

FIND Strategy Board

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Open Minutes of Meeting

23rd March 22 – By Teleconference
11.00 – 13.30 pm

Present:

CORE MEMBERS

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
NPCC	DCC Ben Snuggs (BS)
Home Office, representing the Home Secretary	Jeremy Jones (JJ)
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners	Alexandra Campbell (AC)

APPOINTED MEMBERS (as set out in the Governance Rules)

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Commissioner of the Retention & Use of Biometric material representative	Fraser Sampson (FS) Jai Krishnan (JK)
Forensic Science Regulator representative	Gary Pugh (GP)
Biometric and Forensic Ethics Group Chair	Mark Watson-Gandy (MW-G)

APPOINTED MEMBERS

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
NPCC – CT	Shazia Khan (SK)

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NPCC – Homicide Working Group	Martin Bottomley (MB)
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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	Ian Betts (IB)
Home Office, Interpol and International Biometric Exchange Team	Bianca Russo (BR)
FCN Science	Carolyn Lovell (CL)
NCA	Ulla Irion-Cordwell (UI-C)
Devolved Administration – Northern Ireland	Stephen Campbell (SC) Noel Rainey (NR)
Devolved Administration – Scotland	Gary Holcroft (GH)
Scottish Biometric Commissioner representative	Diego Quiroz (DQ)

APOLOGIES:

ORGANISATION	MEMBER
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners	Darryl Preston
Scottish Biometric Commissioner	Brian Plastow
NPCC – DNA	Emily Burton
FCN Science	Vicki Burgin

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1.0 Welcome, Introduction and Strategic Developments

BS welcomed everyone to the meeting; he said that he would like people to consider when the appropriate time would be to have another face to face workshop style meeting. The last of these was held in 2020 and it looked to set the short, medium and long term actions and work for the Board. BS said it felt it was getting to the correct time to refresh this and have another longer meeting to look at the future direction of not only the board but also the forensic landscape.

5.2 Previous Minutes (0322/01)

3.1 No comments– minutes agreed

4.0 Action Review (0322/02)

4.1 CG took the group through the action list.

05/19 PW expressed his concern about the veracity of the data obtained from FP. CG said that she had removed the large amount of background information from this action. FINDS have drafted a BSN form for HOB requesting various activities that aim to make improvements over 3 time frames, short term, medium and long term. Although this action has been open for a significant time; it is moving forward slowly.

07/20 CG to look at the error figures in the highlight report: Take forward the reporting of crime scene errors from forces – include in data assurance strategy
CG said that FINDS resource is currently stretched. They have been looking at developing an error reduction strategy for the subject errors now that they have a full set of subject data and looking to start to collect the crime scene error data. At the Quarterly Supplier Performance meeting it was discussed with the regulators office and they suggested that FINDS shouldn't be looking at the crime scene error data work yet because forces are using their resources for their accreditation for crime scene sampling and it was agreed it was better to focus on subject errors as forces will need time to embed their crime scene processes for crime scene accreditation. CG asked if the Strategy Board were happy with this approach. BS said that it was sensible – Board agreed.

03/21 JV to review the near matching business case to see where it fits into FINDS priorities. FINDS have submitted a BSN (Business Service Needs Form) to HOB to identify the changes that are required so they can be assessed and then the cost and benefits assessment work can be carried out to assess where it's prioritized within the FINDS and the HOB work.

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05/21 FINDS to consider adding Strategy Board exceptional case approvals to the annual report. This was discussed within FINDS and it was decided that these should not be added to the annual report because there is currently no requirement to publish the number of requests that fall within the access and use policy. There needs to be a consistent approach to publication so that the context of the data is understood.

Strategy board workshop actions.

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

WS-02 – Rapid DNA load ‘lights out’ – NDNAD technical requirements/data assurance –CG said Pilot commenced 31/01/22 – NDNAD2 system update to allocate a specific code for each Rapid DNA instrument to allow traceability for FINDS integrity monitoring (standard as per NDNAD Technical Requirements); data assurance measures are in place. FINDS are proposing to close this action as the NDNAD processes and the Data Assurance activities have been put in place. If there are any further pilots or work on this then current model can be used. BS agreed to close.

5.0 Operational Risks and performance

Risk & issues Register (0322/03)

5.1 JV took the Board through the risk register she said that all risks have remained static and two new risks have been added

STRAT 03 Lack of strategic development roadmap and available funding:
STRAT 15 Lack of funding will stagnate the database supply chains

Propose we combine these two risks and update on mitigation for funding and development within the NDNAD and the NDNAD supply chain. Board agreed.

Two issues remain open and one has been resolved:

SBIS02 Security culture and outstanding security enhancements – SFTP implementation planned for July 2022 at earliest. Access reports for NDNAD users now available but still needed for other environments. Audit reports and user log on data will be available following R6.0.

SBIS04 CPIA Data Returns – FINDS/BCO meeting agreed that details of forces unable to provided CPIA data for samples held within property stores will be passed to BCO to follow up for assurance. 2021-22 Q3 data to be sent to BCO and review meeting planned.

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SBIS06 NDNAD Service support – The Confidential Working Area (CWA) through which
(Closed) NDNAD2 application now has 24/7 support which has been effectively utilised over the weekend so proposing to close.

FS added that in relation to SBIS04 one of the issues they have seen when visiting forces is that the software used by managers to track property is not sufficient. There is a large difference between for example a scooter and a sample taken from someone. Software is needed that can make a distinction between the two.

Four escalations remain open:

DU-ESC-068 NDNAD personal data present in test environment: Initially raised against old NDNAD – info found in old test environments now deleted. PoFA compliance issues in HOB NDAND2 environments tracked on FINDS risk register.
Propose close and add new risk to risk register (STRAT-20). Board agreed.

FINDS-ESC-082 Non-compliance to TickITplus for NDNAD environments: Linked to STRAT 16 – waiting for QAT Audit Report. Standards that Forensic Databases must adhere to are under discussion with the FSRU as part of the Forensic Science Activities included within the FSR Code. Escalation to remain open for now.

FINDS-ESC-092 IDENT1 CT collection searching – Linked to Risk STRAT 18:
Propose close as there is a route forward and manage as risk STRAT-18.
Board agreed.

FINDS-ESC-094 PNC Record deletions impacting NDNAD and IDENT1: Second set of fingerprints re-inserted. Only ~1500 fingerprint records remain to be added. Escalation remains open but hope to close by next Board.

Highlight report (0322/04)

5.2 CG presented the scorecard which now includes error data.

IDENT 1 loads & deletions are now shown. The ident 1 deletions are broken down into individual arrest deletions and whole subject deletions. The high level at the start of the graph for individual arrest deletions was due to the PNC deletions.

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The next slide shows the match rates for NDNAD & IDENT 1 followed by the partiality and the corresponding match rates and some MPDD data. They will be getting the corresponding data for IDENT1 missing persons.

There were 43 new investigations raised in the quarter following CED matches, this is compared to 22 in the previous quarter. 22 investigations were closed by forces with contamination identified compared to 24 in the previous quarter. There were 217 outstanding CED investigations as at 01/1/22 with 197 in the previous quarter.

The first error data graph shows those errors identified on the NDNAD and only covers red errors – those which affect matching. We have seen an increase in FSP interpretation errors in crime scenes and a smaller one in subjects; this is due to one supplier – this is being followed up with them through our quarterly supplier performance meetings.

The next graph relates to all errors in the supply chain. They nearly have a full years data from all sources. The bars remain fairly static, the paper details the movement. One of the main increases this quarter was in on-line weed errors these were due to FINDS working through these types of errors.

The final slide now shows IDENT1 error data. The number of errors that have been reported to the national fingerprint and PNC office over the last four quarters has decreased slightly in all the error categories.

FINDS Business Plan Objectives

- 5.3 JV updated the board that in one of FINDS' recent audits, it was highlighted that the FINDS business plan references the Strategy Board work streams as forming part of FINDS' yearly business goals. However, this is not very well detailed in the FINDS business plan. FINDS will be including some more detail around progressing actions, mitigating risks and also progressing some of the strategic, longer term view workshop actions as well the business plan. JV will share with BS once it has been completed.

International DNA and Fingerprint exchange.

Prüm Update 0322/05 a&b

- 5.4 BR started by giving the policy update, they have been re-evaluated by the EU for both DNA and fingerprint capabilities, that process has now ended. The evaluation reports have been agreed by all parties and they are making their way through the relevant EU institutions. The reports were fairly positive. They are in the process of trying to make new Member State fingerprint connections, they are currently connected to Germany

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and are in the process of contacting and beginning testing with a number of Member States.

It's a slightly different process on DNA where they have made a country connection one at a time. Fingerprints works differently because you don't wash all of your data against the other data set at the beginning.

CG has circulated part of the EU's next generation PRUM proposal. These proposals are at quite an early stage but they will come to the board for views at the point at which it is clear which elements of those proposals are likely to change and which are solid. There is scope in the UK EU Trading Corporation agreement to effectively reopen the PRUM chapter to account for next generation PRUM that's written into the legal text. There is an expectation that we will engage with the EU on that in due course. But the main changes are around new data categories, which might be of interest to the Board. One is around facial images and there's another around police records.

There are actually three strands of Prüm at the moment. Soon to be more, but currently there are DNA and fingerprints, which are of most interest to this group and also the vehicle registration data exchange capability. They are looking to identify policing partner to take that forward as the lead force and trying to gain traction at various sort of policing boards on that and in parallel working with the DVLA to look at the tech.

JT updated that they have a new person starting in the OBC and they will be starting the audit process again. They will be linking back in with the ICO and Forensic Regulator.

SK provided an update on the Prüm dashboard. They have connected to Lithuania, they have a small database in comparison to the NDNAD but they had a surprisingly large number of hits. The second slide in the pack shows how many unverified hits there are; once there is a hit it has to be verified by scientists. The hits are categorised from quality 1 to Quality 4. Other member states do not routinely progress quality 4 matches; it was a recommendation from the re-evaluation that these are not looked at so this will be brought back to the Board in the future.

The pack shows data on how many matches forces are progressing; there was an improvement in this with the table showing more green and yellow with forces progressing matches but recently there has been more of a decline in this with less matches being progressed. This is something which the ICC and the NCA are working on.

Bulk upload of UBs to the Interpol DNA Database

- 5.5 UIC said that the Missing Persons Unit alongside UK ICB have done an exercise to upload some black notices with DNA which was successful. But there are still more than

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150 DNA profiles for unidentified bodies that are not attached to a notice so they have been exploring the idea of doing a bulk upload so they don't have to get the forces liaison to be doing this. They will have the authorization and oversight of Missing Persons Unit to upload these to the Interpol DNA Database. They consider there to be minimal risks involved in this and they will put a paper together for the next board.

BS asked what the timeline is. UIC confirmed that once everything is in place it will only take a few days so it should be ready to go by the next Board. BS said that if the timing needs to be quicker than the next Board, approval can be sought outside of the meeting and then ratified at the next meeting.

Missing Person DNA Database policy update (0322/07).

- 5.6 JV presented paper 0322/07 on some minor policy changes within the Missing Persons DNA Database policy and to also highlight the consultation process around those changes.

The policy has been updated and there's been input from FSP, the NCA UK, Missing Persons Unit and also police forces. The first key update is to reflect that DNA profiles processed by massive parallel sequencing can be loaded onto the Missing Persons DNA database. This means that they can store more information and a larger range of DNA fragments.

The second key update is around defining the searching criteria for unidentified DNA profiles from babies abandoned at birth. The standardisation of the policy around that is to use the standard unidentified body DNA profile searching mechanism to see if the mother of the child can be identified purely for welfare, check for intelligence purposes. This has previously been carried out as best practice but this policy update brings it into the policy.

FSS Archive / PVCS Transition to PSAP delay (0322/08)

- 5.7 JV presented paper 0322/08 an update on the Forensic Science Service Electronic Archive that FINDS has responsibility for. The DNA profiles, the physical samples and case files are held elsewhere by the Forensic Archive; it is just the DNA profile data that FINDS holds and oversee. The FSS electronic Archive came over to FINDS in 2013 following the closure of the Forensic Science Service.

Approximately 60% of the DNA records on the NDNAD were processed by the Forensic Science Service. The checks that FINDS undertake relate to matches to live recent crime scenes that may match against historic data from the FSS, if there are near matches, they are reviewed and confirmed and so are any rare components.

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6.0 Strategic change and delivery to Strategy Board timeline.

HOB update

6.1 IB provided an update on HOB through a presentation. Jason Dewhurst has taken over as SRO for HOB. Strategic matcher stage one delivery still planned for January 23, and the re-procurement of the contract is underway, aiming to get the contract signature in May 2023. He went through their projects. For strategic face matching they are actively working with policing colleagues to work through the data acquisition of custody images to bring them into the IDENT1 area. They are making good progress with the mobile biometric enrolment project, which is looking to provide a capability that enables both policing and Home Office operational areas to capture, store search and biometric data away from a fixed terminal. So out of a custody suite for policing and away from the biometric recording station for immigration purposes.

JV presented the slide on the Strategic DNA update. They are continuing with quarterly releases that are ensuring security patches are implemented but also addressing some of the defects that were accepted at go live and some of the minor functionalities de-scoped that was agreed to get the project over the line. They had a successful release in January and the next release is later in April. The CED re platforming is at the proof of concept stage.

Biometrics Governance & Legislative Update (Paper 1221/10)

6.2 JJ gave an update. They have consulted on department of digital culture, media and sports consultation on data reform, this includes consolidating the biometrics oversight landscape. They expect the government to publish its response to the consultation in the spring. Whilst they are making those changes they are planning on updating the FIND strategy board statutory remit to incorporate fingerprints. There are 3 types of activity ongoing around custody images:-

- Compliance with the current retention regime
- Policy questions around image retention – looking at something akin to the PoFA regime for DNA & fingerprints
- Automation of deletion

Policing, crime, sentencing and courts bill has been going through Lords and Commons and they expect royal assent in the next month. That billing includes the recall powers to make it easier to recall people to take their biometrics.

JV asked if there had been any changes made to the recall powers part of the bill whilst it has been going through Parliament. JJ confirmed that there had not.

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JV said that they had not had a Fingerprint and Footwear Strategy Board since the last board.

DNA futures.

- 6.3 JV said that she will be meeting with the Deputy Director of the HOB program to discuss funding available to progress some of the DNA futures work streams and some of the areas that have previously been identified by stakeholders as a potential benefits for the future. They have already successfully implemented changes to accept DNA profiles from Rapid DNA Devices and also from the Multi Parallel Sequencing techniques on the Missing Persons DNA Database.

On the YSTR project update, the contract for the processing the mass sampling of YSTR profiles to generate the data set for statistics has now been awarded to a forensic service provider. The tender for the sampling exercise to collect those 10,000 samples is currently live and closes the following week.

CL added they have a meeting the following week around the DNA futures program of work. They have some funding via STAR bids to take some of this work forward. They are building up a partnership with Kings Collage to take some of the DNA futures work forward.

Genealogy pilot

- 6.4 SK provided an update via a presentation.

Transforming Forensics and Forensic Capability Network

- 6.5 CL gave an update; they have been under review, and there's been an establishment of a gateway group which Chief Officers are made up of. They have been looking at the future structure of the FCN which they anticipate will start to develop going forward from April. They have had a Community reference group that's been set up by Michelle Painter and they have identified the FCN future remit and what their model will look like and what that structure will look like.

A lot of the team across the pillars have been involved on the national next generation procurement, they are at the stage now where they will go out to tender at the end of March.

The FCN have recently published the SFR guidance version 3 and the DNA Good Practice Manual which is accessible via the knowledge hub. And there is now an expert network established to look at the lawful match guidance.

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There has been a lot of activity from an R&D perspective. The outcome of the STAR bids are due to conclude soon, they have placed seven submissions across a number of different topics.

Ground Truth Database approach (paper 0322/10)

6.6 CL presented the paper; FCN were asked to look at a new approach around how the data is stored for ground truth databases and they are asking the board to consider the options that are in the paper. The current position around the information that is held for ground truth data sets is that they have finger marks where they have asked for consent from participants and that's been the most appropriate lawful basis for processing personal data. It's stored in two parts. The first consists of only the fingerprint image and a randomly generated unique identifier, and the second has the personal information that relates to that image.

It is stored in two separate locations, with the first part shared for the purpose of training and testing, and the 2nd is held locally. The personal information is only retained so that an individual can request their fingerprint image is deleted. The fingerprint isn't used to confirm any one's identity, and we only use it for staff training and materials.

They are proposing that part of that record is permanently deleted and they only hold the image and the random unique number going forward. The proposal is for future collection of images for the Ground Truth Database is to provide an upfront privacy notice that replaces the consent forms.

BS asked ultimately whose decision this should be. GP suggested that it should be the data controller. He said it's about the safeguards around it. This is a self-contained data set, the purpose is clear, it shouldn't, inadvertently be loaded or searched or used for other purposes. If he was the data controller, he would want some reassurance on that. BS said that they would need advice from the ICO whether or not there should be a consent approach as opposed to just a privacy notice.

JV said if it's more of a privacy notice rather than consent, it will highlight that it is still a voluntary process and what the ground truth database will be used for. So there may be concerns if you want to use the Ground Truth Database for a different process in the future.

BS summarised that these are the views of the Board at the moment but they are not making any formal recommendations until the FCN have sought further views from the ICO.

Updates from Board Members.

6.7 AC updated that the APCC have reconstituted their biometrics and data ethics working group. This is their APCC policy setting working group, which is made up of the relevant

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leads from digital, data, forensics, transparency, ethics, performance and equality, diversity and human rights.

AOB

- 6.8 BS went back to the point on having a longer workshop type meeting, it was agreed that to allow the changes to FCN to embed that this should be the September meeting.