

UPDATE ON THE FBI's CODIS PROGRAM

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An idea conceived fifteen years ago, the Combined DNA Index System or CODIS as it is known in the forensic DNA community, has matured into a program supporting DNA databases in over 200 forensic laboratories around the world. As the DNA database programs evolve, the CODIS software has and will continue to accommodate the changing needs of the DNA community. A major component of the CODIS program is operation of the National DNA Index System or NDIS. This National Index recently achieved a major milestone with the participation of all 50 States as well as the FBI Laboratory and United States Army Crime Laboratory. Supporting its many contributors and ensuring compliance with Federal laws has resulted in the establishment of new procedures governing NDIS operations and administration. A number of recent changes to NDIS Procedures will be discussed that may be of interest to the DNA community such as the requirement that an NDIS participant have an in-house capability to analyze DNA samples or new criteria for seeking NDIS approval of expert systems for use with convicted offender samples. Many challenges await the CODIS program in the coming year, including an expected increase in DNA data contributed by laboratories receiving Federal funding as well as a decision from a Federal appellate court on the constitutionality of the Federal law governing the collection of DNA sample from certain Federal felony offenders. Priorities of the CODIS program as well as recent statistics and trends will be presented.