

FIND Strategy Board

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Open Minutes of Meeting

24th September 2020 – By Teleconference
13.30-16.00

Present:

CORE MEMBERS

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
NPCC	ACC Ben Snuggs (BS)
Home Office, representing the Home Secretary	Alex MacDonald (AMcD)
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners	Alexandra Campbell (AC) Jon Wasey (JW) representative

APPOINTED MEMBERS (as set out in the Governance Rules)

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Commissioner of the Retention & Use of Biometric material	Rebecca Madgwick (RM) Representative
Forensic Science Regulator representative	Gillian Tully (GT)
Biometric and Forensic Ethics Group Chair	Mark Watson-Gandy (MW-G)
Information Commissioner's Office	Mark Jones (MJ)

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APPOINTED MEMBERS

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
NPCC – CT Forensic Database representative	Shazia Khan (SK)
NPCC – DNA	Emily Burton (EB)

SECRETARIAT

Home Office Forensic Information Databases Service (FINDS)	Juliette Verdejo (JV)
Home Office Forensic Information Databases Service (FINDS)	Andrew Thomson (AT)
Home Office Forensic Information Databases Service (FINDS)	Caroline Goryll (CG)

IN ATTENDANCE

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Home Office, HOB Programme	Amy Morrell (AM)
Home Office	Carl Jennings (CJ)
Home Office	Alison Goodall (AG)
FCN Science	Carolyn Lovell (CL)
NCA	Derek Lloyd (DL)
Devolved Administration – Northern Ireland	Stephen Campbell (SC)
Devolved Administration – Scotland	Gary Holcroft (GH)

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APOLOGIES:

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Home Office, Interpol and International Biometric Exchange Team	Bianca Russo
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners	Martyn Underhill

1.0 Welcome, Introduction and Strategic Developments

BS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3.0 Previous Minutes (0920/01)

3.1 BS asked for comments on the minutes, there were none. He asked CG to confirm when and where these are published. She confirmed they are published quarterly on the Home office website.

4.0 Action Review

4.1 CG took the group through the action list.

04/18 – Fingerprint data assurance strategy

CG confirmed that a first draft of the Strategy had been circulated in FINDS for comment and said that the final draft will be ready for the December meeting. BS stressed that due to the length of time since this action was raised and the delay in producing the strategy that it is important that it is presented to the December Board or if not that another way forward will need to be considered.

19/18 Update of international policy to include Prüm searching of fingerprints.

CG said that the policy document produced by FINDS for the management of Prüm step 2 data by UK LEA has been approved at the National Fingerprint and Footwear Strategic Board. An options paper will be presented to this Board at the December meeting to consider the options for the strategic fingerprint process solution.

05/19 PW expressed his concern about the veracity of the data obtained from FP.

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CG said that they are finalising the discovery and capturing the requirements. They now need to link with the new supplier on taking these new requirements forward once the new contract is in place. BS noted that this is similar to workshop action WS-10, therefore WS-10 can be closed.

03/20 to convene the relevant parties for a decision on the use of Genealogical databases.

GT confirmed the intention is still to hold the meeting in the autumn.

07/20 CG to look at the error figures in the highlight report.

CG said that the outstanding part of this action is; Take forward the reporting of crime scene errors from forces and include it in the data assurance strategy. She said that they have not yet approached forces for crime scene error data due to the pressure put on forces because of Covid-19. BS asked when this will be progressed. CG said that they will have a proposal to bring to the next meeting.

15/20 BR, MU, Chris Porter and Richard Martin to discuss the concerns around the outcomes of Prum matches and to address these concerns.

JW said that he will link in with Lee McKean to discuss further and then bring any further concerns back to the board.

19/20 AMacD and PW to discuss the issue relating to young offenders. Where forces are using procedures to deal with young offenders that don't involve charge and don't lead to them gaining a PNC record and whether forces can apply for a 63G request to retain the Biometrics.

RM confirmed that this is still an issue; CJ to link in with her to discuss.

Strategy board workshop actions.

AT updated on these actions. He said there have been progress updates given for these as were made available. Considering the velocity of progress for the various strands, there are discussions and meetings booked in that will usefully inform for this, such as the monthly FINDS/FCN collaboration, and similarly FINDS will seek a regular touch point with other action owners to ensure that the presence for all the strands continues to be there. Within these discussions will be considered for the suitability of the action in the work plan, for example the Voluntary Attendee issue does not currently have an owner, but this could be indicative of the fact that there may be a more appropriate forum for this action to sit.

BS noted that this is a wider development action list and it is important that these actions are taken forward.

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5.0 Operational Risks and performance

Risk & issues Register (0920/03)

5.1 AT took the Board through the risk register (0920/03).

For the existing 8 risks, all remain at static rating status. One new risk has been raised - STRAT 18 for IDENT1 system change management robustness, with risk for CT collection searching.

No new issues have been raised, existing issues remain on static status.

4 outstanding escalations:

- MI development delays
- NDNAD personal data present in test environment
- non-compliance to TickITplus for NDNAD environments
- FINDS Birmingham – site move

1 new escalation raised this period

- IDENT1 CT collection searching

AT noted that the progression of workshop actions relating to strategic development and roadmap should help to reduce some of the risks.

Strat 02 - Sample or data-handling errors - AM asked if this should still be red because the validation approach of the new IDENT1 matching algorithm has been agreed and the DPIA for the validation work has now been approved and FINDS are beginning to load the background test data. GT said that we need to see some impact before the risk can be lowered. GT said we are still seeing approximately 100 sample switches in a quarter; this number hasn't changed. BS confirmed that although some aspects have reduced it needs to remain at red.

Strat 11 - There is no clear legislative or policy roadmap for Forensic information databases – AT said that this is linked to the workshop actions. BS said that it needs to remain red because a number of the actions haven't moved on. This also links into the wider governance issues.

Strat 15 - The lack of funding will stagnate the databases supply chain – BS asked what needs to be done to reduce this risk. AT said that the FINDS/FCN collaboration will be considering the business and benefits cases needed for ongoing development and funding stream.

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Strat 18 - IDENT1 system change management not robust – SK gave an update, there is a recovery plan in place. There is a significant backlog in casework. It is estimated that it will take 6 months to get back to BAU. This is still a significant risk.

Highlight report (0620/04)

5.2 AT presented the scorecard.

The number of loads dropped off at the start of the quarter due to COVID-19 impacting. There has also been an increase in lost samples and errors particularly PoFA time elapsed errors. FINDS have also now started to collate data on errors in VA sampling. The crime scene sampling match rate increased this quarter to over 70%, potentially the rise may correlate to a more targeted scene sampling strategy in place during the time period, but the trend for the partiality of profiles being loaded to the NDNAD will affect the match rate too.

Action 22/20 – CG to obtain data on partiality of profiles being loaded to the NDNAD and analyse the affect this has on match rates.

JW asked about the increase in lost samples; CG said that this was thought to be linked to the effects of Covid 19 as forces have said that they have a reduction in staff and a backlog of samples for processing.

BS welcomed JV in her new role as Head of FINDS.

JV thanked everyone for their warm welcome since she has taken over as head of unit. She thanked AT for providing the FINDS updates at all of the relevant boards. She said she was looking forward to working with everyone on the Board and finding out more about the excellent work they do.

6.0 Strategic change and delivery to Strategy Board timeline.

NDNAD 2 readiness and risk – FINDS perspective

6.1 AT gave an update on NDNAD 2 Risk & Readiness. Due to the volume and severity of outstanding defects, there is a further delay in the release, and the confirmed new date within Autumn wasn't available at the time. It was noted that although the chief focus is on the NDNAD, the overall IT solution wraps around all the DNA databases and services that FINDS deliver from these, and so the solution testing involves the ongoing ability to access and deliver services including the Missing Persons DNA Database, the Forensic Science Service electronic archive, and for Proficiency Testing purposes.

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When the Strategic DNA solution does go live, the follow-on release schedule then triggers, there is now more clarity for this schedule which gives assurance that there will be the ongoing follow-on development, from the immediate Early Life Support (ELS) status when NDNAD2 goes live, moving onto stage 1.1 until the end March 2021, and then moving onto stage 1.2 in the next financial year.

Prum update (0920/05)

6.2 SK gave an update on Prum.

DNA

She took the Board through the Prum DNA dashboard (0920/05). They have connected to Latvia since the last board. There has been over 12,400 matches for the UK and 41,000 matches for other member states. The dashboard is sent to all stakeholders monthly and has been updated to include Lee McKean's work on matches. Slide 2 shows the matches broken down by quality. The quality 4 ones are deemed to not be true matches. Slide 3 shows 1,790 matches have been reported to forces and 36% have been requested. They have seen over the last month an increase in forces actively looking at their matches. In slide 4 you can see that in contrast to previous months that the scorecard is now going more towards amber/green.

BS asked what the 0% are – SK said that these are subject profiles and they are where they aren't getting any engagement from the force. Lee is going to be communicating with these forces. AM said that Lee works within HOB. They have a large amount of data to analyse (3000 responses) and it doesn't all fit into the defined model. The team are currently working through it.

JW asked what the confidence level is that we don't have any errors due to the large amount of manual input data. He asked what the checks and balances are.

SK said that since the last meeting where an error in the data was detected extra checks have been put in place. The operational team are currently working through the 3000 responses to ensure they are recorded correctly.

JV asked if the intention is to look at the quality 4 matches. SK said that following the learning from other countries these have been deprioritised. Other countries have shown that in most cases these aren't matches. At some point this decision will be taken back to this Board and the Prum delivery Board. They will probably look at a risk base approach.

The final slide of the dashboard shows which countries we are connected to; connection to Latvia was achieved very quickly, they are hoping to connect with Belgium next.

Fingerprints

UK Prum fingerprint exchange is going to go live on 5th October. All testing has been completed following connection with Germany. Unlike DNA, fingerprints are de-

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centralised so they are going to go live with the Met fingerprint bureau on behalf of policing. Lee McKean has sent out a briefing to all forces on Chiefs Net.

Biometrics Governance (0920/06)

- 6.3 AMacD presented paper 0920/06, he said that he had written the paper on behalf of Alan Barr. It is still early days for the Biometrics Strategy Board, they have had 2 meetings. The first to determine the terms of reference and the second to go into the substantive items. The main aim of the Board is to deliver a Biometrics Strategy for policing. They are awaiting the outcome of a spending bid to get a team in place. The Board is deliberately small for decision making.

The Board needs to work alongside policing to ensure policy/legislation is developed to reflect what policing wants. He suggest it would be sensible to have regular updates between the boards.

BS said we need to understand how we fit in with the Biometrics Strategy Board. He asked AMacD the extent he sees the FINDS Strategy Board to have an influence in the Strategy. AMacD said that a lot depends on what extent policing wants to use facial imaging. If forces want to use facial we will need to replicate the governance of DNA and FP.

Legislative Update (Paper 0920/06)

- 6.4 CJ provided an update on the paper. The Police Powers and Protection Bill has been renamed the Protection of the Police and Public Bill. It includes modest but hopefully useful changes aimed at VAs. It gives police more control over the process to recall them.

The Home Office is currently recruiting to a new position of unified commissioner (Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner). This does not mean the duties of these two posts change. They remain in stature. It is also not a reduction in resources as currently both of these posts are part-time; the new post will be a full time one. The number of staff in their offices will remain the same.

The judgement in the case of Bridges v South Wales Police (SWP) has been handed down. It gave several examples why South Wales Police weren't using Live Facial Recognition within the legal framework. This ruling provides clarity on the position. The court asked for more rules on where the watch list should be kept and where it should be used. There are questions around how much should be in a code of practice and how much should be force policy. The court found that there wasn't any bias on ethical or gender basis but not enough had been done to prove this.

The Home Office has completed recruitment for the Digital Forensics Policy Team, which is now in post.

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Transforming Forensics and Forensic Capability Network

- 6.5 CL introduced herself and said that she was standing in for Vickie Burgin who will be the normal representative on the Board. She outlined that she is the research and development manager for FCN and then she gave a presentation to provide an update on FCN science.

GT asked if the DNA capability roadmap includes interpretation, transfer and persistence. CL said that it is in the R&D work and will be covered by the DNA futures meetings.

JV highlighted that it is important that FINDS and FCN work together to make sure that efforts are not duplicated anywhere and that they are aligned.

BS acknowledged that it was a really useful presentation and it was good to see how FCN science is progressing.

Updates from Board members.

- 6.6 AT raised that there is currently a Project working to give Gibraltar access to PNC and through this the ability to submit records for NDNAD/IDENT1 retention. One of the central reasons for this is to be able to access Prum exchange. Once there has been suitable progression in this project, and the timelines are clearer, FINDS will bring a formal paper to a subsequent meeting.

GH provided an update on work ongoing in Scotland. Legislation for a new Biometrics Commissioner in Scotland has been introduced; it is anticipated that the new commissioner will take up their post early next year. A review of forensics has been carried out and the general view is that they will continue with their separate database but that they will need more control over their data on NDNAD & IDENT 1 to ensure that they are complying with their legislation. This will mean a separate collection on IDENT 1. GH to bring a paper on this to the next meeting.

Action 23/20 – GH to bring a paper to the December meeting on Scotland having control of their records on NDNAD & IDENT 1.

Any Other Business

- 7.1 CG said that the Annual report was published in September and she has a small number of printed copies if members require one.