



### F23 “Ri.Sc.” Database: The Italian Governmental Solution Regarding Missing Persons and Unidentified Cadavers

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have an understanding of the issues arising from Italian legislation on missing persons and unidentified bodies and how the collaboration of forensic odontologists can rapidly facilitate the identification process.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by stressing the importance of a high degree of collaboration between police, the family of the missing person, and forensic odontologists.

Dental identification is one of the principle ways in which a cadaver can be positively identified. The results of a dental autopsy partially constitute the information which leads to the creation of a general biological profile through which initial compatibility testing with antemortem cadaver information may be executed.

In Italy, since April 1, 2010, in the Sistema Ricerca Scomparsi (Ri.Sc) missing persons search system database for missing persons and unidentified cadavers, the forensic odontologist has been able to play an active role with the medical examiner regarding the compilation of the Ri.Sc. form in order to collate pertinent dental data and oral radiographs of the cadaver with the goal of making a positive identification.

In order to test the functionality of the record system itself, the system was used on a sample of four unidentified cadavers (one well-preserved cadaver, one decomposed, one skeletonized, and one carbonized). The study revealed that the recording system allows for an immediate and simple method of data collection for the creation of a general biological profile while at the same time allowing for amplification of the odontological profile.

The forensic odontologist is of fundamental importance, not only in the analysis of the restorations *in situ* in the oral cavity but also for maxillary and dental radiography from which geographical origin, personal habits, and an estimated dental age can be derived.

Digital radiographs are easily archived and may be forwarded and used as an internal instrument of comparison for the Ri.Sc. system. The PM record “dental section” should be compiled by both a medical examiner and an odontologist.

This study underlines the importance of the dentist also being an expert in forensics so that all pertinent information may be retrieved and rendered useful for identification purposes and thus archived as a complete profile of the unidentified cadaver. This importance should also be underlined during the collection and coding of antemortem dental data during investigative procedures carried out by investigative police who do not have odontologists as part of their team of specialists who are routinely commissioned to deal with this type of data collection. With this in mind, a checklist to facilitate both the investigative police and the relatives of the missing person has been compiled regarding the collection of all dental data. The odontologist could also record information revealed during the postmortem exam on an appropriate international form, such as those suggested by Interpol, should the nationality of the cadaver be uncertain. Interpol forms are aimed at the identification of mass disaster victims, but in light of the lack of an international standard for antemortem and postmortem odontological data and the need to overcome language barriers and diversities in foreign legal systems, they are also an excellent way of fostering the mutual exchange of information which may lead towards the positive identification of unidentified human remains.

**Missing Persons, Human Identification, Forensic Odontology**