



JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

THE RT. HON. LORD JUSTICE GOLDRING

To Whom It May Concern:

August 2012

Streamline Forensic Reporting (SFR)

I support the introduction of Streamline Forensic Reporting (SFR).

SFR is a two stage process. It is intended to deliver forensic evidence proportionate to the needs of each case. It complements other current Criminal Justice initiatives, such as the 'Stop Delaying Justice' and 'Early Guilty Plea' schemes. The aim is to avoid full forensic evidence being produced which is not then used in court. A short report is provided by forensic services setting out the initial key forensic evidence. This report should be sufficient for charging purposes and initial hearings. Any issues regarding the forensic evidence should be identified during the case management process. Only if necessary and relevant to a live issue will second stage forensic evidence be required.

There was a successful one year pilot at the courts serving and including Woolwich Crown Court. Full implementation for the remaining London Crown Courts has been in place since December 2011. The scheme has been led by the London Criminal Justice Partnership, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police and London Crown Prosecution Service.

Evaluation of SFR in London has shown that second stage forensic evidence is frequently not required and has resulted in an increase in early guilty pleas.

In short, everything suggests that SFR can deliver significant benefits to the courts, prosecution and defence. Court time is saved. Unnecessary forensic work is avoided. Unnecessary prosecution work is avoided. The defence are better able to focus on the real issues and appropriately advise their clients.

Over the coming months local Implementation Teams will be working to introduce the scheme in the areas where it is adopted. I encourage everyone to support their work.