



### **F15 Odontologic Identification Reporting – Forms and the Interpol Form System**

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After this presentation attendees will become aware of the forensic report in odontologic identification cases. A number of formal requirements and also descriptive data should be included. Attendees will also be more aware of the Interpol form system for odontology reporting and final identification.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by increasing awareness of the importance of the report and hopefully more professional reports from forensic odontologists.

There are a number of requirements for a forensic legal report. These requirements are more or less universal and vary little for instance between the United States and Norway. The requirements are also similar for a technical police report, a forensic medical report, or a forensic odontology report. Experiences with the reports in identification cases, for instance from the tsunami identification in Thailand, seem to indicate that forensic odontologists around the world are not always aware of what is to be expected from a professional

forensic report. Sometimes one has the feeling that dentists look upon the written form in identification cases only as working documents. As a matter of fact, some dentists claim that they only report the conclusion of the comparison to the police or other authorities. Due to the quality control system, most Norwegian reports should be acceptable with focus on writing professional reports.

Some of the more important aspects of a legal report as well as the most important odontology registration in an identification case will be discussed. Basically all legal reports should be able to stand alone. That means that after reading the report there should be a basic understanding of the background of the case and especially facts that might be important for odontology findings and comparison. The condition of the body and especially the face and the teeth should be noted. Any injuries to teeth and oral structures should be noted as well as an attempt to explain those in connection with the death. Most odontologists give a good description of each tooth with restorations, but often forget to note the condition of teeth without restorations. This leaves to the reader only to guess the condition even though a sound six-year-molar may be more characteristic and thus more important for the final comparison and conclusion than a restored one. Assessment of age should always be an integrated part of a dental description in an identification case. In skeletal findings also an assessment of sex based on the teeth only should be given by the forensic odontologists. In cases of reconstructive identification an attempt should be made to assess the ethnic or geographic origin, occupation, or habits.

Interpol has since the 1960s been interested in identifications, especially after disasters as they often involve victims from many countries. International communication and co-operation between different countries' police authorities are important to obtain optimal results. Interpol has thus developed guidelines for international cooperation, a guide to identification work and forms for registration including dental registrations. A presentation of the forms for dental registrations as they are and the previous changes will be given. A discussion if they are compatible with a professional legal report will be given. In addition, forms for comparison and for the Identification commission's final declaration of identification will be presented. In Norway, there is long tradition and experience in the use of the Interpol form as, since 1980, they have always been used in reporting even in single identification cases.

#### **Identification, Reports, Interpol Forms**