

Friday October 12, 2001

To: Paul Stern
From: Drew Richardson
Subject: Study to Review the Scientific Evidence on the Polygraph
(Project Identification Number: BCSS-I-00-01-A)
Re: Committee to Review the Scientific Evidence on the Polygraph
October 17, 2001 - October 17, 2001
Cecil and Ida Green Building
2001 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, DC

Per your email request, I am providing the following with regard to those issues I would like to address during my oral presentation at captioned meeting. My desire and goal will be to cover aspects of the following topics that I have not heard discussed in like manner at previous public hearings.

The overall content and proposed order of the topics that I hope to address, quite apart from my presentation, is one that I believe is of some importance in any overall consideration of the issues before you. The sum of any significance(s) of the topics taken in isolation is much less than that stemming from their consideration as an interlinked body of information. Any weaknesses in fundamental general theory suggest a greater need for scientific control within individual exams and greater consequences associated with a lack thereof. The mechanisms for and efficacy of countermeasure efforts as applied to polygraph screening are inappropriately considered prior to a complete analysis of validity for these techniques in the absence of countermeasures which are inappropriately considered before addressing validity issues for the basic control question test format. Any demonstrated lack of academic freedom in conducting and reporting research as it affects research scientists would lead one to consider more carefully any potential constitutional and other shortcomings as they affect polygraph examinees, etc.

With the aforementioned logic in mind, I would suggest limited aspects of the following be included in my presentation:

- An examination of underlying fundamental theory for Control Question Test (CQT) polygraphy and implications for operational practice, examiner perception(s), and research design
- An evaluation of the scientific control provided by control/comparison questions in CQT polygraph formats
- Overview of validity issues and related research as it applies to polygraph screening applications
- Countermeasure issues and possible demonstration
- An evaluation of often suggested utility/deterrence effects associated with polygraph screening programs
- Academic freedom issues
- Ethical/practical considerations of polygraph-related deception for examinees and this panel as well as various constitutional considerations (due process, right to confront witnesses, etc) associated with polygraph practice
- Potential for polygraph bias: investigative and racial/ethnic
- A novel specific screening application for counter-terrorism investigations utilizing event related potential methodology