

## FIND Strategy Board

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# Open Minutes of Meeting

13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – By Teleconference  
10.00 – 12.30 pm

Present:

## CORE MEMBERS

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
NPCC	DCC Ben Snuggs (BS)
Home Office, representing the Home Secretary	Jeremy Jones (JJ)

## APPOINTED MEMBERS (as set out in the Governance Rules)

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Commissioner of the Retention & Use of Biometric material representative	Jess Renwick (JR)
Forensic Science Regulator representative	Gary Pugh(GP)
Biometric and Forensic Ethics Group Chair	Mark Watson-Gandy (MW-G)
Information Commissioner's Office	Mark Jones (MJ)
Scottish Biometric Commissioner	Dr Brian Plastow (BP)

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### APPOINTED MEMBERS

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
NPCC – CT	Shazia Khan (SK)
NPCC – DNA	Emily Burton (EB)
NPCC – Homicide Working Group	Martin Bottomley (MB)

### SECRETARIAT

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

### IN ATTENDANCE

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Home Office, HOB Programme	Amy Morrell (AM)
Home Office, Interpol and International Biometric Exchange Team	Bianca Russo (BR) Pam Thethi (PT)
FCN Science	Vicki Burgin (VB)
NCA	Ulla Irion-cordwell (UI-C)
Devolved Administration – Northern Ireland	Stephen Campbell (SC) James Reed (JR)
Devolved Administration – Scotland	David Scrimger (DS)

### APOLOGIES:

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners	Darryl Preston Alexandra Campbell

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Home Office	Alex MacDonald
Commissioner of the Retention & Use of Biometric material	Fraser Sampson Rebecca Marsh
Devolved Administration – Scotland	Fiona Douglas Gary Holcroft
Devolved Administration – Northern Ireland	Noel Rainey
NCA	Kathryn Clarke Steve Cox

### 1.0 Welcome, Introduction and Strategic Developments

BS welcomed everyone to the meeting; he asked the new members of the Board to introduce themselves. He said that James Vaughan has stood down as NPCC lead for biometrics; the appointment of a new lead is being awaited.

### 3.0 Previous Minutes (0921/01)

3.1 No comments – minutes agreed

### 4.0 Action Review (0921/02)

4.1 CG took the group through the action list.

**06/19 consider how the dashboard can consider the usefulness of the NDNAD in terms of key indicators for the effectiveness of the NDNAD.**

CG said that they had made some improvements to the scorecard and that further improvements would be made before the next board to update the error and CED sections and she asked that if any of the Board members have any feedback on any additional information they want to be included to let FINDS know.

**02/21 JV to find out who GMP are doing the out of court disposals project on behalf of.** JV has confirmed that the pilot was a GMP pilot only. BS asked how that pilot would feedback; EB said that it would be through the DNA Operations Group.

Strategy board workshop actions.

CG took the Board through those actions which have been updated.

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*WS-04 - biometrics and VA's* – CG said that they had had feedback from the Ops group on the VA guidance; she would be compiling this and then going back to the Ops group to form recommendations to bring to the Strategy Board. BS said that he would be meeting with the CJ custody lead the following week and would discuss this; work is ongoing from a NPCC CJ perspective to improve this.

*WS-07 - Update of access and use policy* – the document has been updated and is being reviewed in FINDS, it will then be circulated for wider stakeholder review.

*WS-08 – Provide clarity for TOR for the Board* – The updated governance rules have been circulated to Board members and their comments have been incorporated in the final draft circulated with the papers.

*WS-12 - Ensure continued engagement between Home Office International and the Strategy Board about the strategic plans for biometric sharing outside Prüm.* – CG said that she hadn't seen any feedback from Board members on what additional information they want to receive for this and that now there is a standing international section on the agenda this action should be closed. BS agreed, he said that the action came about to ensure that there was a mandatory dialogue in place to ensure that there was this engagement and that the mechanisms for this are now in place.

### **5.0 Operational Risks and performance**

#### **Risk & issues Register (0921/03)**

##### **5.1 JV took the Board through the risk register**

STRAT 10	Sharing data with EU: Status static The process to delay the re-evaluation in Sept 2021 until June 2022 has been commenced and is agreed in principle. The SFR/BCO/ICO will be conducting an audit, before (but not this year). Increasing DNA Connections to outstanding EU countries - All have been contacted and responded positively. The UK is now connected with Malta (small DB) and the MPS will now work through the priority list (put together based on police operational priorities - questionnaire circulated by NCA).
STRAT 17	FINDS NDNAD site move: Recommend Closing The validation studies using the new posting arrangements on FINDS PT confirmed no impact on quality - UKAS extended 17043 scope to the new laboratory. Risk no longer present - can close
Issues Log	One existing issue remains open and two new issues added:

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- SBIS04      CPIA Data Returns - BC written out to CC's to remind of the importance of returning data to FINDS (on behalf of the Strategy Board). A Full return has now been received for Dec 20, and there are only 4 outstanding forces for Mar 21. A copy of then BC's letter has been sent with the June 21 request.
- SBIS05      Security - Appropriate levels of data security required for NDNAD systems and the implications of not adhering to these have not been fully appreciated by HOB 3rd party suppliers. SIR/DIR being closely monitored by FINDS/NPIRMT through the NDNAD2 SWG.
- SBIS06      NDNAD Service support – Confidential Working Area (CWA) through which NDNAD2 application is accessed does not have 24/7 support. Cost estimates for out of hours support have been provided and FINDS will work with HOB to implement. It is hoped that this will be in place by the end of the year.

BS noted that SBIS05 is a long term issue but SBIS06 should be a short term issue.

### Highlight report (0921/04)

#### 5.2 CG presented the scorecard.

She said they have made some changes and will be making further changes for the report in December. They will be simplifying and expanding the error and the CED sections and looking at displaying the number of matches in a different way, they will also be adding in FP MI.

Slide 3 – loads have reached a steady state after fluctuations due to covid. Due to CED connectivity issues in May there were no loads.

Slide 5 – FINDS are expanding the partiality measure - Partiality is measured as the percent of crime stain DNA profiles loaded to the NDNAD that month where there were less than 10 full loci present. It peaked in April at 12.45% but they didn't see a corresponding increase in match rate that month. The match rate has increased gradually over the last quarter.

Slides 6 & 7 look at CED data; these will be presented differently at the next Board to provide a clearer picture of contamination events and investigations on the CED. There were 73 investigations closed in the quarter which led to crime scene profiles being deleted from the NDNAD. This is an increased number of investigations closed compared to last quarter where there were 42. A lot of the closed investigations were historic ones so the average turn around time for investigations closed in the quarter was 620 days, it was 531 in the previous quarter. The graph on slide 7 shows the number of days the outstanding CED investigations have been outstanding for. As mentioned previously

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there is a big spike from the initial go live of BAU (1000 days) there are 49 of these outstanding compared to 64 in the previous quarter.

Slide 8 shows error data for errors identified through FINDS this covers the most serious errors which affect matching on the NDNAD or where the samples were taken unlawfully. FINDS are still awaiting some data on FSP errors which FINDS will circulate when available.

Slide 9 shows all force errors not just the most serious ones; it covers returns from forces and FSP's and errors identified by FINDS. This quarter it includes errors identified by FSP's, hence the increase. Because it includes returns from FSP's it includes scientific failures. Scientific failures are the highest – 257 then sampling errors 242 and then bags not sealed 235.

Slide 10 looks at red errors only – those which affect matching on the NDNAD or where the samples were taken unlawfully. This includes returns from FSP's for the first time so includes samples taken with incorrect consent. Sample swaps are the highest number.

The final slide shows the total of all of these errors and also the number of lost samples. For the lost samples it shows the absolute number and the % against submissions.

BS asked what the impact of these errors and lost samples are and what is being done to mitigate against them and improve force processes. CG said that the errors could lead to a delay in the samples being loaded to the NDNAD or the samples not being able to be loaded and a sampling opportunity being missed. She said work is ongoing on using this data to improve force processes. EB said that this work would also be carried out through the DNA Operations Group; to look at the data and raise specific issues with forces.

### **International DNA and Fingerprint exchange.**

#### **Prüm Update 0921/05 a&b**

5.3 BR started by giving the policy update, she further expanded on what JV said on extending the evaluation period and the intention to delay the re-evaluation from Sept 2021 until June 2022, if the extension is not agreed then Prüm exchanges will have to stop immediately but they are confident that it will be agreed. Although the extension period will run until June 2022, they expect the EU to start work on the re-evaluation in October 2021.

They are currently looking at the exchange of minor's data in step 2; if there is a match in step 1 then step 2 is where the NCA share data, currently this does not include minor's information but FINDS guidance states that it can be shared through MLA so this is being looked at.

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PT said that the Home Office have given a steer that departments need to focus on the exchange of data that can help with the fall out of Afghanistan so they are working on that.

BS asked what they hope the landscape to look like post evaluation. BR said that they are hoping to get all issues sorted through this evaluation because there is not the opportunity for another one.

SK took the group through papers 0921/05 a&b. She said that they are now connected to 13 countries and up to date with all legacy profile now being searched. It can be seen on slide3 - Prüm DNA - Matches reported to forces there are a lot more RAG statuses of green and orange. This shows that a lot more forces are progressing the matches they are receiving.

On slide 5 - Prüm DNA Step 2 – Follow up on initial hits (Outbound) – BS asked what the process is for following up where the completed exchange of data is very low (Belgium/Ireland). SK said that they and the NCA are working with these countries to address the issues and put extra steps in the process to allow the exchange of this data.

On slide 8 - Prüm DNA Step 2 – Follow up on initial hits (Inbound) it showed that there has been good performance on the inbound requests for data; all RAG statuses are amber or green. The feedback that they have had is that member states are pleased with our response to inbound requests.

### **Interpol DNA update 0921/06**

- 5.4 U I-C went through the Interpol DNA update (paper 0921/06), this information has been removed from the FINDS highlight report and will now be presented as a separate paper. BS said that it was a very useful update but just asked for some clarity around some of the force names on the graphs.

### **International DNA & fingerprint exchange policy update 0921/07**

- 5.5 JV presented paper 0921/07, it documents what the policy covers, how it will be updated and what the review process will be. The full policy will be coming to board members for review but as it is still being finalised FINDS would like to do this ex committee.

The key updates are:-

- References to legislation
- Changes to SIS II exchanges
- NCA safeguarding checks for Interpol Fingerprint exchange
- Quality criteria for Interpol DNA searches
- UKICB approval of the export of UK DNA samples via

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- Missing Persons
- Offence categories
- Mutual Legal

FINDS have reformatted the document to break it down by types of exchange. The document has gone through significant stakeholder consultation and will be going to BFEG in September and will also be sent to Home Office legal for final review. DS said that it seemed a sensible approach.

**Board agreed to the approach for review and sign off ex-committee.**

### **6.0 Strategic change and delivery to Strategy Board timeline.**

#### **HOB update**

6.1 AM provided an update on fingerprints, she said that the fingerprint business case is currently going through the process. It is having a deep dive by the Board, DDAT and sub groups. It draws out the strategic matcher work and looks at the approach to that and the way forward to steps 2 & 3 around delivery and governance.

JV provided an update on DNA she said that the Strategic DNA project board has now closed. There were a couple of outstanding issues which are being rectified. The PNC incident had an impact on this work but they are now getting into quarterly releases.

They need to build a business case for CED improvements. This will be completed after the PNC recovery work.

MB asked for an update on the near matching work which has been put on hold. JV said that there are 2 work streams; the first is to do the research, FINDS are re-engaging with Home Office researchers to progress this work. The second work stream is the IT changes needed to the NDNAD. This will need to be prioritised with the other work which has been put on hold, AT is looking at this. The work will sit with HOB as a small project.

**Action 03/21 JV to review the near matching business case to see where it fits into FINDS priorities.**

SK asked if JV could give any more information around the timeline for automated loading and searching of the CED. JV said she doesn't have any more information but it will be next financial year, FINDS are looking into whether they can do the CED wash troughs daily instead of weekly.



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### Decommissioning of NDNAD (Paper 0921/08 & 09)

6.2 JV presented paper 0921/09 it sets out the steps for the decommissioning of the old NDNAD. There are a number of phases to full decommissioning, the FSS archive is still being housed at the Hendon data centre so this needs to move first before it can be fully decommissioned. Phase 0 took place as soon as the NDNAD 2 went live. Phase 1 was completed after the NDNAD2 early life support and all access to the system and all files transferred to the database.

During Phase 2 they will turn off all they can but maintain the Forensic Science Service (FSS) archive, the final phase, phase 3 will continue into 2022. The project wanted to make everyone aware of the approach they are going to take and give people the opportunity to comment. NPRINT and the accreditor Rick Smith have signed off the approach.

BS said the paper was very technical, as it was only circulated on the day of the Board he asked that Board members have 2 weeks to comment and agree to the approach. He said consideration needs to be given to the role of the Strategy Board, asked what JV what she needs feedback on. JV confirmed that if people have the technical knowledge they can review and raise any concerns but that it is mainly the time line.

**Action 04/21 board members to feedback on Decommissioning of NDNAD Paper 0921/09 by 5pm 23/09/21.**

JV presented paper 0921/08 on the deletion of the NDNAD1 Oracle Audit Vault (OAV) Logs from the NDNAD1 historic environment as part of the de-commissioning of the NDNAD1. These logs have been inaccessible since 2019. BS asked if there had been any instances of FINDs needing to access this data. JV said that there had not. It is about the audit function rather than NDNAD data.

SK had raised that there had been instances where they had needed continuity statements from FINDS on the integrity of samples on the NDNAD and details of amendments of samples etc. is that affected? JV confirmed that it doesn't affect that; they are logs used for auditing to record user IDS for each transaction. All data relating to loading, amendments and deletions of records etc. is available for any future continuity statements needed.

In the meeting chat MJ said he had no issue with the recommendation, but just a reminder that there is a requirement for logging under the Data Protection Act. BS said he agreed with the recommendation and asked the Board if anyone had any objections, no one did.

**Decision – agreement of the deletion of the NDNAD1 Oracle Audit Vault (OAV) Logs from the NDNAD1 historic environment**

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### **Biometrics Governance**

6.3 JJ gave an update on governance. They are looking at opportunities to improve the framework and paragraphs relating to the capture and retention of biometrics and simplifying this. It is primary legislation so is difficult to change; they are looking at ways to make it easier to amend the legislation.

He thanked board members for their comments on the FIND Strategy Board governance rules. He said one major change was to include reference to non-EU data sharing. This was to future proof the terms of reference.

Biometric Strategy Board – they are reapplying for a fund for a support function. Forces are progressing with automatic facial recognition but there is currently a lack of central support function.

National Fingerprint Footwear Strategy Board (NFFSB) – discussions are progressing to share the footwear reference collection with Germany.

### **Legislative Update (Paper 0921/10)**

6.4 JJ provided an update on the paper

### **DNA futures.**

6.5 JV said that the changes to CED will be the next big project a funding bid has been submitted for that. They have had 2 successful bids for funding for the YSTR project; this is for the collection and processing of 10,000 samples.

Genealogy pilot – SK provided an update, they have been successful in securing funding through a bid. They are setting up an advisory board which will include academia, commercial partners and the Home Office.

### **Transforming Forensics and Forensic Capability Network**

6.6 VB provided an update through a presentation the TF/FCN Strategic Review has now reported recommendations. A Gateway Group has been established, comprising Chief Officers to action recommendations and determine strategic priorities for both TF and FCN. They have been asked to ensure that they are meeting what policing needs. Consequently some work has slowed or been paused until direction given. Work on RASSO and Next Generation Procurement (NGP) has continued.

The SRO for the NGP work is Paul Gibson. They need to build in resilience because policing needs are not static. Previously the focus was on crime type but the new services and lotting structure is based on Forensic Science. Bundling of DNA casework services

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in a Lotted Service Line to ensure effectiveness and minimise, where possible, discordance. Retention of a Crimestain Lotted Service Line but recognising need to enable seamless transition for additional analysis and interpretation to maximise outputs. They hope to award contracts to minimise discordance across casework and crime stain services. There is inclusion of a Niche Services Lotted Service Line to safeguard and improve supply. They need agility to capture any further work that is required. They have now entered the formal procurement process with a hard deadline for the awarding of the contracts of 1st July 2022.

The DNA Good Practice manual is currently with EB awaiting sign off from the DNA Operations Group.

BS asked about the governance of the new gateway group and how it fits with that of TF and FCN. VB said that TF and FCN have their own governance. FCN is a deliverable of TF. The gateway group is looking at ensuring they are doing what they should be. The governance is still being reviewed; Jo Ashworth sits on all the groups.

JV asked if when FINDS and FCN next have their collaboration meetings if FINDS Data Assurance Strategy and the procurement strategy could be discussed.

### **Updates from Board Members.**

6.9 None