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'DNA evidence completely valueless'

([Irish News](#))

The DNA evidence against south Armagh electrician Sean Hoey allegedly linking him to the Omagh bomb atrocity and other terrorist explosions came in for further criticism yesterday (Friday).

Forensic expert Dr Peter Gill, the main proponent of Low Copy Number DNA was forced to admit yesterday that some of the match profiles allegedly linking Hoey, pictured, to one of the bombs he is accused of making were "completely valueless".

Trial judge Mr Justice Weir also warned Dr Gill against "blowing backwards and forwards" on what he described as "an important topic" which the Crown has said is central to the case.

Dr Gill was asked to comment on claims that control samples tested at the same time as parts of the Lisburn device, had come up positive for Hoey's DNA type.

That finding, Orlando Pownall QC defending, said, should have meant the tests were run again. The fact they were not meant the results were invalid, he claimed.

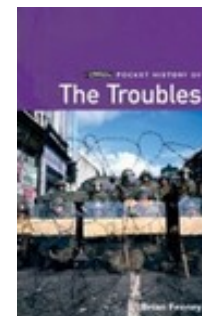
"I think it invalidates the result," Dr Gill agreed.

He was also challenged over what appeared to be conflicting evidence on the reliability of LCN DNA testing.

Mr Pownall was questioning him about the amounts of DNA below which results could be relied on.

Dr Gill said at a certain DNA level information taken from the results could be "informative". But Mr Pownall pointed out that in papers Dr Gill had written on the subject he had said that at that level the results were "uninformative".

Mr Justice Weir intervened to say it "seems rather an important topic on which to be blowing backwards and forwards on. One minute it's informative, the next it's uninformative". He asked which he should accept as expert evidence.



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by Brian Feeney

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Dr Gill replied that it was a complex area in which there were "shades of grey".

Mr Justice Weir said: "When this evidence is presented on behalf of the prosecution no-one talks about it in terms of shades of grey.

"It's put forward as evidence I can rely on."

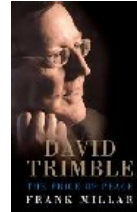
December 11, 2006

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