

Overview of chapters 2-5 of the House of Lords S&T Inquiry into Forensic Science

	2. Strategy and Oversight	3. Market (Sustainability and regulation)	4. Trust/Accreditation (Regulation of quality)	5. Forensic Science in the CJS
The core issue identified;	No oversight or accountability at the moment and no credible strategy exists	Not sustainable, no resilience to shocks (like a supplier going into administration), market (and procurement process) is based on costs rather than quality, FSR doesn't have powers to regulate the market, and we're facing a loss of niche disciplines	Failures in QS (miscarriages of justice, corruption identified), poor take up of accreditation (no digital forensic lab is accredited, few fingerprint labs accredited etc.), current FSR doesn't have powers to enforce accreditation/remove below standard providers from the market, disagreement about what standards are appropriate (ISO 17025 and 17020 are not originally intended for FS and can't cover tacit expertise and experience of an expert). Especially an issue for digital...	Interaction of science and law – misunderstanding of what FS can offer; inequality of arms between prosecution and defence (lack of legal aid)
The context of that issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • why it's an issue and • why does it matter? 	HO/MoJ, fragmentation of FS means it's fallen between the cracks, broadly been under HO but it doesn't have the mandate for oversight, particularly because aspects fall under MoJ remits.	FSS to GovCo to fully privatised industry – one procurer (the police), 3 major providers and lots of sole traders/small providers	Unregulated industry	Lack of common language between science and law, different views on what science can offer in terms of answers (competing needs of science and law) and in what timeframe it can provide those answers.

<p>What recommendation was made;</p>	<p>Establish a Forensic Science Board with representatives from key stakeholder groups to oversee strategy and ultimately be accountable and responsible for FS in the UK</p>	<p>Expand and fundamentally change the role of the regulator to have oversight of the market and to have regulatory powers for that market.</p>	<p>Consideration of appropriate QS measures needed and a fundamental change to role of FSR to give the office power to enforce accreditation.</p>	<p>Science CPD for advocates; address digital to ensure timeliness in evidence provision.</p>
<p>An evaluation of recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • could it work? if so what would be needed to make it work? • If not why not? 	<p>Could it work? (https://www.ruth-morgan.com/post/forensic-science-oversight-and-accountability-the-missing-link) – my view is that yes it could if there is a will to make it work and a broad enough view of FS (what it is and what it is for) to ensure a holistic approach. It would of course need funding and power to hold different stakeholders to account.</p>	<p>Has worked in other industries where there is a one procurer model (health), it's desirable to ensure that services continue (integrity of service and of exhibits). This would need government will and creation of new FSR office with whole new capacity and remit, would need to be funded...</p>	<p>Could work but needs to be a nuanced approach that addresses both processes and expertise....</p>	<p>Can't just be one off 'courses' – needs to be an ongoing conversation between lawyers and scientists, weaving science into the law, and law into forensic science. Digital by all means!</p>