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EXCLUSIVE

By JOHN KAY
Chief Reporter

Published: 28 Jul 2009

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A TOP US lie-detector expert is testing freed British sex offenders to check if they have reformed.

More than 100 newly released paedophiles and rapists have been lined up for a 90-minute polygraph examination.

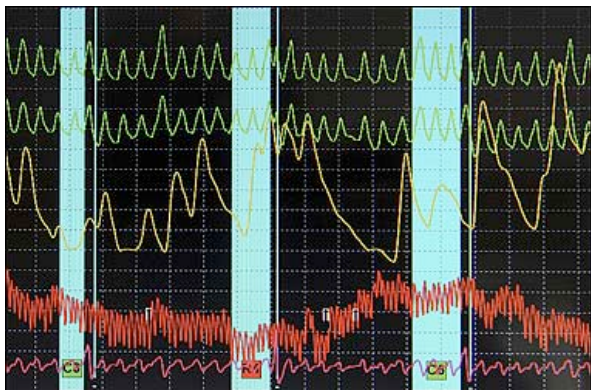
The Sun sat in while tester Bill Scheve, 55, from Wisconsin, USA, questioned a sex offender using the lie-detector machine in Birmingham.

Mr Scheve is a key part of the Ministry of Justice's three-year trial.

Jobless Bob, 45, who was jailed for 18 months for "sexual contact" with a girl, 15, was hooked up to sensors on his hand and chest which fed his responses to a computer.



Wired ... Bill Scheve tests offender Bob



Paedo scan ... reading on the polygraph is used to assess the risk posed by freed sex offenders

He answered "Yes" or "No" to a series of questions, including whether he had associated with anyone under the age of 18 and if he feared he might reoffend. The polygraph results are confidential but Bob, released on licence in April, said: "I was happy to take the lie-detector test because I want to learn more about myself."

The tests aim to try to assess the risk of freed sex offenders going back to their old ways.

Up to 450 offenders are to be quizzed in a trial over three years in the Midlands.

And two Brits will go to the US for a 12-week course to be trained to operate the machines. Mr Scheve said: "With sex offenders, the polygraph test has an accuracy rate between 72 per cent and 94 per cent.

DO you intend to answer each question truthfully?

DO you consider yourself to be a sex offender at risk?

HAVE you lied to any family or friends since your release from prison about anything serious?

SINCE your release have you been alone with anyone you knew was under 18?

SINCE your release have you violated any rules or conditions of your license?

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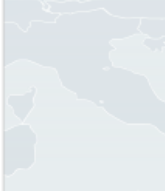
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"With other criminals, it is 88 to 94 per cent. Sex offenders are better at concealing things about themselves."

If as a result of failing a test they confess to breaking the terms of their licence, they can be recalled to prison.

It is virtually impossible to trick a lie-detector because it picks up signals of fear, which emanate from the hypothalamus gland in the neck.

Mr Scheve, who has been carrying out polygraph tests for 26 years, said: "In a sense, it is like a smoke detector.

"Instead of smoke, a lie-detector picks up the fear of being found out."

Mike Maiden, chief officer for West Midlands Probation, said: "We are keen to examine whether the polygraph tests can help us to better protect the public."

Justice Minister Maria Eagle said: "The tests sit alongside a range of measures already used to manage sex offenders that are in the community."

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A MUM who has had 13 kids is pregnant with her 14th - even though her kids are in care








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