

DNA IDENTIFICATION IN MASS FATALITY INCIDENTS: LESSONS LEARNED

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After the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, the New York State Police and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of the City of New York asked the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to form a panel of experts to advise and assist them with the DNA identification of the victims of the attack. NIJ developed the Kinship and Data Analysis Panel (KADAP) which was composed of approximately 20 volunteers from public and private sectors with nationally recognized expertise in one or more critical areas including: mass fatality response, mathematics and statistics, population genetics, DNA technology, forensic identity testing information technology, and clinical scientists.

In addition to providing recommendations regarding technical issues and approaches to DNA analyses of the severely damaged samples from the World Trade Center, the KADAP also sought to capture lessons learned for the benefit of the entire forensic community. Specific tools created include: Collection Forms for Personal Items and Kinship samples, DNA Brochure for Families of the Victims, Family Reference Collection Kit Components and Instructions and Sample Statements of Work for outsourcing samples

The KADAP also authored an approximately 100-page document entitled *DNA Identification in Mass Fatality Incident: A Guide for Laboratory Managers*. This document is written for people who may be responsible for organizing and managing the DNA response to a mass fatality incident. The document is organized into chapters and contains executive briefings, checklists, worksheets, diagrams and other tools for immediate use or modification, as well as the longer document meant to be read before the need for implementation. There are chapters on:

- How DNA is Used to Make Identifications
- Before the Incident
- Major Decisions (including briefings for governmental leaders)
- The DNA Laboratory Director
- Project Management
- Media Relations (including worksheets and model press releases)
- Family Coordination and Liaison (including pamphlets for families)
- Informatics and Information Technology
- Sample Tracking and Management
- Sample Analysis
- Identification Management
- Procurement and Vendor Management (including sample contracts)
- Quality Control
- Future Considerations
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This presentation overview will provide the forensic DNA community an opportunity to review *DNA Identification in Mass Fatality Incident: A Guide for Laboratory Managers*.