing time and reduces the amount of intervention by staff in the DNA profiling process.

Significant progress has also been made on miniaturised DNA technology, which will play a major role in many future products and services.

A full picture of crime

The 'digital detective' FLINTS - the Forensic-Led Intelligence System - puts a criminal's movements together like a jigsaw. FLINTS was jointly developed by the FSS and West Midlands Police, and launched at a forensic intelligence conference in April 2000 which was attended by more than 150 delegates from this country and abroad. An extra £500,000 was awarded by the Home Office to continue the computer program's development.

Allied to the day-to-day work carried out for customers is the world-leading research conducted by dedicated scientists.

Surplus revenue is ploughed back into research - on a rolling strategy to provide benefits to the Criminal Justice System in both effectiveness and efficiency.

"The FSS has a world leading position in research and development of new applications of technology and novel approaches. As a result of that investment, we stand on the brink of a step-change in the contribution of forensic science in support of police in the investigation and detection of crime."

Trevor Howitt, Research and Service Development Director.

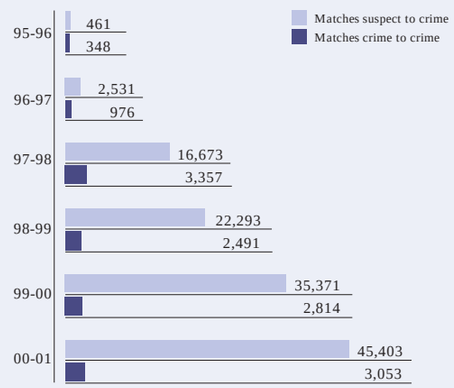
An unprecedented impact on crime

The National DNA Database (NDNAD) continues to have an increasingly significant impact on crime investigation - six years after its launch.

The NDNAD holds DNA profiles taken from suspects charged, reported, cautioned or convicted for a recordable offence. It also holds DNA profiles from stains found at crime scenes. It matches profiles from suspects with those from a crime scene and can also link crimes to one perpetrator, even if they are hundreds of miles apart.

As Custodian, the FSS inputs, updates and manages the information and gives relevant intelligence data to the police. The NDNAD chalked up an important milestone in November when the number of DNA profiles of suspects or convicted criminals reached one million. This coincided with the 100,000th DNA profile match of a suspect to a crime scene or a crime to another crime. Another milestone was achieved in March 2001 with the loading onto the Database of the first DNA Low Copy Number (DNA LCN) profile, which matched a profile from a volume crime investigation.

Number of Matches Reported by the National DNA Database®



In the last year, the Government pledged an extra £168 million of investment in DNA to be spent over three years. This includes £109 million towards the expansion of the NDNAD to ensure the profiles of more than three million active criminals are on the database by April 2004, and £59 million to support police scenes of crime work to increase the quality of DNA evidence recovered and to exploit results evidentially.

This funding is in addition to £34 million over two years awarded in September 1999 to expand the NDNAD.

The DNA expansion project continued with major advances in DNA Database automation.

A big 'plus'

In 1991, scientists needed a bloodstain around the size of a ten pence piece to be able to extract a DNA profile. Now, a far more discriminating and powerful DNA profile can be extracted from the touch of a finger on a glass, or a single speck of dandruff. The latest technique, FSS SGM Plus™, is playing a vital role in the police reinvestigation of major unsolved cases.

INVESTING IN INNOVATION continued

Justice review

The Chief Scientist is the liaison point for the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) - the body that in 1997 took over most of the responsibilities previously held by the Home Office for considering and investigating suspected miscarriages of justice in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The FSS works closely with the CCRC in both an advisory and operational capacity. In the last year, 47 cases were referred to the FSS by the CCRC.

The best for the CJS

The Chief Scientist works closely with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to ensure that the FSS's working practices continue to comply with the requirements of the CJS. The Chief Scientist also acts as a source of internal advice within the FSS on such matters and he represents the FSS on the tripartite FSS/CPS/ACPO National Liaison Group which has developed various agreements affecting all three agencies - on disclosure of unused material and retention of case files, for example. The National Liaison Group is currently reviewing statement writing and will soon be providing new guidance in this area.

"The National DNA Database® continues to be an astounding success, generating around 900 matches every week. The success of the NDNAD has been recognised by the Government, which is investing more funding in it with a view to putting the active criminal population on the Database within the next three years."

Dr Bob Bramley, Chief Scientist.

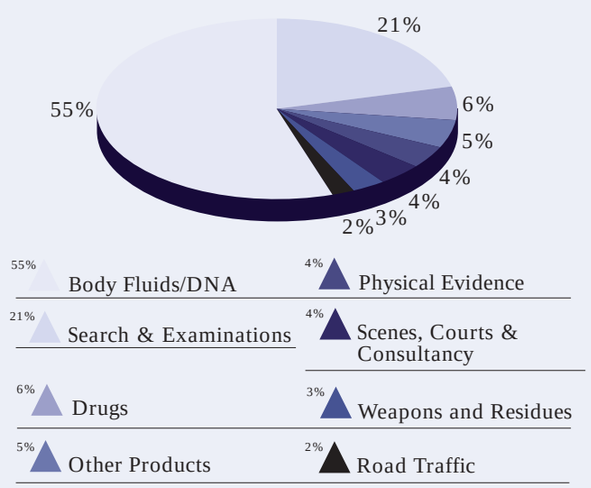
Safe custody

The FSS - as the principal provider of forensic science services - provides leadership in the wider forensic science community. Much of this falls to the Chief Scientist, Dr Bob Bramley. The Chief Scientist is a senior manager, independent of the Executive Board, and reports direct to the Chief Executive.

The Chief Scientist is responsible for carrying out the FSS's role as Custodian of the National DNA Database - in line with the new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the FSS and the Association of Chief Police Officers.

The MoU stresses the importance of the Custodian in maintaining public confidence in DNA profiling. The Custodian is also required to ensure the integrity of the data held on the Database.

Police Sales By Product Group



Today's technology reaches back in time

A combination of DNA advances and a determined police investigation helped solve one of Britain's oldest murder enquiries. Mary Gregson was murdered in 1977, as she walked along the towpath of the Leeds-Liverpool canal in Yorkshire.

West Yorkshire Police interviewed more than 8,500 people in a huge investigation, but Mrs Gregson's death remained a mystery.

The specialist DNA Low Copy Number unit became involved in 1997 following a review of the case. Their work led to a break-through – a full male profile obtained from semen stains recovered from Mary's clothing.

Reporting Officer Jonathan Whitaker said: *"The FSS has a continuing programme of research aimed at improving the extraction and sensitivity of DNA profiling tests. In early 1999, FSS SGMPlus™ was launched along with other improvements which have been termed DNA LCN. This is our most sensitive technique yet and has produced outstanding results in current and historic cases."*

Detectives undertook an intelligence-led screen of the men involved in the original inquiry. Local man Ian Lowther's sample matched the DNA profile obtained from Mary's clothing. He pleaded guilty to killing Mary in September 2000 at Sheffield Crown Court and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

INVESTING IN OUR STAFF

People progress

The pioneering work of the FSS, and the effectiveness of its services, has led to significantly increased demand, both in terms of volume and type of services. Staff numbers grew by almost 500 to ensure that the FSS not only stays on top of its game - but also is flexible enough to adapt to changing customer requirements. Skills development was focussed on both these new starters as well as existing staff, amongst whom 350 moved into different positions, illustrating the opportunities for career and personal development in a growing organisation.

Investment pays off

The priority which the FSS places on its staff was recognised when Investors in People accreditation was awarded in December 2000. An improved performance appraisal and personal development process, regular reviews with staff on a one-to-one basis and strengthened briefing and communications mechanisms were among the measures introduced. A third staff attitude survey was carried out in 2000 - with the results driving the development of further initiatives.

- The appointment of a diversity officer helped to further reinforce the FSS policy of aiming to maximise the benefits of a diverse workforce (10 per cent ethnic minority, 57 per cent female and one per cent staff who have declared a disability).

- The FSS's expansion has brought more young scientists into the organisation - to form an effective mix with the experienced experts. Over 40 per cent of staff is under the age of 30.

- Extensive progress in the safety, environment and health aspects of staff saw focussed efforts in health and safety training, an internal audit system, developing an Environmental Management System, and piloting a staff health screening programme.

"I attended a training course to help me with my work in the Evidence Recovery Unit at Huntingdon, which examines a wide range of submitted material, recovering evidence of potential scientific value. The eight-week course provided me with essential basic skills as well as training on a wide range of techniques such as using low and high power microscopy alongside relevant chemical tests."

Sam Fox, Evidence Recovery Unit.

"The First Line Manager course has given me a better understanding of the relationships between managers and their staff, and highlighted how management style needs to be flexible within a line management group. Modules included presentation skills, customer care, situational leadership and team building."

Karen Owens, Evidence Recovery Unit Supervisor.

Appliance of science

Specialist adviser Cathy Turner was presented with an award by West Yorkshire Police after dedicated work on a complex series of armed robberies.

The award - the Divisional Commander's certificate of merit - followed painstaking work by Cathy and a team of FSS staff who helped police crack 10 armed robberies, two attempted armed robberies and two burglaries.

Three men were jailed for a total of 24 years for carrying out a spate of terrifying attacks in Bradford. They burst into building societies, banks, jewellers' shops and post offices threatening staff with an Uzi sub-machine gun, sticks and metal bars.

FSS scientists produced results suggesting links between suspects and the crimes. These included a fingerprint on a note left at one of the robberies; fibres work; examination of CCTV footage and DNA on a cigarette butt in a suspected getaway vehicle.

Cathy said: "*The award was not just for me but for the whole team.*"

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

A strategy for success

The FSS is able to play an important strategic role in realising the potential of forensic science to support the administration of justice both now and in the future. As principal supplier to the police of forensic science services, the FSS, in partnership with ACPO and Government departments, aims to contribute at a strategic level to the development and implementation of policy initiatives and performance targets.

New intelligence

The major growth in DNA profiling has confirmed the role of forensic science as providing intelligence and information as well as evidence to the courts. The FSS, conscious of the increasing requirement for intelligence-based services and the pressure to reduce the time taken for forensic examinations, is changing working patterns to deliver a more responsive service.

Entering into a more structured relationship with customers to manage demand and capacity is critical to future success. The introduction of seven-day working nationally will form part of improving customer service levels and asset utilisation.

OBJECTIVES 2001-02

Effective forensic on demand

Demand for forensic science - and the services of the FSS - is likely to carry on rising as customers reap the benefit of our work - including research and development.

Better understanding of the requirements and priorities of customers and stakeholders will enable us to improve timeliness even further. The FSS will adopt a more service-led approach that delivers the kind of benefits that are important to customers. Services will be delivered by a complete forensic process, rather than through a totally laboratory-based system.

The FSS is keen to develop added-value services that incorporate existing products and services combined with new services and new roles to deliver customer benefits.

Forensic science can make a major contribution to crime reduction, and complement traditional policing methods. An improved interface between the FSS and police forces will bring on the advantages of effective forensic science work.

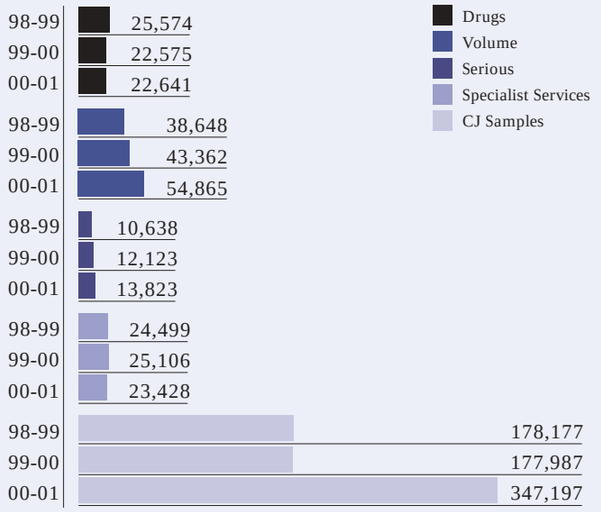
Plotting the way ahead

Our work will complement the Home Office Business Plan 2001-2002 in a number of areas, including the aims to reduce crime, the delivery of justice and a reduction in organised and international crime.

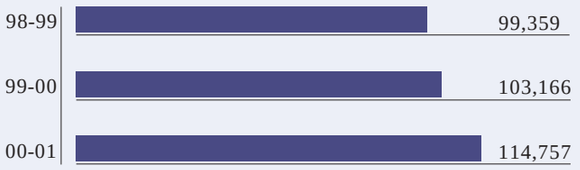
The FSS's objectives will also have regard to the Government strategy document *Criminal Justice: The Way Ahead*, published in February 2001.

New services - based on policing outcomes - will be piloted with our customers - and databases to support investigation through improved use of forensic intelligence will be developed.

Number of Cases Submitted by Police Customers



Total Casework (excluding CJ Samples)



Profile match snares rapist

A rapist who got away with his crime for almost a decade was finally caught and jailed - after he was arrested for allegedly stealing a bottle of whisky.

A DNA profile of Stephen Snowden - taken on arrest - matched a profile from an unsolved rape on the National DNA Database.

Police made repeated appeals for help to find the rapist at the time, but without any luck. They got the break they needed when Snowden was arrested for stealing from his local supermarket in south London, early last year.

Huntingdon's Senior Violent Crime Reporting Officer Peter Lamb said: *"We all knew DNA technology was going to improve, so we stored material. Now, such cases are being prioritised and re-examined."*

Snowden was jailed for 12 years at Peterborough Crown Court in January after being found guilty of the 1991 Cambridgeshire rape.

THE FORENSIC SCIENCE SERVICE®

Accounts for the year to 31 March 2001

FOREWORD TO THE ACCOUNTS

Background Information

These accounts report the results of The Forensic Science Service in its second year as a Trading Fund.

The Forensic Science Service became a Trading Fund on 1 April 1999, in accordance with Section 4 (6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973. The Forensic Science Service remains an Executive Agency of the Home Office.

On 5 May 1998 the NAO published a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of The Forensic Science Service. This report was followed by a Public Accounts Committee hearing on 16 November 1998 and published report dated 15 March 1999. This report made certain recommendations. The Forensic Science Service put in place a three year programme of work to deal with these recommendations. During 2000/01 The Forensic Science Service completed this programme of work.

Activities of The Forensic Science Service

The purpose of The Forensic Science Service is to realise the full potential of forensic science to contribute to a safer and more just society.

The Forensic Science Service is committed to delivering the highest quality of service, providing cost effective solutions to customers' needs, and harnessing developments in science and technology for the benefit of customers and to contribute to the prevention, deterrence and reduction of crime.

The Forensic Science Service also believes that by establishing strategic partnerships with customers and suppliers the maximum potential value of forensic science can be realised.

Advisory Board

Responsibility for advising the Secretary of State on the performance of The Forensic Science Service lies with the Director General, Policing and Crime Reduction Group, assisted by an Advisory Board. Members of the Board in 2000/01 were:

Mr J Lyon (Chairman)
Director General, Policing and Crime Reduction Group, Home Office

Miss K Collins Deputy Director General, Organised and International Crime Directorate
Home Office

Mrs A Deal Crown Prosecution Service from November 2000

Mr R Fulton Director of Strategy and Performance
Home Office

Mr D G Gunn Chief Constable, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Mr L Haugh Principal Finance Officer,
Home Office

Mr P Hobbs Non Executive Director

Mr R Pannone Non Executive Director

Mrs J Terry Crown Prosecution Service,
resigned November 2000

Dr J Thompson CB
Chief Executive of The Forensic Science Service, attends meetings.

No fees or expenses were paid to members of the Advisory Board.

Main Board

The Main Board consists of:

Dr J Thompson CB
Chief Executive

Mr R J Anthony
Finance Director

Mr C Bradley
Information Systems Director (Interim) appointed April 2000

Mr K G Gilliver
Human Resources Director

Mr T H Howitt
Director of Research and Service Development

Mr P Jones
Customer Relations Director

Mr M R Loveland
Director of Quality

Mr G Pugh
Marketing Director

Dr D J Werrett
Director of Service Delivery

In addition, there are four Non Executive members who act in an advisory capacity to the Main Board and Chief Executive they are:

Mr J Botten
Chief Executive Officer, Telemedic Systems Inc

Mr P Hobbs
Chairman of the Learning from Experience Trust

Mr R Pannone
Pannone and Partners, Solicitors

Mr P Riley
Senior Manager, Zeneca Plc (retired)

Financial Objectives

The Government Trading Funds Act 1973, as amended, lays upon the Minister responsible for each fund the financial objective of:

- managing the funded operations so that the revenue of the fund is not less than sufficient, taking one year with another, to meet outgoings which are properly chargeable to revenue account; and
- achieving such further financial objectives as the Treasury may from time to time, by minute laid before the House of Commons, indicate as having been determined by the responsible Minister (with Treasury concurrence) to be desirable of achievement.

The financial objectives of The Forensic Science Service are:

- to achieve an average annual return on capital employed (ROCE) on ordinary activities of at least 10-15% over a three year period;
- to achieve an efficiency gain of a minimum of 10% over a period of three years.

Treasury Direction

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with a direction given by the Treasury in pursuance of Section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973.

This is reproduced on page 37. The accounts have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

A Review of the Business Environment

Turnover in 2000/01 was £102.9m, an increase of 34% on the previous year. This growth was due to a greater demand for products and services in part a direct result of the additional funding made available by the Government to support the increased use of DNA as an enabler to the achievement of crime reduction targets. Early indications are that demand for forensic services will continue to grow into 2001/02.

The profit for the year ended 31 March 2001 was £3695k which has been added to reserves.

The increase in fixed assets reflects planned capital projects together with the investment in the move to Trident Court. This was largely funded by a loan of £6m from the Home Office.

The Forensic Science Service generated a return on capital employed of 11.3% against a target of 10%. The unit cost outturn delivered a 7.1% efficiency gain year on year, giving a cumulative figure for the last 3 years of 8.9% against a target of 10%. In the two years since the Trading Fund was established, the cumulative efficiency gain is 10%.

The dividend payable to the Home Office has been waived for the year to 31 March 2001. It is planned that a dividend is to be paid for the year ended 31 March 2002.

There were no significant post balance sheet events.

Market Value of Land and Buildings

Land and buildings were professionally valued as at March 1998 in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors guidance and were revalued by the use of relevant indices to their replacement cost as at 31 March 2001. The Forensic Science Service has commissioned an interim valuation which at the time of publishing these accounts is not complete but, we believe the valuation will not be materially different from the figures shown in the accounts.

These interim valuations will be reflected in the accounts to 31 March 2002, together with their relevant indices for their replacement cost. Full valuations are planned to be undertaken in two years' time.

Fixed Assets

The movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in note 7 on page 32.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is chaired by a Non Executive Member of The Forensic Science Service's Main Board and includes independent external and internal representatives. This Committee has responsibility for monitoring the application of audit throughout The Forensic Science Service, advising on the appointment and performance of Internal Audit, for monitoring the systems of internal control and to ensure procedures are in place for reviewing the effectiveness of those controls. The Committee may also advise on the application of corporate governance principles in The Forensic Science Service. National Audit Office and Internal Audit are invited to attend Committee meetings.

Members of the Audit Committee: Mr P Riley Chairman
Mr R J Anthony Finance Director
Dr R K Bramley Chief Scientist
Mr P Hobbs Non Executive Director
Mr M R Loveland Director of Quality
Mr A Mortimer Head of Home Office Audit and Assurance Unit

Development and Remuneration Committee

The Development and Remuneration Committee is chaired by a Non Executive Member of The Forensic Science Service's Main Board and includes another Non Executive Director and the Chief Executive. The Director of Human Resources in The Forensic Science Service attends. The Department is represented by The Director General, Policing and Crime Reduction Group. There are two external and independent ex-officio members with development and remuneration expertise.

The Committee reviews and makes recommendations on Non Executive Directors fees and expenses, the terms and conditions of the Chief Executive and the Executive Board; advises on FSS organisation, staff reward and recognition strategy and advice on management and succession planning.

Members of the Development and Remuneration Committee: Mr P Hobbs Non Executive Director
Mr J Lyon Director General, Policing and Crime Reduction Group and Advisory Board Chair
Mr P Riley Non Executive Director
Dr J Thompson CB Chief Executive
Sir Leonard Peach ex-officio
Mr D Battle ex-officio

The Euro

The Forensic Science Service has representation on the Home Office Euro Steering Group. Currently we have assurances that our accounting systems are euro compliant, and we will comply with Home Office guidelines on any future implementation.

Supplier Payment Policy

The Forensic Science Service follows Government guidelines on the payment of supplier invoices and has adopted the better payment procedure code. Individuals and small company suppliers are paid within 30 days, larger suppliers are paid, wherever possible within their terms of sale, normally at the end of the month following the supply of goods and services.

The Forensic Science Service payment performance, calculated in accordance with Treasury Guidelines, was 96.5%, against a target of 100% (year 1999/00 94.6%).

Research and Development

The Forensic Science Service research and development programme is critical to realising the potential of forensic science with customers and stakeholders. Through a comprehensive programme which focuses on the development of new products and services to more effectively detect crime and contribute to crime reduction, prevention and deterrence, the FSS will ensure business success and maximise its contribution to the Government overall aims and objectives.

Recruitment

The Forensic Science Service is committed to policies that fully recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce and recruits staff on the basis of fair and open competition in accordance with the recruitment code laid down by the Civil Service Commissioners. This gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment regardless of candidates ethnic origin, religious belief, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability or any other irrelevant factors.

565 Staff were recruited during 2000/01:

	Female	Male
Grades 6 and 7	0	1
Scientific staff	250	151
Administrative /support staff	96	67
Total	346	219

Of the 565 staff recruited 64 were from ethnic minorities. None of the staff recruited declared any disability.

There were 9 occasions when the permitted exceptions to the principles of fair and open competition were used. All of these were re-appointments of former civil servants.

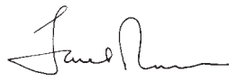
Health and Safety

The Forensic Science Service is committed to assuring health and safety of its staff, visitors, premises and equipment and has in place the appropriate organisational resource, processes, policies and audit mechanisms.

Communication

The Forensic Science Service has put in place a number of measures to ensure that it communicates effectively, regularly and professionally with both staff and customers, and these are kept under constant review.

The cascading of corporate information to staff and the mechanisms for reverse flow of views and information are constantly being improved. Staff contribute to and receive a monthly staff newspaper and a regular briefing sheet containing both corporate and local information which is published regularly. News and information is also available on an expanding Intranet system.



Dr Janet Thompson CB
Chief Executive
27 June 2001

Statement of Trading Fund's and Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under Section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973, as amended, the Treasury has directed the Trading Fund to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction on page 37. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Trading Fund's state of affairs at the year end and of its income and expenditure, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Trading Fund is required to:

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable Accounting Standards have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Trading Fund will continue in operation.

The Treasury has appointed the Chief Executive of The Forensic Science Service as the Accounting Officer of the Trading Fund. Her relevant responsibilities as Accounting Officer, including her responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which she is answerable and for the keeping of proper records, are set out in the Framework Document, and the Accounting Officers' Memorandum, issued by the Treasury and published in "Government Accounting".

Statement on The System of Internal Financial Control

As Accounting Officer, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by The Forensic Science Service (FSS). I carry out this responsibility in conjunction with the Department's principal Accounting Officer, the relationship between us being set out in the FSS Framework Document. The system can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely period.

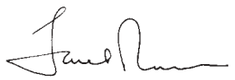
The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including the segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting systems with an annual budget which is reviewed and agreed by the Main Board and the Executive Committees;
- regular reviews by the Main Board and Executive Committees of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined capital investment control guidelines;
- as appropriate, formal project management disciplines;
- establishment of risk management practices including setting up of risk register.

The FSS has an internal audit unit, which operates to standards defined in the Governmental Internal Audit Manual. The work of the internal audit unit is informed by an analysis of risk to which the FSS is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. The analysis of risk and the internal audit plans are endorsed by the FSS Audit Committee and approved by me. At least annually, the Head of Internal Audit (HIA) provides me with a report of internal audit activity in the FSS. This report includes the HIA's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the FSS's system of internal financial control.

My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the internal auditors, the Audit Committee which oversees the work of the internal auditor, the executive managers within the FSS who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the financial control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports.

As Accounting Officer, I am aware of the recommendations of the Turnbull Committee and I am taking reasonable steps to comply with the Treasury's requirement for a statement of internal control to be prepared for the year ended 31 March 2002, in accordance with Treasury guidance DAO (GEN) 13/00.



Dr Janet Thompson CB
Chief Executive
27 June 2001

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

I certify that I have audited the financial statements on pages 26 to 36 under the Government Trading Funds Act 1973. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain fixed assets and the accounting policies set out on page 29.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRADING FUND, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND AUDITOR

As described on page 24, the Trading Fund and Chief Executive are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. The Trading Fund and Chief Executive are also responsible for the preparation of the other contents of the Annual Report. My responsibilities, as independent auditor, are established by statute and guided by the Auditing Practices Board and the auditing profession's ethical guidance.

I report my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and Treasury directions made thereunder, and whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. I also report if, in my opinion, the Foreword is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Trading Fund has not kept proper accounting records, or if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. I consider the implications for my certificate if I become aware of any apparent mis-statements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements.

I review whether the statement on page 24 reflects the Trading Fund's compliance with the Treasury's guidance "Corporate Governance: Statement on the system of internal financial control". I report if it does not meet the requirements specified by the Treasury, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit of the financial statements.

BASIS OF AUDIT OPINION

I conducted my audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Trading Fund and Chief Executive in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Trading Fund's circumstances consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material mis-statement, whether caused by error, or fraud or other irregularity and that, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I have also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

OPINION

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of The Forensic Science Service Trading Fund at 31 March 2001 and of the surplus, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 and directions made thereunder by Treasury; and
- in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

John Bourn
Comptroller and Auditor General
4 July 2001

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria, London SW1W 9SP

Income and Expenditure Account

for the year to 31 March 2001

	Notes	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	Year to 31 March 2000 £'000s
Income				
Income from activities	2		102,917	76,505
Expenditure				
Staff costs	3	55,893		47,256
Depreciation	7	4,184		3,207
Other operating charges	4	38,252		25,115
			98,329	75,578
Operating surplus			4,588	927
Interest receivable	5		356	166
Interest payable	6		(1,249)	(936)
Surplus for the financial year	15		3,695	157

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing operating activities. There were no acquisitions during the year.

Statement of total recognised gains and losses for the year ended 31 March 2001

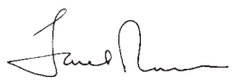
	Notes	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	Year to 31 March 2000 £'000s
Surplus for the financial year		3,695	157
Unrealised surplus on revaluation of tangible fixed assets	16	424	285
Total gains and losses recognised since last annual report		4,119	442

The notes on pages 29-36 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2001

	Notes	31 March 2001 £'000s	31 March 2001 £'000s	31 March 2000 £'000s
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	7		37,387	30,810
Current assets				
Stock and work in progress	8	4,584		4,949
Debtors	9	16,797		13,603
Cash on short term deposit	19	4,679		5,000
Cash at bank and in hand	19	10		865
		26,070		24,417
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	10	(19,348)		(18,105)
Net current assets			6,722	6,312
Total assets less current liabilities			44,109	37,122
Financed by				
Creditors - amounts falling due after more than one year	11		1,685	1,317
Provisions				
Provisions for early retirement	12		146	218
Capital and reserves				
Public dividend capital	13		17,971	17,971
Long term loans	14		19,746	17,174
Income and expenditure account	15		3,852	157
Revaluation reserve	16		709	285
			44,109	37,122



Dr Janet Thompson CB
Chief Executive
27 June 2001

The notes on pages 29-36 form part of these accounts.

Cash flow statement

for the year to 31 March 2001

	Notes	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	£'000s	Year to 31 March 2000 £'000s	£'000s
Net cash inflow from operating activities	17		5,577		12,565
Returns on investment and servicing of finance					
Interest received		356		166	
Interest paid		(1,249)		(936)	
			(893)		(770)
Capital expenditure					
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets		(10,684)		(5,355)	
Receipts from sale of tangible fixed assets		21		27	
			(10,663)		(5,328)
Net cash (outflow)/inflow before financing			(5,979)		6,467
Financing					
Repayments of loans	18		(4,408)		(6,190)
Additional Loans	18		8,500		5,800
(Decrease)/Increase in cash	19		(1,887)		6,077

The notes on pages 29-36 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

1. Accounting policies

Accounting conventions

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention modified to include the revaluation of fixed assets. Without limiting the information given, the accounts meet the requirements of the Companies Act 1985, and the accounting standards issued and approved by the Accounting Standards Board, so far as those requirements are appropriate. They are in accordance with the Accounts Direction given by the Treasury, which is reproduced on page 37.

Revaluation and depreciation of fixed assets

Valuations of fixed assets are revised annually using appropriate indices published by the Central Statistical Office. Indices are first applied in the year of acquisition. Fixed assets are stated at valuation less accumulated depreciation. The minimum value for capitalisation is £1,000 for an asset or group of assets. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, other than freehold land, at rates estimated to write off the valuation of each asset evenly over its expected useful life, as follows:

Buildings:

Freehold	over 30 to 50 years as advised by Professional Valuers.
Leasehold	over the period of the lease term - Birmingham Laboratory 26 years remaining, London Laboratory 5 years remaining, Oldbury storage facility 17 years remaining, Norfolk House office accommodation 12 years remaining, Doranda Way archive store 13 years remaining and Trident Court 15 years remaining.
Laboratory equipment	over 10 years except microscopes which are over 20 years.
Office equipment	over 5 years.
Computer equipment	over 3 years.
Motor vehicles	over 5 years.

It is the intention to use professional valuations of land and buildings at least every five years in future, and the last valuation was carried out in March 1998. Four of the laboratories are held on the Home Office Departmental Estate and have been treated as freehold property in the accounts as The Forensic Science Service has all risk and reward of ownership. The Birmingham, Trident Court and London laboratories together with storage and office facilities are held on third party leases in respect of which tenants additions are included as a leasehold asset.

Stock and work in progress

Consumable stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Work in progress is valued at the lower of cost of professional time plus attributable laboratory overheads and net realisable value.

Operating leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Research and development

Research and development expenditure is written off as incurred.

Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. Contributions in respect of accruing superannuation liabilities, calculated at rates determined from time to time by the Treasury, are charged to the income and expenditure account in the year in which they fall due. Some staff may be retired early at the discretion of the Trading Fund. Relevant costs are provided for in the year in which the early retirement takes effect.

Value Added Tax

Commencing 1 April 1999 on the formation of the Trading Fund, The Forensic Science Service is accountable for VAT and transactions are duly recorded in accordance with Statement of Standard Accounting Practice No.5.

Vote

As a Trading Fund, The Forensic Science Service does not operate as part of the Home Office Vote.

Banking

Commencing 1 April 1999 The Forensic Science Service operates its banking arrangements as an autonomous organisation and is no longer part of the Home Office Cash Management Scheme.

2. Income

Income represents the invoiced amount of goods and services provided (net of value added tax) from the ordinary activities of the business. Total income is analysed between the main customer groups as follows:

	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	Year to 31 March 2000 £'000s
Police Authorities	92,290	69,300
Other Customers	9,951	6,344
Home Office other	676	861
	102,917	76,505

3. Staff costs

	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	Year to 31 March 2000 £'000s
Wages & salaries	46,512	39,087
Social security costs	3,435	2,925
Other pension costs	5,946	5,244
	55,893	47,256

The emoluments (including bonus, backpay relating to the period 1997-2000, taxable benefits and excluding pension contributions) of the Chief Executive were: £112,186 £94,573

The Chief Executive and Main Board (excluding Mr C Bradley Information Systems Director and the Non Executive Directors) are all members of the Civil Service Pension Scheme - see note 24.

The aggregate emoluments (excluding taxable benefits and pension contributions) paid to Main Board members excluding the Chief Executive were: £581,266 £412,377

The range of salaries of board members, excluding the Chief Executive, are as follows:

	Number	Number
£ 0-£ 4,999	4	4
£10,000-£14,999	-	2
£20,000-£24,999	-	1
£25,000-£29,999	-	1
£50,000-£54,999	-	1
£55,000-£59,999	3	1
£60,000-£64,999	1	1
£65,000-£69,999	1	1
£70,000-£74,999	1	-
£80,000-£84,999	-	1
£85,000-£89,999	1	-
£125,000-£129,999	1	-

The average number of staff during the year was made up as follows:

Caseworkers and specialists	1,603	1,221
Management and support staff	660	539
	2,263	1,760

Salary and Pension Disclosure of Directors as at 31 March 2001

		Age	Salary including performance pay £k	Real increase in pension at 60 £k	Total accrued pension at 60 at 31 March 2001 £k
Dr J Thompson	Chief Executive	59	110-115	2.5-5.0	35-40
Mr R J Anthony	Finance Director	40	85-90	0-2.5	2.5-5.0
Mr C Bradley	Information Systems Director (Interim)	53	125-130	-	-
Mr K G Gilliver	Human Resources Director	53	55-60	0-2.5	0-2.5
Mr T H Howitt	Director of Research & Service Development	53	65-70	0-2.5	25-30
Mr P Jones	Customer Relations Director	53	55-60	2.5-5.0	20-25
Mr M R Loveland	Director of Quality	57	60-65	0-2.5	15-20
Mr G Pugh	Marketing Director	43	55-60	0-2.5	10-15
Dr D J Werrett	Director of Service Delivery	51	70-75	0-2.5	20-25

4. Other operating charges

This is stated after charging/(crediting) the following:

	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	Year to 31 March 2000 £'000s
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	4,184	3,207
Deficit on disposal of tangible fixed assets	300	1
Revaluation surplus on land and buildings	(285)	(200)
Revaluation deficit on other tangible fixed assets	311	229
Staff travel and subsistence	1,266	1,000
Charges for hire of plant and machinery	520	233
Charges for operating leases	2,200	1,768
Research and development expenditure	3,173	3,187
Auditors' remuneration	58	55
Internal audit fee	69	42
Payroll services	317	145
Insurance	280	237

5. Interest receivable

Bank interest receivable	356	166

6. Interest payable

On short term loans	40	83
On long term loans	1,209	853
	1,249	936

The interest payable on long term loans is based on:
1) 25 year fixed term rate of 4.75% on the initial Trading Fund Long Term Loan of £17,972k.
2) 4 year fixed term rate of 6.25% on Business Development Loan of £6,000k.

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Land & Buildings	Plant & Laboratory Equipment	Office Equipment	Motor Vehicles	Total
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Cost or Valuation:					
At 1 April 2000	19,627	16,578	9,266	836	46,307
Additions	5,316	2,523	2,737	108	10,684
Surplus/(deficit) on revaluation	754	65	(669)	(84)	66
Disposals	-	(261)	(263)	(73)	(597)
At 31 March 2001	**25,697**	**18,905**	**11,071**	**787**	**56,460**
Depreciation:					
At 1 April 2000	2,020	8,056	4,880	541	15,497
Provided during the year	907	1,573	1,585	119	4,184
(Surplus)/deficit on revaluation	80	31	(387)	(56)	(332)
Disposals	-	(185)	(21)	(70)	(276)
At 31 March 2001	**3,007**	**9,475**	**6,057**	**534**	**19,073**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2001	**22,690**	**9,430**	**5,014**	**253**	**37,387**
Net Book Value at 1 April 2000	**17,607**	**8,522**	**4,386**	**295**	**30,810**

The opening balance of furniture and fixtures included in Office Equipment has been valued at £392k. Purchases of furniture and fixtures in the year amounted to £593k. A write off representing depreciation of £457k has been deducted from these figures and charged to the income and expenditure account as an equivalent charge representing depreciation, giving a closing balance of £528k.

The net book value of land and buildings comprises:

Freehold	10,759
Short Leasehold	11,931
	22,690

In accordance with Treasury guidance freehold land and buildings are professionally revalued at least every five years. Valuations are reflected in the financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Freehold land and buildings were last professionally revalued in 1997/98.

8. Stock and work in progress

	31 March 2001	31 March 2000
	£'000s	£'000s
Consumable stock	2,072	2,138
Work in progress	2,512	2,811
	4,584	4,949

9. Debtors

Trade debtors	15,605	12,614
Provision for bad and doubtful debts	(52)	(48)
Prepayments and accrued income	885	728
Advance funding of early retirement costs (note 25)	33	63
Other debtors	326	246
	16,797	13,603

Included within the advance funding of early retirement costs is £3,218 which falls due after more than one year (year 2000 £32,765).

10. Creditors - amounts falling due within one year

Bank overdraft representing unpresented cheques	711	-
Government loans	1,928	408
Trade creditors	4,509	5,254
Accruals	6,244	4,421
Deferred income	2,763	5,289
Other creditors	3,193	2,733
	19,348	18,105

11. Creditors - amounts falling due after more than one year

Deferred income	1,685	1,317

12. Provision for early retirement

At 1 April 2000	218	197
Early retirement payments charged to provision	(42)	(47)
(Decrease)/Increase in provision	(30)	68
At 31 March 2001	146	218

13. Public dividend capital

Issued pursuant to the Government Trading Funds Act 1973.	17,971	17,971

The dividend due to the Home Office has been waived for the year ended 31 March 2001. A dividend is planned to be paid for the year ended 31 March 2002.

14. Long term loans

Government loans, repayable by instalments and bearing interest at 4.75% and 6.25% per annum:

	31 March 2001		31 March 2000
	£'000s		£'000s
Amounts repayable:			
Within 12 months (note 10)		1,928	408
Within 1-2 years	1,948		428
Within 2-5 years	2,975		1,408
After five years	14,823	19,746	15,338
		21,674	17,582

15. Income and expenditure account

	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s
At 1 April 2000	157
Surplus for the year	3,695
At 31 March 2001	3,852

16. Revaluation reserve

At 1 April 2000	285
On surplus on revaluation of tangible fixed assets	424
At 31 March 2001	709

17. Reconciliation of operating surplus to net cash inflow from operating activities

	Year to 31 March 2001 £'000s	Year to 31 March 2000 £'000s
Operating surplus	4,588	927
Revaluation adjustment	26	29
Depreciation	4,184	3,207
Deficit on disposal of fixed assets	300	1
Decrease/(Increase) in stock and work in progress	365	(1,482)
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors	(3,224)	1,116
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	(620)	8,708
Movement in early retirement pension	(72)	21
Decrease in prepayment for early retirement costs	30	38
Net cash inflow from continuing operating activities	5,577	12,565

18. Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net debt

(Decrease)/Increase in cash in the period		(1,887)	6,077
Additional Loans	- Business Development Loan	(6,000)	-
	- In year Working Capital Loan	(2,500)	(5,800)
Repayment of loans	- Long Term Loan	408	390
	- Business Development Loan	1,500	-
	- Working Capital Loan	2,500	5,800
		(5,979)	6,467
Net debt at 1 April 2000		(11,717)	(18,184)
Net debt at 31 March 2001		(17, 696)	(11,717)

19. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2000 £'000s	Cashflows £'000s	Other Non-cash movements £'000s	At 31 March 2001 £'000s
Cash on short term deposit	5,000	(321)	-	4,679
Cash in hand, at bank	865	(855)	-	10
Bank overdraft	-	(711)	-	(711)
	5,865	(1,887)	-	3,978
Debt due within one year	(408)	408	(1,928)	(1,928)
Debt due after one year	(17,174)	(4,500)	1,928	(19,746)
	(11,717)	(5,979)	0	(17,696)

20. Capital commitments

	31 March 2001 £'000s	31 March 2000 £'000s
Contracted but not provided in the accounts	2,390	5,744

21. Operating leases

	31 March 2001		31 March 2000	
	Land & Buildings £'000s	Other £'000s	Land & Buildings £'000s	Other £'000s
Commitments on operating leases for the next year are as follows:				
Leases expiring:				
In next year	-	-	-	-
In the second to fifth years	2,065	-	15	-
After the fifth year	1,625	-	2,374	-
	3,690	-	2,389	-

22. Contingent liabilities

There are no significant contingent liabilities.

23. Related party transactions

The Forensic Science Service is a Government Trading Fund of the Home Office. The Home Office is regarded as a related party. During the year, The Forensic Science Service has had a number of material transactions with the Department and with other entities with which the Department can influence operating policies, notably the Police Authorities of England and Wales together with the Metropolitan Police Service.
In addition, The Forensic Science Service has had material transactions with other Government Departments, being:
The Crown Prosecution Service;
H.M. Customs and Excise;
H.M. Scottish Prisons.
All transactions are on a commercial basis.
During the year, none of the Main Board Directors or members of the key management staff have undertaken any material transactions with The Forensic Science Service.

24. Pensions

The employees of The Forensic Science Service are Civil Servants to whom the conditions of the Superannuation Acts 1965 and 1972 and subsequent amendments apply. For 2000/01 contributions of £5,946k were paid to the Paymaster General at a sliding rate between 12% and 18.5% of salary as determined by the Government Actuary and advised by the Treasury.

25. Early retirement

The Forensic Science Service also operates an Early Retirement Scheme which gives retirement benefits to certain qualifying employees. These benefits conform to the rules of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. The Forensic Science Service bears the costs of these benefits until normal retiring age of the employees retired under the Early Retirement Scheme.
The total pensions' liability up to normal retiring age in respect of each employee is charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in the year in which the employee takes early retirement and a provision for future pension payments is created. Pensions and related benefit payments to the retired employee until normal retiring age are then charged annually against the provision. As at 31 March 2001 The Forensic Science Service has a future Pension Provision of £146,261. Under rules announced by Treasury in November 1992, bodies may advance fund all or part of their outstanding pensions' liability at 31 March each year, by making lump sum payments to the Paymaster General's Office. The advance funding carried forward at 31 March 2001 was £32,765 and this sum is shown as a prepayment at the year end (note 9).
Under the Early Retirement Scheme The Forensic Science Service has made provision to cover future liabilities for annual compensation payments. Under the Central Government Early Retirement Scheme, 20% of the total cost has been provided for. The residual 80% is being funded by Central Government and charged to the Income and Expenditure Account when costs are incurred, as required by H.M. Treasury.

26. Performance measures

The key financial performance measures are:

1) managing the funded operations so that the revenue of the fund is not less than sufficient, taking one year with another, to meet outgoings which are properly chargeable to revenue account;
2) to achieve an annual return on capital employed (ROCE) on ordinary activities of at least 10-15% over a three year period;
3) to achieve an efficiency gain of a minimum of 10% over a period of three years.

The operating surplus was £4,588k. The surplus represents a return on capital employed of 11.3%. An annual efficiency gain of 7.1% was achieved giving a three year rolling efficiency gain of 8.9% against a target of 10%.

Accounts direction given by the Treasury in accordance with Section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973

1. Forensic Science Service Trading Fund ("FSS") shall prepare accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2000, and for subsequent financial years comprising:

   (a) a foreword;

   (b) a statement of the Accounting Officer's responsibilities;

   (c) a statement on the system of internal financial control;

   (d) an income and expenditure account;

   (e) a statement of total recognised gains and losses;

   (f) a balance sheet; and

   (g) a cash flow statement,

   including such notes as may be necessary for the purposes referred to in the following paragraphs.

2. The accounts shall give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure, and cash flows for the financial year, and the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.

3. Subject to this requirement, the accounts shall be prepared in accordance with:

   (a) generally accepted accounting practice in the United Kingdom (UK GAAP);

   (b) the disclosure and accounting requirements contained in *The Fees and Charges Guide* (in particular those relating to the need for segmental information for services or forms of service provided) and in any other guidance which the Treasury may issue from time to time in respect of accounts which are required to give a true and fair view;

   (c) the accounting and disclosure requirements of *Government Accounting* (in particular Chapter 17) and the Treasury's guidance paper *Next Steps Agencies - Annual Reports and Accounts* (February 1993) as amended or augmented from time to time, insofar as these are appropriate to The FSS and are in force for the financial period for which the accounts are to be prepared.

4. Clarification of the application of the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act and accounting standards is given in Schedule 1 attached. Additional disclosure requirements are set out in Schedule 2 attached.

5. The income and expenditure account and balance sheet shall be prepared under the historical cost convention modified by the inclusion of:

   (a) fixed assets at their value to the business by reference to current costs; and

   (b) stocks at the lower of net current replacement cost (or historical cost if this is not materially different) and net realisable value.

6. This direction and the Treasury Minute (see paragraph 2 of schedule 2) shall be reproduced as appendices to the accounts.

J. Mortimer

Treasury Officer of Accounts
4 February 1999

Schedule 1

Application of the Accounting and Disclosure Requirements of the Companies Act and Accounting Standards

Companies Act

1. The disclosure exemptions permitted by the Companies Act shall not apply to The Forensic Science Service unless specifically approved by the Treasury.
2. The Companies Act requires certain information to be disclosed in the Directors' Report. To the extent that it is appropriate, the information relating to The Forensic Science Service shall be contained in the **foreword**.
3. When preparing its **income and expenditure account**, The Forensic Science Service shall have regard to the profit and loss account format 2 prescribed in Schedule 4 to the Companies Act.
4. When preparing its **balance sheet**,The Forensic Science Service shall have regard to the balance sheet format 1 prescribed in Schedule 4 to the Companies Act. The balance sheet totals shall be struck at "Total assets less current liabilities".
5. The Forensic Science Service is not required to provide the historical cost information described in paragraph 33 (3) of Schedule 4 to the Companies Act.
6. The foreword and balance sheet shall be signed by the Accounting Officer and dated.

Accounting standards

7. The Forensic Science Service is not required to include a note showing historical cost profits and losses as described in FRS 3.

Schedule 2

Additional Disclosure Requirements

1. The **foreword** shall, inter alia:
   (a) state the accounts have been prepared in accordance with a direction given by the Treasury in accordance with Section 4(6) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973;
   (b) include a brief history of The Forensic Science Service and its statutory background.
2. The **notes to the accounts** shall include details of the further financial objectives set by the responsible Minister as described in a Treasury Minute in accordance with Section 4 (1)(b) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973, together with an indication of the performance achieved.

Treasury Minute dated 3 February 1999

1. Section 4(1) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973 provides that a Trading Fund established under that Act shall be under the control and management of the responsible Minister and in discharge of his function in relation to the fund it shall be his duty:
   (a) to manage the funded operations so that the revenue of the fund:
      (i) consists primarily of receipts in respect of goods or services provided in the course of the funded operations, and
      (ii) is not less than sufficient, taking one year with another, to meet outgoings which are properly chargeable to revenue account; and
   (b) to achieve such further financial objectives as the Treasury may from time to time, by Minute laid before the House of Commons, indicate as having been determined by the responsible Minister (with Treasury concurrence) to be desirable of achievement.
2. The Trading Fund for The Forensic Science Service will be established on 1 April 1999 under The Forensic Science Service Trading Fund Order 1998 (SI 1998 No. 3197).
3. The Secretary of State for The Home Department, being the responsible Minister, has determined (with Treasury concurrence) that a further financial objective desirable of achievement by The Forensic Science Service Trading Fund for the period from 1 April 1999 to 31 March 2002 shall be to achieve a minimum return averaged over the period as a whole, of 10 per cent a year, in the form of a surplus on ordinary activities before interest expressed as a percentage of average capital employed. Capital employed shall equate to the total assets from which shall be deducted the total of the current liabilities.
4. Let a copy of this Minute be laid before the House of Commons pursuant to section 4(1)(b) of the Government Trading Funds Act 1973.

The Forensic Science Service

Code of Practice

1. The responsibilities and accountabilities of The Forensic Science Service staff and managers both to the Criminal Justice System and within the organisation are embraced within the following code of practice.
2. The Forensic Science Service expects its staff and managers to demonstrate the highest professional and personal standards and integrity by:

Personal Expertise - keeping their knowledge and skills up-to-date and confining their work and opinions to their own areas of competence and expertise;

Integrity of Evidence - ensuring, (as far as they are able) that the integrity of items of evidence submitted to them has not been compromised for example by contamination or mishandling, and the integrity is maintained while in the laboratory;

Scientific Examinations - taking on professional responsibility for determining the required examination and ensuring that what is submitted is sufficient for the examination to be scientifically acceptable and that the customer is aware of any limitations of the material he has supplied. Carrying out that examination by following agreed procedures using reliable methods and appropriate equipment and the skill, knowledge and judgement of the scientist;

Impartiality - by objectively considering items of the evidence for examination and ensuring that the conclusions based on these examinations are soundly based. Ensuring that opinions are placed into the context of the case as presented giving reasonable possible alternatives where appropriate dependent on the information supplied;

Advice and Reports - presenting their findings in accordance with the practice and rules on both confidentiality and disclosure, and in a way that can be understood by the appropriate person; reporting all relevant findings; and ensuring as far as possible that those involved in the Criminal Justice System are aware of the strengths of the evidence in the context of the case and any limitations;

Service Levels and Value for Money - taking full account of the service requirements, including timeliness, of customers; recognising a need for effective and efficient use of resources within the framework set by professional standards.

3. The Forensic Science Service expects its staff to work to this code throughout the justice process; investigation, assembly of case and court hearing. On its part The Forensic Science Service, through its managers, is committed to supporting the work of its forensic scientists by:

Personal Expertise

- making clear its expectations of staff;
- training its staff to develop and maintain personal skills, knowledge and competencies and ensuring that the level achieved is assessed;

Support for Scientific Examinations

- setting standards of work and developing quality management systems that will ensure that the appropriate procedures, technical and otherwise are followed;
- making available supporting information and any additional individual skills that are required;
- conducting research and other work to ensure that procedures and methods are of an appropriate standard;
- taking supportive remedial action when defects are identified;
- providing a safe and healthy working environment;

Service Levels and Value for Money

- providing the necessary systems, resources and information to support the work of forensic scientists in meeting service level and value-for-money requirements.

Notes

The Forensic Science Service®

A national service delivered through regional laboratories at:

Chief Executive's/Corporate Office and London Forensic Science Laboratory

109 Lambeth Road
London SE1 7LP
Telephone : 020 7230 6700
Facsimile : 020 7230 6253

Birmingham Operational Headquarters and Forensic Science Laboratory

Priory House
Gooch Street North
Birmingham B5 6QQ
Telephone : 0121 607 6800
Facsimile : 0121 666 7327

Chepstow Forensic Science Laboratory

Usk Road Chepstow
Gwent NP16 6YE
Telephone : 01291 637100
Facsimile : 01291 629482

Chorley Forensic Science Laboratory

Washington Hall Euxton
Chorley Lancashire PR7 6HJ
Telephone : 01257 265666
Facsimile : 01257 274752

FSS Website

www.forensic.gov.uk

Huntingdon Forensic Science Laboratory

Hinchingbrooke Park
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire PE29 6NU
Telephone : 01480 450071
Facsimile : 01480 450079

Wetherby Forensic Science Laboratory

Sandbeck Way Audby Lane
Wetherby
West Yorkshire LS22 7DN
Telephone : 01937 548100
Facsimile : 01937 587683

Woodley Office

Suite C Loddon Vale House
Hurricane Way Woodley
Reading RG5 4UX
Telephone : 0118 944 0391
Facsimile : 0118 944 0408