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Mattox to reveal conclusions of Lucas report

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AUSTIN — Attorney General Jim Mattox plans to release a lengthy report Wednesday that will indicate that law enforcement officials were duped by false tales of slayings by self-proclaimed killer Henry Lee Lucas and that killings were mistakenly cleared because of Lucas' confessions.

However, the report, which is expected to contain more than 150 pages, will not directly criticize the handling of the Lucas investigation by a Texas Rangers task force, a Mattox spokesman said Tuesday.

"It's going to say sort of the same thing we've been saying —

that while Lucas was running around confessing to all these murders, those who had custody of Lucas did not do anything to stop Lucas' hoax of false confessions," said Elna Christopher, Mattox's press secretary.

"We found no evidence to prove that any member of law enforcement in Texas deliberately tried to bring about this scheme of deception," Christopher said. "We think a lot of these people got real wrapped up in this and were true believers that Henry Lee Lucas was the worst mass murderer in U.S. history."

The Texas Rangers are a division of the Department of Public Safety. Mike Cox, a spokesman for

the department, said that the attorney general's office had promised that it would give the agency a copy of the report before it was released, but that the report had not been furnished by late Tuesday.

A draft of Mattox's report was filled with errors, according to a highly-placed source.

Mattox entered the Lucas inquiry in early 1985 when McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell asked for assistance in a grand jury investigation of two cases in which Lucas was the chief suspect. The grand jury in Waco refused to indict Lucas for the murders.

In January, Mattox said the results of his investigation would show that "a great miscarriage of justice took place, and it brought about a level of disrespect for our criminal justice system."

Christopher said the "miscarriage" occurred not because Lucas was charged with murders he did not commit, but because killers have remained free after lawmen closed the books on murder cases based on confessions by Lucas.

After he was arrested for the slaying of his teenage girlfriend, Lucas claimed that he and an acquaintance committed more than 300 killings in several states.

Lucas, however, has recanted all but three of the confessions.

The report Wednesday will contain a 100-page chronology of Lucas' whereabouts to show that he could not have been in many places where he claimed to have killed people.

Lucas received the death penalty in 1984 for the so-called "Orange Socks" case involving the murder of an unidentified female hitchhiker near Georgetown. Ed Walsh, the former Williamson County district attorney who prosecuted that case, said lawmen knew Lucas was a liar but that other evidence supported the guilty verdict in Williamson County.

Walsh is in a runoff for the Re-

publican nomination for attorney general, and some law enforcement officials have speculated that Mattox's report is politically motivated. Mattox was unopposed Saturday for the Democratic nomination.

Several days after Mattox announced his office was preparing the report, the three-member Public Safety Commission, which oversees the Department of Public Safety, said no evidence had been uncovered to indicate the Texas Rangers were involved in any wrongdoing. The commission said it did not plan to take disciplinary action against any of those involved in the Lucas case.