State Patrol Investigating Former Cheney Crime Lab Manager

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

Posted on : April 16, 2013 at 8:32 am

Cheney, WA - The Washington State Patrol is investigating allegations that the former manager of the State Crime Lab in Cheney mishandled case files and claimed to have completed laboratory case work that was not actually done.The investigation reveals that at least five cases had been mishandled. The manager resigned from state service during the investigation.There is no evidence that the alleged misconduct led to any wrongful convictions. The investigation began when those working for the manager raised concerns to the Crime Laboratory Division Commander. Information gathered to date does not implicate any other lab employees in similar misconduct.“We continue to have confidence in the work of our front-line scientists and supervisors in Cheney, and at our other labs throughout the state,” said WSP Crime Laboratory Division Commander James Tarver. “These allegations involved a single laboratory manager, and do not appear to reflect upon any of our other personnel.”

In addition to the original investigation conducted by the WSP Office of Professional Standards, Tarver ordered an internal management audit of the Cheney operation and requested that WSP Risk Management Division conduct a full evidence audit for the Cheney lab.The State Patrol is notifying local prosecutors and the police agencies which submitted the cases identified in the investigation. The Washington State Forensic Investigations Council and Washington State Prosecutors were notified of the investigation, as was the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors, Laboratory Accreditation Board.The cases involved in this investigation appear to be older ones, assigned to the manager while he worked as a front-line crime lab scientist.