

Mattox wants hearings on Lucas probe

□ Mattox, Feazell to co-sponsor seminar
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Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox said in Waco Wednesday he wants the Public Safety Commission to hold hearings to review the conduct of law enforcement officials who participated in the Texas Rangers Homicide Task Force.

The attorney general's office has been working on a report for the past 10 months dealing with the task force, which investigated convicted murderer Henry Lee Lucas. The report is expected to detail where Lucas was living and working when 182 murders cleared by his confessions were committed.

"Once we release this report, I think the entire matter needs to be reviewed," Mattox said Wednesday at the Waco-Madison Cooper Airport.

Public Safety Commissioner John Fainter said from his Austin office Wednesday the three-man commission, which oversees the Texas Department of Public Safety, is waiting to see the attorney general's report on Henry Lee Lucas before making any decisions.

Bob Lemons, whose daughter Lucas was accused of killing, met with Fainter in Austin this week. Lemons, in Waco to hear Mattox speak, predicted Wednesday that Col. Jim Adams of the DPS will be fired within 30 days. Adams is head of the DPS, which oversees the Texas Rangers.

Mattox was in Waco to announce a seminar he is co-sponsoring with McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell Feb. 25. The seminar will focus on how to use the state's Crime Victims Compensation Program.

"As far as dismissal of anyone, we will re-

Bereaved father criticizes task force

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view it and any other matters and take the appropriate action," Fainter said in a phone interview.

"I hope that it is reviewed in hearings held by the Public Safety Commission and monitored by the governor's office to determine whether additional steps need to be taken toward the personnel involved," Mattox said.

Fainter stopped short of saying the commission would conduct hearings to investigate the task force.

Fainter said that because Lucas has a lawsuit pending against the DPS, he is limiting comment about Lucas. He said he plans to review the attorney general's report before it is made public, "and see what it says . . . We will review it completely and thoroughly."

Mattox indicated Wednesday he believes several individuals involved with the Lucas task force may receive some kind of reprimand.

"There were other people involved besides the Texas Rangers. The sheriff there in Williamson County (Jim Boutwell) and others share some of the responsibility for what took place," Mattox said.

Bob and Joyce Lemons' daughter, Deborah Sue Williamson, was slain in 1975 and was listed as the first person killed by Lucas after his release from prison. The couple were the first people to question publicly Lucas' confessions.

Their efforts led to the discovery that Lucas could not have been responsible for many of the murders attributed to him by the task force. In the past two weeks, the Lemonses have met with Gov. White and Fainter to discuss their concerns.

"I think the governor, his office, and the Public Safety Commission all are waiting for (Attorney) General Mattox's report, so that they

can do what they got to do," Lemons said.

"I think they all realize now that the report will contain ammunition to get rid of Adams. I think their intention is to fire the man. I believe that within 30 days, Col. Adams will be gone," Lemons said.

Adams said recently he does not believe the commission will fire him or ask for his resignation. He said a review of the Lucas investigation by the commission in 1985 failed to uncover any wrongdoing on the part of the DPS.

Mattox said Wednesday the Lucas report his office is compiling for public release will deal only briefly with instances of law enforcement officers aiding Lucas in making his confessions. But Mattox said he will make additional information known in "private conversations."

"There is information to come down on some task force members. I think there are some who are going to be prosecuted. If Mattox doesn't see to it, I intend to," Lemons said.

"They knowingly and intentionally informed Henry on cases so he could go to other police departments and give them enough so they'd buy it," he said.

Mattox said he agrees.

"I think it's pretty evident from the information we have that a real travesty took place

within the criminal justice system. I cannot put the responsibility just on the law enforcement people, because Lucas is a pretty sly fellow," Mattox said.

"We will have the report finished shortly. I think a decision about whether any kind of action should be taken towards Col. Adams or any of the individuals involved in the task force should rest with the Public Safety Commission and the governor's office," Mattox said.

Lemons said that he believes Fainter is concerned that a complete and thorough review of the Lucas matter be conducted.

"He was very specific in what he said. He wants to get the attorney general report, dot all the i's, and cross all the t's, so that whatever the decisions made are, there will not be repercussions. They want something they can get right the first time," Lemons said.

"(Fainter) made it very clear he was going to do whatever they deem necessary to straighten it all out. I think he realizes they've got a problem. I'm sure the governor realizes they've got problems," Lemons said.

The attorney general's report was begun during the 1985 McLennan County grand jury probe of Lucas.