

POLICE ORDER No. 183

Instructions to be followed in including documents for examination in the Handwriting Bureau, C. I. D., Crime Branch.

In spite of clear instructions contained in P. M. Appendix 25, regarding proper despatch of documents for expert examination, it has been observed that the despatches are often not according to rules, necessitating long correspondence for obtaining necessary enclosures and resulting in delay and various other inconveniences. The despatch of the documents should be according to rules. Special care should be taken to follow the instructions mentioned below :—

1. *Prompt despatch*—Documents are often sent for expert examination after several months (sometimes after years) of the institution of the case. At times also documents are sent after submission of charge-sheet or even at the trial stage. As such late sending of documents, and that too often without necessary enclosures for examination leads to serious difficulties, it is necessary that documents should be sent as early as possible after the institution of the cases.

2. *Marking of writings*—Writings on the questioned and admitted documents and in the specimens, that are required to be examined by the expert, should be marked out by enclosing them with red or blue pencil lines, to distinguish them from the other writings and each writings should be given a separate identification mark as A, B, C, etc.

3. *Forwarding letter*—A type written statement should be furnished, briefly giving the facts of the case and clearly indicating which of the documents are questioned ones, which are the admitted ones and which are the specimens and the points on which expert's opinion is necessary. In the facts of the case, particulars such as title, number, date, names of complaint and accident section under which the charge is laid, circumstances of the writing, right or left hand used in writing, age and health condition of the writer and other matters in which the expert should be informed, should be included. There should, however, be nothing in the statement for which the defence lawyer may take the plea of 'bias' to the expert. For instance, no questioned writing should be characterised as 'forged' or written by a particular writer.

4. *Standards for comparison Specimen writings*—(i)—Six specimens, corresponding to each disputed writing/signature and containing the same matter, should be sent for examination. As far as practicable, specimens should be written on papers of the same size, quality and nature and with similar speed, as the corresponding questioned documents. When the disputed writing/signature, is on a printed form or ruled paper, the specimens should also be obtained written at corresponding positions of similar printed forms or ruled papers. In writing the specimens similar pointed nib or pencil as was used to write the disputed writing, should be used as the case may be. At the time of obtaining the specimens, the accident should be put at ease and should not be made nervous or excited, so that he may write in his natural way. Specimens should be taken as early as possible, and at any rate, before he gets advice from outsiders, to disguise his writing or to refuse to give specimens. The specimens should always be written to dictation, and the disputed documents should not be shown to the suspects while writing the specimens. Each specimen should be taken out of his view after it is written.

(ii) *Specimens set paragraphs*—Two copies of a set paragraph, written to dictation by each of the suspects, containing several words, capital letters, figures and letter combinations, in common with the disputed writing should also be obtained and sent for examination.

(iii) *Admitted writings*—Written in the ordinary course of business—Admitted writings/signatures, written in the ordinary course of business, near about and preferably prior to the date of occurrence, provide valuable data for examination. Such admitted writings/signatures, may be available in letters, petitions, acquittance rolls and private business and official correspondence and records. Some such admitted documents preferably including a few, written on similar documents as the disputed one, and containing words, capital letters and figures, in common with the disputed writings, should be sent. Nothing should, however, be characterised as 'admitted writings' unless it is really so, and can be proved as such under section 47 of the Evidence Act.

5. *Care and despatch of documents*—The documents should always be sent in sealed covers by registered post or through special messengers. Requisition for the services of the Examiner of Questioned Documents, should be made through the Superintendent of Police, of the district and not direct. The writings or portions on the documents to be examined, should not be damaged by careless pinning, tagging, folding, stamping, pasting of paper over or below, exposure to strong sun light, moisture or sweat.

6. *Nature of examination undertaken*—Examination of not only handwriting and signatures but also of erasures, additions and interpolations in documents, examination of stamp, seals, postage stamps, postal date stamps, forged notes, type-writings, substitution of papers, identification of the torn edges of receipts with those of the stamps left in the receipt books, physical examination of ink, restoration of writings obliterated with ink or by pasting of paper over it or by chemical eradicators, examination of invisible writings, decipherment of obscure stamps and writings and similar other matters are undertaken in the Handwriting Bureau, and such problems may be referred to it for examination and opinion.

7. In case any of the conditions laid down in this order cannot be complied with after due diligence and endeavour, the fact should be clearly mentioned in the body of the letter.

8. Before the documents are despatched for expert examination, the Circle Inspector of the immediate superior of the I. O. should satisfy himself that the ingredients and conditions of this Police Order have been fulfilled and a certificate to that effect should be given by him on the body of the forwarding letter.