



G5 National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Dental Coding: Washington State Patrol's Missing/Wanted and Unidentified Persons Unit (WSP/MUPU) Cold Case Hit

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Learning Overview: After attending this presentation, attendees will understand, through case examples, how the NCIC dental coding system is used to identify unidentified human remains. Additionally, attendees will gain insight into how an agency is structured to have success utilizing the NCIC system.

Impact on the Forensic Science Community: This presentation will impact the forensic science community by illustrating how the NCIC dental coding system can aid in the identification of unidentified human remains. WSP/MUPU has a developed protocol to effectively utilize the NCIC dental coding system, and the unit has a long-standing working relationship with appropriately trained forensic odontologists.

On Thursday, January 30, 2019, human skeletal remains were discovered in Snohomish County, WA, by Forest Service personnel. A dental examination was completed on Friday, February 1, 2019. The following Monday, February 4, 2019, the dental information, including an NCIC-coded Unidentified Persons (UP) Digital Wide Dynamic Range (DWDR) image was forwarded to WSP/MUPU. This dental information was entered into the NCIC system on February 5, 2019, and a dental Across Matching Ranking (\$M) report was generated on February 6. That same day, the comparison report was reviewed by a trained forensic odontologist. The UP dental information was compared to the Missing Persons (MP) information in the NCIC \$M report, and a match identifying the unidentified remains was made. The Snohomish County medical examiner was notified of the identification on February 6.

A similar sequence occurred in August of 2018 when human remains were recovered in the town of Mill Creek, WA.

Again a dental examination of the remains was performed, the UP information entered into the NCIC database by the Washington State Patrol, a \$M report was generated and reviewed by a forensic odontologist, a match was confirmed, and the local medical examiner was notified.

In 2013, a review of an NCIC \$M cross match report yielded a match between an individual who was reported missing since March 31, 1992, and unidentified human remains recovered on April 29, 1992.

Washington State has state laws that designates the WSP as a central repository for all dental records for Washington States' missing/wanted and unidentified individuals. These laws (Revised Code of Washington (RCW)) include a requirement for entry of the dental information for MPs and unidentified remains into a system linked to other statewide and national systems. There are also requirements for law enforcement, coroners, or medical examiners involved in an MP investigation to collect dental information for submission to WSP/MUPU. The RCWs also include a protocol for the dental information of unidentified human remains to be submitted to the WSP/MUPU.

The protocol Washington State has established to aid in their missing/wanted and UP cases is able to utilize the NCIC dental coding system due to the WSP/MUPU's relationship with trained forensic odontologists.

This working relationship ensures that the NCIC dental coding is accurate and that the NCIC \$M cross match reports are reviewed. Law enforcement, coroners, and medical examiners can consult with the State Patrol's unit if ever aid is needed in the collection of dental data. Washington's system is a *de facto* centralized repository for the entire state.

Dental Identification, NCIC Dental Coding, Missing/Wanted/Unidentified Persons