

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Attorney General

State of California
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



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RECEIVED

February 11, 2009

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DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S
OFFICE

District Attorney Stephan Passalacqua
District Attorney's Office
600 Administration Drive, Room 212J
Santa Rosa CA 95403

Dear Stephan Passalacqua:

The purpose of this letter is to advise your agency of a quality control discrepancy that the Bureau of Forensic Services (BFS), Santa Rosa Laboratory has identified. A full investigation by the BFS Quality Assurance Unit is in progress. The discrepancy is related to controlled substance evidence submissions, and specifically the reported weight(s) of these samples submitted to the laboratory and examined by Senior Criminalist Gregory Popovich. In several instances, we have determined this criminalist may have improperly zero balanced the analytical balance used to weigh controlled substances. These instances resulted in the reported weight of the sample being more than the actual weight.

The analysis and reported controlled substance identifications as reported are accurate and are not in question. We would request however, that any drug cases pending prosecution, which have been analyzed by Senior Criminalist Gregory Popovich, be re-submitted to the BFS Santa Rosa Laboratory for re-weighing determination and analysis.

We will provide your office further information upon completion of the BFS review/investigation, and in the meantime, Mr. Popovich's drug weight results in any cases dating from July 2008 forward should be considered unreliable and appropriate action taken.

Please contact me at the number above if you have any questions.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM L. CASPER

Laboratory Director
Eureka and Santa Rosa Laboratories

For EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Attorney General