



National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR)

Best Practices



Exhibit: National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls		
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Acknowledgements

These best practices have been compiled from documents, policies and procedures obtained from police agencies across Canada as well as from foreign police services and research papers (see Appendix A). Reviewing this material, extracting and articulating the ideas that were most important to express as the best practices, would not have been possible without many subject matter experts who contributed their time and patience in this initial version. Contributors and reviewers included police and coroners/medical examiners involved in the ad hoc working group formed in response to a resolution by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, others involved in Missing Person and/or Unidentified remains units across Canada, and members of the NCMPUR.

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Location/Phase: _____
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TABLE OF TERMS

Term	Description
AMBER	America's Missing: Broadcasting Emergency Response
BOLO	Be On the Look-Out for
BP	Best Practice
CACP	Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
CAS	Children's Aid Society
CATSA	Canadian Air Transport Security Authority
CCRTIS	Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services
CMPUR	(regional) Centre for Missing Persons and/or Unidentified Remains (investigations)
CPCMEC	Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children
CPIC	Canadian Police Information Centre
DL	Driver License
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation (US)
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
MC/PUR	Missing Children/Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR database)
ME	Medical Examiner
MP	Missing Person
MPUR	Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains
NAO	National Aboriginal Organisation
NCIC	National Crime Information Center (US)
NCMEC	National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (US)
NCMPUR	National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains
NCO i/c	Non Commissioned Officer in/charge
NDDDB	National DNA Data Bank
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMPDP	National Missing Persons DNA Program
NOK	Next Of Kin
NPS	National Police Service
OIC	Officer in Charge
OLS	Off-Line Search service (CPIC)
OPP	Ontario Provincial Police
ORI	Originating Agency Identifier
PIP	Police Information Portal
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RMS	Records Management System
RO	Registered (motor vehicle) Owner
SOR	Sex Offender Registry
UR	Unidentified Remains
US	United States
ViCLAS	Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In August of 2008 the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) passed a resolution calling for the adoption of a coordinated multi-province (national) approach in the development of a single analytical software program (database) to house information pertaining to both missing persons and unidentified human remains. Over the next three years an ad hoc working group of interested police services and Chief Coroner/Medical Examiner offices worked in an effort to define a solution even without specific funding available to build or operate the necessary infrastructure.

The 2010 Federal Budget included money for Public Safety to have the RCMP develop a centre to support all Missing Person (MP) and Unidentified Remains (UR) investigations in Canada. The result was the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR).

The NCMPUR built on the vision and work of the ad hoc working group to implement a national centre providing investigators across Canada with enhanced data sharing, sophisticated analysis capabilities, national level services, research, and promotion of best practices. The NCMPUR manages the overall program, operates the national centre providing services to investigators, and provides the NCMPUR infrastructure. A regional centre can apply to be designated as a Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (CMPUR) and thus use the NCMPUR infrastructure to provide certain services to investigators in local jurisdictions. There are currently CMPURs established in BC and Ontario.

The NCMPUR's mandate is to:

- enhance specialized services available to missing persons and unidentified remains investigations;
- increase operational effectiveness and intelligence building;
- develop training for police; and
- assist in investigative comparisons involving missing persons and unidentified remains.

In support of the mandate above, the centre is to support:

- the exchange of information concerning missing persons across police forces and jurisdictions;
- police training for the use of related enhanced CPIC fields;
- the development of course training standards; and
- the development of best practices.

Included in these activities is the gathering and dissemination of best practices for investigating missing person and unidentified remains occurrences, in order to bring all such investigations in Canada to the best possible level of execution.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

This document identifies the best practices for missing person and unidentified remains investigations in Canada.

It is not the intention of these Best Practices to replace the policies and procedures of individual agencies, nor to provide a step-by-step manual for investigating missing person and unidentified remains cases. Agencies should review these best practices and the rationales behind them, and

consider incorporating them into their own policies and procedures wherever they can be improved by doing so.

1.3 Approach

These best practices have been compiled by subject matter experts representing police and coroner/medical examiners reviewing the policies and procedures of police agencies across Canada and internationally, choosing practices that have proven effective. The focus has been on good practices that have proven in the past to be not uniformly implemented, and on correcting practices that have caused less than optimal investigative results. Good practices that have proven to be very common police practices have not been included here in order to focus on those that for some agencies and/or units may be less familiar.

These best practices do not address the local details about how an investigation is executed in an agency, which typically depends on the organisation and resources available. These best practices include details about how to share information nationally and make use of national support services such as CPIC and the NCMPUR program.

Appendix A provides a list of the sources used for the raw material that was reviewed in preparation of these best practices.

1.4 Structure

Important definitions are included in Section 2.

Missing Person (MP) cases and Unidentified Remains (UR) cases are fundamentally different, and so this document breaks the best practices into two sections. Section 3 lays out the best practices for Missing Person cases. Section 4 lays out the best practices for Unidentified Remains cases.

The internal structure of each of these sections follows a parallel pattern based on the different aspects of an investigation: General, Response, Jurisdiction, Priority, Gathering, CPIC, Information Management, Publication, Escalation, Analysis, Dealing with Family, Procedural, Closing. Where a best practice applies to both types of cases, it is repeated.

For each best practice, a corresponding rationale is provided (indented italics).

Appendix A provides a list of references used in compiling these best practices.

Appendix B contains a timeline for milestones identified in the best practices.

Appendix C provides some useful checklists for Missing Person investigators.

Appendix D provides some useful checklists for Unidentified Remains investigators.

Appendix E provides a list of training developed by NCMPUR.

Appendix F provides a list of additional expertise that may be considered.

Appendix G provides an index to the document.

1.5 Evolution

This Best Practices document is expected to evolve over time. The National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR) will continue to research and adopt new insight from Canadian and foreign sources through workshops, police agencies, coroners/medical examiners, CMPURs, subject matter experts, and interaction with non-governmental organisations, partners and the public. To provide input, contact the NCMPUR in Ottawa, Ontario.

1.6 This version

The addition of new practices has resulted in a renumbering of some of the best practices themselves. For those who have references into this document and those are interested in what has changed from the previous version, the following convention has been used:

- The number of a new practice, title of a new appendix, or marker for a new bullet will be green;
- The number of a practice that has been changed, or marker for a bullet that has been changed, will be red.

2 DEFINITIONS

The NCMPUR program uses the following definitions for key terms and concepts.

Biological sample: Any biological material from which the investigator hopes DNA can be extracted. DNA can be collected from very small amounts of blood, mouth (cheek) scrapings, hair roots, or other samples.

DNA profile: The coded sequence unique to an individual that is derived through scientific analysis of DNA material extracted from a biological sample.

Identified: An unidentified remain is identified when the coroner/medical examiner has made and confirmed a determination of the person's identity.

Investigator: The person in the police agency or coroner/medical examiner's office charged with the investigation of a case. The primary investigator is the person so charged within the agency of jurisdiction; otherwise the investigator is assisting.

Located: A missing person is located if their whereabouts are known and have been confirmed by law enforcement.

Missing Child: A Missing Person under the age of 18 when they go missing will be classified as a Missing Child¹.

Missing Person: A Missing Person is anyone reported to police or by police² as someone whose whereabouts are unknown, whatever the circumstances of their disappearance, and they are considered missing until located. In the case of a Missing Child, they are considered a Missing Child if they are no longer in the care or control of their legal guardian and have not been removed by law, and they are considered missing until returned to appropriate³ care and control⁴.

Off-Line Search: The CPIC Off-Line Search service is available to CPIC agencies. A request for an off-line search can be submitted to the Support Section, CPI Centre, NPS at RCMP Headquarters in Ottawa whenever the standard CPIC query capability on-line cannot be used to search the CPIC database for known partial descriptions of Persons, Property, Vehicle, Boats or Boat Motors.

Presumed Dead: A missing person may be tagged in CPIC as 'presumed dead' if circumstances lead the investigator to believe that there is a high likelihood that the person has died (as opposed to virtual certainty). This is not as stringent as the criteria used by coroners/medical examiners before they can issue a death certificate where there is no body.

Pure Version Statement: A narrative statement from a witness written without prompting or questions that might direct or filter the narrative.

¹ In special circumstances and in accordance with local policies, an adult with a disability or dependency that puts them in the care of a guardian may be handled in the same manner as a missing child (e.g., accorded the same measure in a risk assessment) but they need not be defined as a missing child.

² Police may identify a Missing Person occurrence without having an external party report them missing. Whether the report is initiated by police or by the public, the person is considered a Missing Person because someone is concerned that they are missing. A Missing Person report is not a means to find someone for any other reason. For example, police may not designate someone as a Missing Person simply because they are wanted on a warrant or are a person of interest in another case (there are other mechanisms available).

³ 'Appropriate care and control' may or may not be the legal guardian they left, depending on the circumstances.

⁴ Unless singled out otherwise, Missing Children cases are considered as a subset of Missing Person cases.

Returned: A missing child is considered returned if they are confirmed by law enforcement to be under the care and control of their legal guardian (or other lawful authority if the legal guardian is not appropriate).

Risk Assessment: A structured approach to evaluating the basic facts of a case and determining an objective measure of the risk of harm to the missing person, in order to establish a priority and directions for the investigation.

Unidentified Remain: An Unidentified Remain is a body of a deceased person or any part of a body known or assumed to be human for which the identity of the person is unknown.

Unidentified Person: Any live person whose identity is unknown because of medical reasons (amnesia or coma)⁵.

Validation: A process of checking that information in a file or information system is still current and necessary.

Verification: A process of checking the accuracy of information in a file or information system.

⁵ For the purposes of these best practices, an Unidentified Person is treated in a similar manner to Unidentified Remains since the goal is identification, except for the fact that a coroner/medical examiner is not involved.

3 BEST PRACTICES FOR MISSING PERSON INVESTIGATIONS

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 Agencies should standardize police policies and procedures in regard to missing person investigations in order to ensure consistency in delivery of services across Canada. Police agencies should have in place procedures that adopt these Best Practices and tailor them to the local jurisdiction and organisation. Agencies should standardize their use of important terms (e.g., see Section 2).

Consistency ensures equal service to all persons; consistency around best practices ensures the best service from lessons learned. Tailoring achieves local relevance.

- 3.1.2 Agencies and investigators should recognise when they do not have the resources to follow the Best Practices. It is important that agencies and individual investigators know their own limitations in personnel or training and are aware of municipal, provincial and national resources available to help.

This reduces the likelihood of problems caused by lack of resources, and ensures that additional resources are called in a timely manner.

- 3.1.3 A police agency should consider prevention and intervention efforts including education and partnerships with other organizations where appropriate, such as hospitals, rest homes, group homes and non-governmental organizations.

Prevention, intervention and education can reduce the number of occurrences and unnecessary reports⁶, and make investigations run more smoothly when they do occur.

- 3.1.4 Consider the potential usefulness of DNA analysis in your investigation. DNA may be the primary - or only - means of identification of a missing person as a set of unidentified remains. DNA testing can be performed even on cases of decomposed, burned or very old remains and may be the only remaining connection to the missing person. DNA technology continues to improve such that DNA analysis performed in the future on biological samples collected today may yield results that are not possible at present. DNA analysis does have limitations and should be used as one tool in the investigation.

DNA analysis can provide investigative leads and can be used to confirm identity to resolve a case. DNA analysis is becoming a matter of course in missing persons and unidentified remains investigations as one tool available to the investigator.

3.2 Response

- 3.2.1 The investigation into a missing person begins at the point of first notification to the police. In responding to a missing person report, a police agency's first priorities are to confirm that the person is indeed missing and to gather as quickly as possible the information needed to complete an initial risk assessment.

If the person is not missing then resources are not wasted (for example the subject has just lost contact with the complainant over time). If they are missing, a rapid and robust

⁶ UK experience has shown that an effective multi-agency prevention and intervention program can reduce the number of missing person incidents by more than 50 per cent [UK Guide 2010 6.5]

risk assessment will ensure that the proper resources are put into the case and will avoid the risk of judgement errors.

- 3.2.2 A police agency should not restrict who can report a missing person. A report should be accepted from anyone who is concerned that the person is missing.

In the past, some agencies would only accept a report from a family member. Yet, in some cases, the missing person is estranged from their families so the family may not even know that the person is missing. Rejection based on who is reporting the person missing runs the risk of failing to investigate a legitimate missing person situation.

- 3.2.3 A police agency should not turn away a missing person report on the basis of jurisdiction or location. Complainants should ideally contact the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction (see Section 3.3). However, they should be able to report the case to ANY police agency. The initial call should be taken in wherever it is first received and must be conveyed to the agency of jurisdiction. It should also be possible to report a person missing over the phone rather than having to report in person (ideally followed up by a face-to-face interview by an officer).

It is not the responsibility of the public to determine jurisdiction, nor are they always capable of doing so. With today's travel and communications, the complainant who notices a person missing may be physically remote from the area of jurisdiction. We must not make it difficult for people to call for police assistance.

- 3.2.4 An agency should not treat reports of missing persons handed on by other agencies as any less important than those reported within its own jurisdiction. The same initial response, information collection and risk assessment should be applied.

This follows from the principle of being able to report a missing person anywhere.

- 3.2.5 A police agency should not turn away a report of a missing person on the basis of time elapsed since they went missing. There is no waiting period for reporting a missing person. Under no circumstances should a reporting party be advised that they must wait a specific period of time before a report can be made.

Any delay has the potential to negatively impact the investigation and the likelihood of success. To suggest a waiting period is to pre-judge the risk assessment.

- 3.2.6 An agency should not treat certain types of missing persons differently at the very beginning (e.g., repeat runaway, persons of particular lifestyles, youth home elopee).

Too often, errors of judgement are caused by complacency or pre-conceived notions.

- 3.2.7 The initial response of a police agency should always be to treat the report of a missing person as legitimate, serious and urgent, and to avoid downgrading the priority too quickly.

Many factors can lead to errors in handling during the first response, from insufficient initial information to snap judgements. Since time is critical in high risk cases, errors at the beginning can be the deciding factor in an unfortunate outcome.

- 3.2.8 The police agency of jurisdiction should conduct a proper risk assessment by a trained person and de-escalate the risk from 'serious and urgent' only if proven otherwise.

Only a properly applied risk assessment can avoid judgement errors and an incorrect assessment of risk that could misdirect the resources and investigation direction. Since

time is critical in high risk cases, it is safer to assume a case is high risk until proven otherwise.

- 3.2.9 There are no special Best Practices for attending to the location last seen or to interview the complainant. An immediate response is warranted, but the method will depend on the circumstances and local procedures. The important aspect is the information needed to do the initial risk assessment; the assessed risk will dictate the course of action.

Time is of the essence until the risk assessment is applied; expediency is the driver for the first response. An efficient response will also better preserve the scene in case it turns out to be a crime scene.

- 3.2.10 Upon receiving a missing person report, the investigating police agency should immediately generate a police file in relation to the missing person. All steps taken to locate the missing person should be recorded in the agency's police file that is stored in the agency's Records Management System (RMS).

Record keeping is important for continuity, especially if the case is not resolved quickly, and to ensure a proper record is maintained on investigative activities.

3.3 Jurisdiction

- 3.3.1 Based on information in the initial report of a missing person, the police agency responsible for providing police services where the missing person was last seen should take responsibility for conducting the investigation. If necessary, they can be assisted by police agencies in other jurisdictions (e.g., place of residence, place of family, points of travel).

The place where the subject was confirmed as last seen is the logical starting point for finding the person and so the initial concentration of the investigation will be around that location.

- 3.3.2 If the last known location of the missing person cannot be confirmed, the police agency providing police services where the missing person resides or last stayed should take responsibility for conducting the investigation.

When the place last seen is vague, the best place to concentrate the initial search is around the locations where the person would normally be. This does not prevent an investigator from broadening or moving the focus of an investigation when merited.

- 3.3.3 Every effort should be made to resolve jurisdictional questions quickly to ensure prompt and timely missing persons investigations. Agencies should ensure that the investigation proceeds in accordance with the risk assessment while jurisdictional questions are sorted out.

Putting an investigation on hold while agencies sort out jurisdiction does not help the missing person. Under the assumption of high risk until proven otherwise, such delays need to be avoided.

- 3.3.4 If the assessment of the circumstances determines that the case does not fall within the jurisdiction of the police agency that has received the initial report, all information gathered should be transferred immediately by electronic or any other means, to the agency of jurisdiction for investigation. Personal contact is advisable in order to confirm the transfer (e.g., by phone or CPIC message) and this should be documented in the original file.

Complete details are needed to do the risk assessment and begin the investigation as soon as possible. Advising and confirming the transfer avoids the report being lost in transit. Obtaining written confirmation of jurisdiction avoids any confusion and assures the necessary record.

- 3.3.5 If the law enforcement agency of jurisdiction is outside of Canada, forward all the details to INTERPOL Branch, RCMP Headquarters. The original file should be retained at the originating agency.

INTERPOL Branch is the official liaison to INTERPOL. Retaining the original file makes it easier if the agency of jurisdiction requests further investigational queries by the originating agency.

- 3.3.6 If, during the course of an investigation, it becomes clear that the jurisdiction has changed (e.g., person was later seen somewhere else), then the investigating agency and the agency responsible for the new jurisdiction should determine if a transfer of ownership is warranted. Common sense should determine what roles each agency will take, considering resources, continuity etcetera.

No rule of thumb can be applied as to whether a transfer is warranted. These investigations would benefit from a sense of shared responsibility where jurisdiction is an issue or multiple jurisdictions are involved.

- 3.3.7 In the event the missing person is found deceased in another jurisdiction, the police agency of that jurisdiction should at that time assume the primary lead in the ongoing investigation, in consultation with the originating agency where appropriate.

If the person is found alive the missing person case is concluded; however if an offence were involved such as an abduction then that investigation would proceed and take investigative precedence. If the subject is found dead, then there needs to be an investigation into the death, in the jurisdiction of the death, likely with assistance from the first agency.

3.4 Priority

- 3.4.1 The most important best practice is this: always treat a missing person report as a top priority, and treat every missing person investigation the same at the outset.

Collected wisdom. It is always easier to scale back from the early stages of an investigation, than it is to recover missed opportunities resulting from miscalculation in the early stages.

- 3.4.2 A police agency receiving a report of a missing person should treat the report seriously and thoroughly investigate; assume the person is indeed missing and foul play is involved until proven otherwise. The amount of resources deployed should depend upon the risk level assessed through a risk assessment conducted only once confirmed information is available.

Poor outcomes can often be traced back to not taking a report seriously at the start, and making a risk judgement too early.

- 3.4.3 The investigating agency should conduct a risk assessment to determine the resources to be applied, and the urgency in which to apply them. The risk assessment should be simple to use and avoid interpretations. Where practical, the assessment should be reviewed by a second, experienced person, to confirm the risk assessment. Any decision should be well documented.

A risk assessment takes into account confirmed information and provides consistent outcomes. It will direct the best avenues and use of resources. Risk assessment also includes a judgement about the likely reason for their being missing, which can be critical to subsequent criminal investigation. A review by a second person ensures the assessment methodology is applied objectively.

- 3.4.4 One purpose of a risk assessment is to reduce the possibility of introducing pre-conceived notions. Those applying the risk assessment methodology should keep an open mind and not try to apply it so as to confirm an established opinion.

Interpreting information or the results of a risk assessment to fit an existing opinion or 'hunch' is working against the purpose of the risk assessment method.

- 3.4.5 As the investigation progresses, the risk assessment should be revisited as new information comes to light and time passes. Any decision to reduce the level of risk should be reviewed by senior investigators and well documented.

Original findings may be in error or the case may evolve to one of higher risk or lower risk, requiring an adjustment in approach and resources.

- 3.4.6 If the risk assessment indicates that a ground search, neighbourhood canvas, or roadblock is warranted, the investigator should follow his/her agency policy & procedures.

Searches and search strategy are specific to the situation, agency resources and procedures.

- 3.4.7 Missing persons subject to a Mental Health Act warrant should be treated as missing until found and not just until the warrant expires. A person that is entered as a compassionate-to-locate type missing person, if they are not found, should also be treated as any other missing person.

Treating a missing person under a Mental Health Act warrant as missing only for the duration of the warrant puts that person at risk if they have not been found by the time it expires. Similarly, if it has not been possible to locate a compassionate-to-locate person in a reasonable time, they must then be missing.

3.5 Gathering

- 3.5.1 .The person taking the initial report/call and/or the initial responding police officer needs to gather enough information initially to conduct a risk assessment. This does not preclude gathering additional information that is useful to the investigation, as long as the risk assessment is not unnecessarily delayed.

The risk assessment is critical for determining the appropriate response, so a focussed collection of information is a top priority.

- 3.5.2 The first responders to the site-last-seen or home of a missing person should consider that the location might be a potential crime scene until investigation proves it otherwise.

Standard precautions for crime scenes ensure preservation of evidence which could be lost if responders first assumed it was not serious.

- 3.5.3 The investigator should conduct a thorough search of the subject's home or room even if the person was reported missing from a different location. The purpose of the search is to assist police in determining the status and possible whereabouts of the missing person. This should be done as early in the investigation as possible since the information gained may support the risk assessment.

The normal place of residence will sometimes provide more information than the place last seen. Things that are missing or left behind are important clues as to what type of occurrence this is and what the circumstances may be. A residence is also a good source for fingerprints or DNA of the subject.

- 3.5.4 When an area search is conducted, it should be methodical and include all spaces in which the missing person could fit. Searchers should be looking for objects and other clues as well as for the person. Special search strategies may be required depending on the nature of the missing person.

Children can fit into very small spaces especially when frightened or hiding. Special conditions affect how a missing person may respond to a search (e.g., a child with autism may hide from rescuers).

- 3.5.5 The investigator should obtain statements as soon as practical from the person who filed the missing person report, the person who last saw the missing person, and the person who last had contact with them. This should be repeated as the investigator discovers other key people in the timeline. Ideally for each the investigator should obtain a "pure version" statement followed by questioning. Ideally, interviews should be recorded.

These are key witnesses. People may be absent or less willing to speak to the investigator later. Obtaining a pure version statement first avoids introduction of assumption by the interviewer. Recording allows revisiting the interview later. These statements are particularly relevant where allegations of a serious crime follow, as the information given, and the circumstances of it being given, and by whom, may be important to that investigation. There have been a number of murders where the perpetrator has reported the victim to the police as a missing person.

- 3.5.6 The investigator should develop a timeline of the subject's activities, movements, actions etc. prior to going missing, and then should continually corroborate and add to it. The investigator should keep it in a fashion that is easily shared, analysed, and compared with timelines developed for persons of interest or other timelines.

The subject timeline is the backbone of an investigation. If it is not maintained well, time will be wasted in rebuilding it for every analysis or review of the file, and analysis will be hampered.

- 3.5.7 The investigator should take care to compile a clear and comprehensive history of the missing person.

The history provides many clues for where a person might have gone or what they might have been thinking at the time of disappearance. It can change the risk assessment and provides leads the coroners/medical examiners can use in matching to UR cases, increasing the likelihood of identification.

- 3.5.8 The investigator should take care to compile a complete and accurate description of the missing person (e.g., physical descriptors, scars, marks, tattoos, implants, teeth, jewellery, clothing etc. – see Appendix C for suggestions).

The physical description is the foundation for identification, automated comparisons and analysis, which are far more effective if the information is comprehensive. Inaccurate information can lead to mismatches and missed matches that resulted in wasted resources and increased wait times for families.

- 3.5.9 The investigator should ensure at least one recent photograph of the Missing Person is on file as soon as possible. More than one photo is desirable.

Photos are used in all publications and alerts. Photos are an excellent way to recognise someone. Studies show that on a missing person web site, cases without photos are rarely visited.

- 3.5.10 The collected photo should realistically portray what the missing person would look like if found or seen - avoid glamour shots or presentations of the person in a previous 'look'. Ideally the photo should be a quality image such as a school photo or similar portrait.

The purpose of the photo is to allow those who do not know the person to identify them, and so they need to be clear and true to life at the time of disappearance.

- 3.5.11 The investigator should collect original dental records of the missing person as soon as possible if the person is presumed dead or, at the latest, within 6 months of the date last seen even if they are not presumed dead. Dental records for the missing person should be added to CPIC as soon as they are collected. Dental records should also be added to a regional dental databank if it exists. Ideally, the dental record is completed by a dentist or trained professional and every effort should be put into consistency. Dental records must be in police hands to be considered collected and should be stored securely.

Dental records are used for MP-UR comparisons and identification on CPIC and MC/PUR, with confirmation by dental experts. If the records are not accessible and not shared these comparisons will not be done, preventing closure. Dental records are complex documents with a potential for misinterpretation that can have serious impacts

on the progress of an investigation, and so must be completed by professionals⁷. RCMP's E Division (BC) has been successful in obtaining accurate dental information by using one central processing body for the dental transcription of all CPIC and NCIC entries.

- 3.5.12** To facilitate collection of dental records, police agencies should consider having something in place for approaching dentists, such as template letters and awareness material from provincial dental associations⁸. When necessary, it may also be possible in some jurisdictions and situations to obtain a warrant or a coroner's warrant.⁹

British Columbia has been successful with a letter from the provincial association explaining the privacy issues and calling on dentists to support the police in their work by releasing dental files. Dental associations, insurance companies and other payment trails may help in locating the dentist for a specific person.

- 3.5.13** If there are suspicious circumstances or if the person is presumed dead, the investigator should immediately collect samples that could credibly provide DNA of the missing person. The investigator should collect and protect personal effects as soon as possible, and/or DNA from relatives of the missing person as soon as there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the person may be deceased, as established by substantive investigation or witness, or when other means to locate the person have failed to do so. The collection of DNA should be a matter of course as investigations reach this point.

In some case, the correct timing will require judgement taking into consideration the attitude of the family, circumstances of the disappearance, and the availability of other means. In general, it is recommended to collect DNA samples as soon as possible. Personal effects that might contain DNA are much more difficult to collect intact and uncontaminated as time goes by. Relatives' DNA is also more difficult to track down as time passes (people move, pass away). DNA can be used to confirm identities which may not be possible if DNA can no longer be collected.

- 3.5.14** A distinction should be drawn between the collection of biological samples and the processing of the samples to produce DNA profiles. The collection of biological samples has a certain urgency because of the difficulty in collecting them as time progresses; however, the DNA analysis to produce the DNA profile can and should be delayed until other investigative means have been exhausted.

The urgency for collection is due to the greater difficulty in collecting suitable samples as time passes; however, DNA processing can be costly and unnecessary if other methods are able to locate or identify the subject. Some privacy risks are mitigated if the DNA profile is not produced until absolutely necessary.

⁷ Investigators should keep in mind that dental comparisons can be complex and need to take into account aspects such as reversible or temporary dental features, and primary versus permanent teeth in the case of children.

⁸ It is also useful to provide the CPIC template and instructions in case they are not familiar with it.

⁹ Several provinces now have legislation to make it easier to collect information about missing persons.

- 3.5.15** For collecting biological samples, use someone trained in investigative procedures for collecting DNA and the method being used (e.g., Ident), or someone under their direction. Use the method and kit designated by the destination laboratory and program that will be using the DNA profile.

The tools and techniques are not familiar to everyone and mistakes could result in contamination, a sample that is not usable, or a need to collect more samples at a later date. For collecting DNA from families, experience can also help with the emotional issues.

- 3.5.16** When collecting biological samples, it is always best to collect at least two exhibits used by a missing person. When submitting biological samples to a data bank it is a good practice to keep some samples at the investigative agency in case follow-up analysis is required.

The first exhibit processed may not yield a suitable sample, and by then it may be too late to obtain another. If more DNA analysis has to be done at a later date to confirm an association or take advantage of more advanced technology, it is good to have additional material to work with.

- 3.5.17** Ideal personal items to collect as a source of DNA for a missing person are those where there has been direct contact with bodily fluids of the missing person, with frequent use by the missing person and nobody else. Examples include: eyeglasses, toothbrushes, razors, ear buds, used underwear, jewellery, medical syringe. Contact the destination laboratory or program for which it is being collected for advice specific to their capabilities and what is available. Family reference samples should be collected in order to verify any personal effects collected.

See also suggestions in Appendix C. Direct contact and exclusive use gives greater confidence that the item will yield DNA and that it will belong to the missing person. Family reference samples are used to confirm that the extracted DNA belongs to the missing person.

- 3.5.18** Medical specimens such as tissue samples from medical procedures from the missing person may be collected as biological samples providing there is good documentation and they come from a reliable source. It is advisable that family reference samples still be collected in order to verify the origin of the medical specimen.

Medical specimens are direct from the missing person and may provide more DNA than some personal effects; however, even hospitals have been known to mix up the documentation trail that ensures they do belong to a certain person. Family reference samples are used to confirm that the extracted DNA belongs to the missing person.

- 3.5.19** The program for which a biological sample is being collected from a relative will identify the preferred sources. In general, the following preference order may be useful: 1) both parents of the missing person or the identical twin of the missing person; 2) one parent and as many siblings of the missing person as possible; 3) children of the missing person and the other biological parent of those children; 4) children; 5) one parent of the missing person or the missing person's siblings.

The closer the connection to the missing person the better.

- 3.5.20** With the exception of DNA collected from an identical twin, it is always best to collect biological samples from at least two persons closely related to a missing person. If foul play is possible, collecting second samples from the same sources may be useful for later criminal investigation. When submitting biological samples to a data bank it is a good practice to keep some sample at the investigative agency in case follow-up analysis is required.

There is more strength in DNA comparisons if there are samples from multiple biological relatives of the missing person. Also, it may turn out that not all those sampled are the close relatives they believe themselves to be. If more DNA analysis has to be done at a later date to confirm an association or take advantage of more advanced technology, it is good to have additional material available.

- 3.5.21** When collecting samples from relatives it is important to confirm the identity of the individual donor with documentation, and to confirm the exact biological relationship to the missing person.

Misinterpretation can occur if the donor is not related to the missing person in the way they believe to be or the relationship is not recorded with precision.

- 3.5.22** When collecting samples from relatives it is important to ask about any conditions that might affect the DNA collected from the donor including: medical intervention at the time of conception of the individual, questions of parentage of the donor or the missing person, bone marrow transplants, recent medical treatments, twins.

These factors will affect the DNA collected or how it can be used in analysis.

- 3.5.23** Consent requirements will be provided by the program for which the biological samples are being collected. Use the correct consent(s) for the intended use(s). It is critical that the investigator ensure the donor understands all aspects covered by the consent including where applicable: the comparisons that will be made, the ability to withdraw consent, and retention. Ask the consenting person to reiterate in his/her own words what they understand they are consenting to, to ensure he/she understands. It is important that consent to collection of a biological sample be voluntary and that there be no coercion from the collector or others. This requires extra care if the donor is in custody at the time.

There is sensitivity about the government or police holding DNA profiles for non-criminal cases. Care for the handling of the consent process will deal with most of the concerns and privacy risks.

- 3.5.24** DNA testing is very sensitive. Therefore, it is imperative that steps be taken to prevent contamination and mistakes. Wear appropriate protective equipment. Keep items being collected completely separate from each other. Change gloves when handling exhibits from different sources/donors. Avoid excessive handling. Treat each collection as a complete process before collecting a second exhibit. Double check all labeling and clearly label every component that could possibly get separated.

Good practices prevent mistakes, and avoid collections that cannot be used. They ensure tracking is accurate and that the DNA profile is attributed to the correct subject.

- 3.5.25** The same care should be taken to ensure the chain of custody, accuracy and documentation for the collection of biological samples for missing persons, relatives and unidentified remains as is taken for the collection of exhibits for criminal cases.

Good tracking is just as important for the accuracy and later verification of results for missing persons cases as it is for criminal cases, and depending on the course of the investigation it may turn into a criminal investigation.

- 3.5.26 Ensure that collected samples are dry before packaging, where appropriate, and refrigerate if there is danger of spoilage. Do not use chemical preservatives.

Biological samples can deteriorate if not stored and shipped appropriately.

- 3.5.27 The investigator should collect fingerprints of the missing person as soon as possible if the person is presumed dead or, at the latest, within 6 months of the date last seen even if they are not presumed dead. Fingerprints may be available from existing police files, home fingerprint kits, children's artwork, items in the subject's residence, or employers' records.

Fingerprints can be a fast method for MP-UR comparisons and identification by experts in some situations. If fingerprints are not accessible, then identification will be slower. If fingerprints are not already on file, they are more difficult to collect as time passes. It is particularly important to collect finger, palm and foot prints if the missing person is a child since children often lack dental records.

- 3.5.28 The investigator should collect medical records related to the missing person immediately if presumed dead or, at the latest, within 6 months of the date last seen. The information must be in police hands to be considered collected. Medical summaries should be completed by a doctor. Investigators should obtain appropriate releases/consent/warrant for the information in accordance with provincial privacy laws and practices as well as federal law where appropriate.

The earlier medical information is collected, the more likely it can be used in analysis or comparisons, and the more likely the record is to be obtainable.

- 3.5.29 Throughout the investigation, investigators should continually verify the accuracy and consistency of information. Nothing should be assumed. Do not rely on information relayed from other sources by the family – interview sources directly.

Far too often, critical details are overlooked because an investigator thought someone else had taken care of a particular aspect, or believed that a witness' account of the incident need not be verified because the witness "seemed credible".

- 3.5.30 A police agency should consider development of standard intake forms and checklists for information to be gathered, interview questions to be asked and investigative avenues to consider, that investigators can apply as the circumstances warrant. Appendix C contains items compiled from several such lists. NCMPUR has an example Intake Form available to agencies on request.

Checklists are a quick reminder and convenient way to ensure consistency in investigations. Checklist may have to be different for different types of cases or include sub-checklists that are used depending on what else is discovered.

3.6 CPIC

- 3.6.1 The investigator should ensure that a missing person case is put onto CPIC and thus onto MC/PUR as soon as possible. A CPIC entry should be made as soon as it is determined that the missing person report is genuine and a case file has been generated.

Missing person cases often cross jurisdictions especially in this age of travel. If a case is delayed in entry onto CPIC, none of the support and cross-analysis of the wider enforcement community is available. This case may also be the missing part of someone else's case. Services such as CBSA border alerts, MC/PUR analysis and publication to the national web site cannot take effect without a CPIC entry in place.

- 3.6.2 The investigator should ensure that full use is made of CPIC, including as much information as possible, and updating the information as more becomes available.

The information that is available on CPIC and MC/PUR is used by other law enforcement agencies and automated programs for analysis and matching. Every field can be searched and matched and may be the key piece of information that leads to solving the case.

- 3.6.3 The investigator should ensure that physical descriptions, clothing, jewellery, distinguishing features, surgical implants and aliases for the missing person are entered on CPIC. These should use the secondary categories and fields designed for them instead of placing them in general Remarks fields.

The descriptive attributes are used on CPIC and MC/PUR for comparison and analysis. Having complete and accurate information increases the likelihood of a successful analysis. Using the correct categories and fields allows more accurate searching and system support for analysis than over-use of remarks fields.

- 3.6.4 The investigator should ensure that an accurate location last seen is entered on CPIC for the missing person. This should include LOCITY and Latitude/Longitude if at all possible. Secondary locations (e.g., places frequented) should be entered in to CPIC as Remarks or sent to your CMPUR.

Accurate location data can be used by mapping analysis tools. CPIC has the capability to enter latitude and longitude coordinates which greatly assist in these types of analysis. GPS devices and on-line maps are an easy way to obtain coordinates.

- 3.6.5 In the case of a court-declared death, the CPIC record should be updated to MP Probable Cause = Presumed Dead. The entry should not be removed from CPIC.

This will flag the record as being of particular interest in MP-UR comparisons. The entry is not removed from CPIC since the person is still missing.

- 3.6.6 The investigating agency should use the CPIC Modify operation to make updates and the Transfer operation to transfer ownership of the CPIC entry to another unit or agency, rather than performing a Remove and Add operations. For repeat runaway situations within 6 months, re-use of the CORE and consistent use of the Agency Person Identifier (APID) is recommended.

Using the operations and features of CPIC for the purposes for which they were intended provides a more accurate record over time in MC/PUR, providing for more efficient analysis and more accurate statistical information for research.

- 3.6.7** The investigating agency should leave a missing person listed on CPIC as long as they are still missing (adult until located; child until returned). A missing person entry should be entered with an indefinite expiry period (EXP = INDEF).

The person is still missing and although a local investigation may grow cold until new information comes to light, sharing the case means that the national systems and other investigators will include the case in searches and comparisons. Missing persons can show up, sometimes far from where they went missing, many years after going missing or even indefinitely as unidentified remains. Even if the person's age and the passage of time mean they could not possibly be found alive, they may be found as remains. An indefinite expiry avoids unintended purging from the system. See also section 3.13.

- 3.6.8** In the case of a missing person found deceased, the investigating agency should take the record off of CPIC only when a coroner/medical examiner has confirmed death and identity (if not complete, see 3.13.7). If the missing person had a criminal record, the Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services (CCRTIS) branch of the RCMP should also be informed in accordance with their procedures, to update the criminal record.

At this point the fate of the missing person is known.

- 3.6.9** When it is necessary to transfer jurisdiction from one police agency to another, the two agencies should use the CPIC TRANSFER mechanism rather than deleting and adding a new record for the missing person.

This approach is more efficient and helps the systems track better the history of the case.

- 3.6.10** If a person goes missing close to the US border or there is reason to believe the person may cross the border, then the investigator should consider posting the case to NCIC as well¹⁰.

NCIC is the US equivalent to CPIC and can alert US law enforcement.

- 3.6.11** The agency of jurisdiction conducting the investigation is responsible for the CPIC entry. When the agency of jurisdiction is a foreign police agency, then the NCMPUR is responsible for the CPIC entry on their behalf.

According to CPIC Policy, the agency putting an entry on CPIC is responsible for its maintenance. Foreign agencies cannot put an entry on CPIC themselves, and so if the NCMPUR creates an entry on CPIC for them, it becomes responsible for maintenance.

- 3.6.12** All entries of information to CPIC must be done in accordance with current CPIC policy.

In particular, CPIC has policies on accuracy, maintenance, the ability to validate records 24/7, and disclosure that are echoed in NCMPUR policy and these Best Practices.

- 3.6.13** Investigators and agencies should understand that missing person (MISS) and unidentified remains (BODY) information entered into CPIC is sent also to the MC/PUR database of the NCMPUR program.

Pulling in these CPIC entries without a data push from the investigator makes it possible for a CMPUR to conduct comparisons with existing cases using MC/PUR.

¹⁰ This can be done when adding the entry to CPIC. See NCIC in the CPIC User Manual.

- 3.6.14 If foul play is suspected, the investigator should follow the ViCLAS policy and submit the appropriate information into ViCLAS.

This is ViCLAS policy/standing order.

3.7 Information Management

- 3.7.1 All investigative and analytical steps taken to locate a missing person should be captured in the case file, including those that produce negative results. This file should be complete and well maintained; avoid having different aspects of the investigation spread around in unconnected files.

Good documentation helps preserve the knowledge base when investigators change, especially if it turns out to be a long term or interrupted investigation. It is critical if there is a later review of the investigation. There are too many aspects to keep track of without systematic documentation.

- 3.7.2 For all information put into the records and information systems, the investigator is ultimately responsible for all content, quality, accuracy and maintenance.

Ensuring that as much information on the missing person or unidentified remains is obtained and shared during the course of the investigation will maximize the potential for a successful outcome to the investigation.

- 3.7.3 Throughout the investigation, investigators should continually verify the accuracy and completeness of information that is accessible to others (e.g. RMS, CPIC, MC/PUR, ViCLAS, web site). These should be kept up to date with the investigation. If the investigator has the information to complete a potential attribute in any of these databases, it should be added immediately. As changes occur, the investigator must inform the person(s) who enter information into sharing systems.

Shared information is important for those systems and if the information they have is out of date or incomplete then they will not be of benefit to the investigation (analysis, tips generated etc.). Every field can be searched and matched and may be the key piece of information that leads to solving a case.

- 3.7.4 In order to ensure data quality, certain fields should be verified by an expert before being accepted or put into a system (e.g., dental).

Police are not expected to be dental and medical experts, but the investigator must call upon those who are experts to assist in completing accurate data for comparisons.

- 3.7.5 Where inaccuracies do come to light the investigator should ensure that the inaccurate information is corrected as soon as possible.

This will ensure that the correct information is used in ongoing and subsequent searches and comparisons. This improves the chances of a successful match and avoids time wasted on incorrect matches.

- 3.7.6 The investigator should not place keyfact/holdback information into CPIC or MC/PUR. It is questionable if such information should be in the RMS – the investigator must check with agency practices on storing and protecting holdback information.

Although access to these systems is controlled, it cannot be assumed to protect exposure to the extent needed for this type of information.

- 3.7.7 The investigating police agency should validate existing information in key systems periodically as follows:

These systems cannot achieve their purpose if the information is incorrect and outdated, with the result that analysis or public tips will be missed that could help solve the case.

- 3.7.7.1 Existing information in CPIC must be validated at 3 months from first entry and every 12 months thereafter (i.e., at 15 month mark, 27 months etc.).

This is CPIC verification policy.

- 3.7.7.2 Validation of MC/PUR information should occur at least every 12 months.

This is NCMPUR validation policy.

- 3.7.7.3 Review of any publication/renewal (e.g., web sites, INTERPOL notices, border alerts) should occur at least every 12 months.

This is NCMPUR verification policy.

- 3.7.7.4 The investigating agency should consider a full file review at the 6-month anniversary of the beginning of the investigation, at the 15-month anniversary, and every 12 months thereafter.

This can bring fresh insight and restart a stalled investigation.

- 3.7.8 The agency's investigative file should be diary dated to ensure these reviews are completed.

This ensures a reminder that the validation is due.

- 3.7.9 Appendix B contains a timeline diagram that includes the key milestones identified above for information management.

- 3.7.10 All records may be subject to federal and/or provincial access and/or privacy legislation and should be managed accordingly.

RCMP files including MC/PUR and CPIC information are subject to the collection, usage, disclosure, retention and disposal provisions set out in the federal Privacy Act. RCMP files are also subject to the federal Access to Information Act. All provinces have similar Privacy/Access legislation and agencies should be aware of these provisions in their jurisdiction.

- 3.7.11 Subject to agency retention policies, in general, biological samples, extracted DNA if returned to the agency from the lab, and DNA profiles if returned to the agency, should be retained as long as the case remains unresolved, and should be returned/destroyed immediately after. In the case of found partial remains, these should be retained even after they are identified.

Retention of DNA facilitates further testing if required to correct mistakes, confirm associations, or take advantage of new technologies. Privacy issues and good information management dictate destruction when no longer of use. Retaining DNA for partial remains even after they are identified allows matching to other remains if more body parts are discovered at a later date or another site.

3.8 Publication

- 3.8.1 Investigating agencies should ensure that its investigators have a clear understanding of the local, regional and national public alerting protocols that are available, the policies surrounding publication of information on a case, and the proper procedures for invoking them.

The channels for getting information out vary depending on the circumstances, type of case, urgency and jurisdiction. Some, such as AMBER Alerts, are very specific and have a short timeframe while others, such as publication to the national missing person website, are more general and have longer timeframes. To make effective choices and timely decisions, the investigator and the agency need to have a clear understanding of the possibilities and mechanisms.

- 3.8.2 The investigating agency should establish relationships with regional women's shelters, advocacy groups, persons with high risk lifestyles, medical clinics, taxi organisations, public transit, municipal services, medical clinics, hospitals, soup kitchens, homeless shelters and other institutions forming a network for bulletins and help in locating missing persons.

This will provide immediate and effective channels for information about missing persons especially runaways. Good will and education supports investigative efforts.

- 3.8.3 The investigating agency should inform its own personnel prior to any external publication of information.

External publication may generate interest that will cause additional questioning of personnel. It is good personnel practice to let internal personnel find out before the public does.. The agency should be resourced and prepared to deal with tips and interest generated to ensure these are properly handled.

- 3.8.4 If appropriate to the circumstances, the investigator should consider contacting the INTERPOL unit at the RCMP to issue an INTERPOL Yellow Notice. Assistance may be obtained from the NCMPUR.

The Yellow Notice can make a missing person visible to the international law enforcement community.

- 3.8.5 Investigating agencies should appoint one person as a media liaison for any case, and should clear any information release with the agency's media relations group and policies to ensure that dissemination is in accordance with communications policies and protocols.

Otherwise information may be released inadvertently or inappropriately, which could have an adverse effect on the investigation and the family.

- 3.8.6 Before releasing any information to the public, the investigating agency should consider risk to the investigation/investigative strategies, potential risk to the subject, how it will affect the family, and applicable privacy legislation.

Once information is released it is not possible to take it back to avoid damage.

- 3.8.7 The investigating agency should avoid publishing information for which the exposure would cause a long-term issue with the person once found/identified.

Any success in closing a case will be marred if the subject or family are adversely affected in the long run. Professionalism and forethought will enhance police/public relations and trust.

- 3.8.8 When planning a media strategy, the investigating agency should consider ways to protect the family of the missing person and mitigate disclosure of information that will jeopardize the investigation. The media strategy should be discussed in advance with the family, including what information should not be shared publicly.

The media will want to talk to the family and the family will see the media as an active way to reach their loved one or persons involved. They can be overwhelmed or may hamper the investigation if they are unprepared and uninformed.

- 3.8.9 When planning a media strategy, the investigating agency should make itself available to the media and position itself as the point of contact for the case. The agency should regularly schedule press briefings to deter attempts by the media to discover details from other sources (e.g., the victim's family, witnesses, neighbours) that might obstruct investigative activity. The investigating agency may wish to ensure that these briefings are at appropriate times to allow the media to fulfill their deadlines.

A positive relationship with the media will make them more helpful to an investigation and minimize misinformation and rumour.

- 3.8.10 Information deemed non-sensitive should be made available to the public. The national missing persons and unidentified remains website is recommended.

Although national publication is not necessary or appropriate in all cases, it will allow the public to provide feedback and information to assist in the recovery and/or the identification of those persons.

- 3.8.11 Providing it will not jeopardize the investigation, the investigating agency should request publication to the national missing person and unidentified remains website for any missing person who has been missing for more than six months, or earlier at the investigator's discretion. Cases involving exigent circumstances such as a missing child, foul play, suicidal thoughts, etc. should be added to the national website immediately after being added to CPIC.

The purpose of the web site is to solicit tips from the public, which is of great benefit to the investigation. The longer the delay in publishing, the greater the chance that valuable information will be lost. (Contact your CMPUR regarding publication on the national website).

- 3.8.12 At the annual anniversary of the discovery, the investigating agency should consider renewing public interest by methods such as creating a new media release, and featuring the case on the national web site.

The renewed publication is a way to generate tips that might not come in if publication is just in passive mode, and to reach members of the public who may not have seen previous publications.

- 3.8.13 Prior to publication of a case on a website or other release, the investigating agency should make every reasonable effort to notify the missing person's guardian/next of kin of the content and timing of the release.

This is a courtesy to a family under stress and follows the principle of assistance to victims.

- 3.8.14 Prior to publication of a case on a website or other release, the investigating agency should make every reasonable effort to obtain consent by the missing person's guardian/next of kin on the content and timing of the release. If the family expresses concern, the investigating agency should determine if investigative requirements override the concerns of the family. The investigating agency should document any consent, exchanges and decision.

Although consent is desirable and is normally given, the need to find the missing person must drive the decision to publish.

- 3.8.15 Once a case has been added to the website or otherwise published, the primary investigator(s) should review the website entry or other result to ensure accuracy and that publication has taken place as planned.

Checks and balances prior to publication notwithstanding, it is still possible that the result is not what was expected and will need to be changed immediately.

- 3.8.16 With any publication of information about a missing person, the investigating agency should provide contact information for anyone who may have information about the case, ideally using a method that is available at all hours and days. Contact choices should include a mechanism for anonymous tips.

People who have information that may be useful to an investigation must not be discouraged by lack of contact information, difficult methods, awkward business hours or fear. Although in practice not many choose anonymity, allowing information to be given anonymously may result in vital information that would not otherwise have been offered.

- 3.8.17 When a member of the public submits information, the investigating agency should acknowledge to them that the tip was received, and should encourage them to provide information in future.. If the information proves to be useful later, the investigating agency should make an effort to advise the person and to determine if there is more information.

Acknowledging and following up on information provided is acting in a professional manner. Doing this may result in extra information and the generated goodwill makes it more likely that that person or others will provide information in the future.

- 3.8.18 A police agency should not turn away a person wishing to provide information on a case on the basis of jurisdiction. Complainants should contact the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction for the case, but they should be able to provide the information to ANY police agency. The information should be taken in wherever it comes in and by whatever means, and must be passed on to the agency of jurisdiction.

It is not the responsibility of the public to determine jurisdiction or understand whose case it is, nor are they always capable of doing so. We must not make it difficult for people to provide helpful information.

3.9 Escalation

- 3.9.1** The investigator should consider informing/consulting with their major crime investigation unit and/or missing person unit.

These specialised units provide fresh eyes, experience and knowledge of other cases that could be related.

- 3.9.2** Until the risk assessment indicates otherwise, a missing person case should be considered as serious and, based on the evidence the investigation should be handled as a major crime investigation and in accordance with agency policy for such investigations.

Policies are well established for major crime investigations, and it is better to assume the worst and step-down the investigation later than to take the wrong approach from the start.

- 3.9.3** The investigator should be aware of other non-police agencies and resources that might be available in the region, and the services they can provide, such as: trucker's associations; cab companies; other government departments; provincial registries; utility companies; transport companies; Neighbourhood Watch; schools; municipal departments; social services, search & rescue services, non-governmental organisations, and victim assist programs. A police agency should make available to its investigators appropriate lists of resources, and should encourage partnerships with other organisations where collaboration is beneficial.

These can prove useful and it is difficult to figure out the possible resources for each investigation. A comprehensive list can be a time-saver as well as suggesting avenues the investigator might not think of right away.

- 3.9.4** The investigator should consider using the services of the NCMPUR program. The investigating agency may contact their CMPUR at any time to have the case published to the national web site or to obtain specialised analytical services. In general, these services should be requested if a case has gone over 30 days with no resolution. In the case of any missing person where it is suspected there has been a parental, family or stranger abduction, or where it is suspected the subject has left Canada, the investigating agency should contact the NCMPUR immediately to make use of international liaison and coordination services.

The specialised services can be useful to the investigator at different points in the investigation.

- 3.9.5** When other avenues have been tried and failed, consider placing DNA profiles in the National Missing Persons DNA Program (NMPDP) to provide a constant searching mechanism at the national level. Contact the NCMPUR for information on the NMPDP.

NMPDP has a national scope for comparisons and can share missing person DNA internationally. It is strictly controlled by federal legislation and policy. Once the sample is sent to NDDB, you will not actually have a copy of the DNA profile, and so may need to get it separately developed for other purposes outside of the national program. Regional or local DNA analysis and data banks where they exist may be sufficient for some cases and may have different restrictions. Contact NCMPUR for advice.

- 3.9.6** The investigator should consider using the services of specialists or specialised services such as those listed in Appendix F.

Experts and specialised services can be useful to the investigator depending on the circumstances of the investigation. Specialists are able to see possible avenues for investigation that may not occur to the average investigator.

- 3.9.7** When seeking assistance from another police agency, the investigator should be aware of his/her own agency's policy on sharing information. As a general rule, the investigator should only share what is pertinent to the help the other agency can provide, and should take into account the information to which the other agency already has access through shared systems¹¹.

These simple considerations provide a baseline since CPIC and NCMPUR publishing practices have been set up to reduce the risk. Only the agency's own policy can fully take into account all pertinent arrangements, policies and legislation in the specific jurisdiction.

- 3.9.8** If there are any warrants obtained in relation to the missing person (such as a warrant of arrest for an abducting parent), and there is any possibility the person may have left the country, the investigator should obtain a Canada-wide warrant in accordance with current policies and procedures for such warrants.

If the warrant is not Canada-wide, there are issues with international support, such as not being able to issue a red notice on INTERPOL. Crown Attorney approval and/or confirmation of willingness to extradite may also be required.

- 3.9.9** If the missing person is an international visitor or there is reason to suspect that the missing person may have crossed the border, the investigator should contact INTERPOL and the NCMPUR.

NCMPUR has contacts and knowledge to assist in international cases.

- 3.9.10** If the missing person is an international student, visiting diplomat, or other foreign dignitary, the investigator should contact the respective embassy or consulate, CBSA and the NCMPUR as appropriate to the circumstances.

The embassy may have information on the person. CBSA may have information on their whereabouts. The NCMPUR has contacts and knowledge to assist in international cases.

- 3.9.11** If there are indications that a missing person may have gone to another country or that the unidentified remains belong to a person who may have come from another country, consider having an international comparison done on the DNA directed at that country via the NMPDP, INTERPOL or direct contact with the foreign police services.

Many countries have DNA programs for missing persons and unidentified remains. With international travel, missing persons may cross national borders. The effort and

¹¹ For example, Canadian and US law enforcement have the same access to what is already on CPIC, and internationally all police forces have access to what has been posted to INTERPOL. Every agency, plus anyone in the public domain (such as media or NGOs), has access to what is already on the website or otherwise published.

privacy issues are such that this avenue should only be used if it is likely for the specific case.

3.10 Analysis

- 3.10.1 The investigator should check his/her agency's RMS, CPIC, PIP and other available databases such as the Alzheimer Society's database available through CPIC, looking for previous history, family history, other interactions with police, and victimology.

If the missing person or family have previous interactions with the police, these are fast sources of pertinent information. For example, if the subject is a victim of domestic violence or child abuse, or is an offender, will suggest directions to investigate further.

- 3.10.2 An agency's procedures for missing person cases should include a list of resources and suggested checks to be done, such as:
registration of home births reported in the area (in the case of infant abduction);
the Children's Aid Society for any history with the family (in the case of a missing child);
the Sex Offender Registry regarding the neighbourhood; at-risk or youth support organisations; credit bureaus; motor vehicle branch records; transaction card records; Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (via the RCMP); information banks controlled by the Department of Social Development, the Canada Revenue Agency and the Canada Employment Insurance Commission as identified in the Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act; transition homes or safe homes for victims of spousal abuse. Agencies should ensure that the information they are requesting is within their lawful authority and that the request uses the appropriate legal mechanism.

Ideas and contacts are difficult to come up with from scratch each time, so a standard list of possibilities is an asset and saves much time.

- 3.10.3 The investigator should create a detailed victimology for the subject.

This will suggest avenues to pursue as well as facilitate the ongoing risk assessment

- 3.10.4 The investigator should consider making a request to CPIC Off-Line Search services for detailed CPIC queries.

The CPIC Off-Line Search is capable of more sophisticated searching than what is available to users on CPIC.

- 3.10.5 When investigating a missing person case in which death is a possibility (which increases as time passes), the investigator should compare MP to UR occurrences in case the person has been found deceased. They should also consider searches to find previous cases involving the same subject, and similar cases that may be part of a pattern or examples of avenues to pursue.

These types of analyses may resolve the case and can be conducted with existing databases.

- 3.10.6 If there is strong likelihood that the missing person is dead, the Probable Cause on CPIC should be indicated as 'Presumed Dead'.

Although automatic comparisons in MC/PUR occur in any case, this designation will raise the visibility of the occurrence to manual comparisons and the likelihood that it will

be analysed as such. In some jurisdictions it may even be required before coroner/medical examiner investigators can examine a comparison in detail.

- 3.10.7 Analysis can be done directly by the police investigator using the police RMS, CPIC, or the national website. The investigator should also request analysis support from their CMPUR (either the NCMPUR or their regional CMPUR where it exists), and/or a ViCLAS unit.

CPIC and the NCMPUR program can help especially when the missing person and body are in different jurisdictions. The CMPURs have special tools and expertise to assist analysis.

- 3.10.8 When comparing the case at hand with other cases, the investigator should share any findings of the analysis with the investigators of the other cases and with their CMPUR, including any matches ruled out by further analysis.

Any comparative analysis between two cases produces a result relevant to both cases. Sharing the results can avoid the same analysis being done again.

- 3.10.9 An association or match from DNA should be taken into account with other information in the associated investigations. Consider a consultation on all factors with all investigative parties and other expertise as appropriate.

DNA results by themselves are not necessarily conclusive, and it is important to think critically if other factors do not corroborate DNA evidence. DNA results may be misleading if samples were contaminated or tracking mistakes were made and so they need to be treated like any investigative lead as one component in the larger puzzle.

- 3.10.10 When DNA matching needs to be confirmed between a UR case and an MP case, the UR investigator should send any DNA profile to the MP investigator for confirmation, rather than the other way around, especially if international.

This minimizes the privacy risk by minimizing the identity information exchanged until after confirmation. The DNA profile that has an associated identity presents the greater privacy risk for inadvertent disclosure. Also, the population statistics needed to make the best analysis should be based on the known characteristics of the person, such as biological affinity, which are known to the MP investigation.

- 3.10.11 Analysis efforts should be repeated periodically.

Analysis results will be different as new information becomes available, new cases are included in the collections against which analysis is performed. Unidentified remains may be entered many years after the person went missing, and even missing persons are sometimes reported years after they actually disappeared.

- 3.10.12 A police agency should have a list of simple checks that are done regularly on any historic MP file (e.g. complainant/family, CPIC, RMS, credit cards, DL/RO, 411, Vital Stat check, family and friends, social services, social media, etc.). These checks should be done at the 3-month point and every 12 months thereafter (15, 27, 39 etc.).

These checks could show that the person returned or is alive somewhere, and lead to conclusion of the file. (These checks are a subset of those done during the initial investigation.)

3.11 Dealing with Family

- 3.11.1 The investigating agency should assign a point of contact and continually, as circumstances dictate, provide updates to the complainant and the missing person's family. The contact person should document all interactions with the family.

This is a simple courtesy to a family under stress and helps to maintain their cooperation with the investigation.

- 3.11.2 Ideally the family contact person should not be the primary investigator, but someone with experience and training in victim support and cultural sensitivity.

The prime investigator may not have the time or capability for this role and needs to focus on the investigative role.

- 3.11.3 Ideally the investigating agency's family contact should identify and deal with a single point of contact within the family. (This does not apply in the case of a family member being interviewed for information or considered as a suspect or witness in the matter).

Dealing with multiple people in the family can lead to miscommunication.

- 3.11.4 The family contact person and investigator should be sensitive to the cultural sensitivities of the community of the family¹². The police agency should make appropriate training available to its personnel.

Appropriate sensitivity helps the police, family and community understand each other and can increase the chance of success, tips, and general cooperation with the investigation.

- 3.11.5 The family contact person and investigator should be aware of resources available (national, provincial, NGO) to which family members can be directed for victim assistance and support. The agency should make available to investigators a list of such resources or places to find them.

Families and close friends of missing persons need support that is not always available from police agencies. These other organisations may be better equipped to provide this support, and this allows police to focus on the investigation.

- 3.11.6 Non-Governmental Organisations and National Aboriginal Organizations (NGO/NAO) groups will sometimes wish to be involved as a party with interest in a case. The investigator should always ensure that the family supports the organisation being involved. Investigators should respect these organisations and their role; however, the investigating agency should not disclose to them any more information than is already published to the general public, nor give them the same privilege as the family.

These interested organizations can be valuable sources for tips and information and they provide support to families that police cannot. However, legislation does not provide them any particular privilege in a specific case.

¹² For example, the CACP endorsed the OPP Manual as deftly capturing sensitivities for dealing with aboriginal cases.

- 3.11.7 At the annual anniversary of the disappearance, the investigating agency should consider renewing contact with the family. The agency should touch base especially on anniversary dates and significant dates such as a birthday.

Anniversaries of the disappearance are difficult for the families of missing persons and so the contact is good management of the relationship with the investigation.

- 3.11.8 In situations where the family is in a different city or province than the primary investigators, the investigator should make the effort to establish appropriate channels for contact with the family so that distance is not a barrier.

In these situations, if nothing is done to set up formal channels of communication, it is likely the family will feel left out and for the investigator to lose or reduce contact below what is ideal. This reduces the effectiveness of the investigation.

- 3.11.9 The interview with family members to collect biological samples should be integrated with the investigation. If foul play is suspected it may also be an opportunity to further other investigative avenues (e.g., if a relative uses the past tense to refer to the missing person it may be an indicator). It is a good opportunity to give general information on the progress of the investigation, to seek additional information that may have been overlooked, and to manage expectations. Continuity with other family contact should be maintained. Use the same team if multiple visits are required, and ideally some of the same people who have been in contact for other aspects of the investigation.

Continuity of the biological sample collection with the ongoing investigation is helpful to that investigation and reassuring to the family.

- 3.11.10 When collecting biological samples for DNA comparison, speak of the missing person as if they were alive rather than deceased when discussing the missing person with the family.

Some families will have difficulty adjusting to the possibility that the missing person may be deceased and although the collection of DNA may be primarily oriented to that possibility, it is not necessary to emphasize that and distress the family.

- 3.11.11 Be direct and honest when answering questions related to the collection of biological samples; in particular, be certain the family understands this is for long term comparison. Follow guidelines for whatever program(s) you are collecting for and make sure the family is aware of the nature of these programs.

The collection of biological samples can be seen as a positive step at a certain stage in the investigation. Providing the family with solid and honest information is important to ensure that trust is established.

- 3.11.12 It is important to manage the expectations of a family with respect to participation in DNA testing, since putting DNA profiles into DNA data banks is a long term strategy but sometimes people expect immediate results.

False hopes of effective or fast results leads to disappointment and anger. Only a small percentage of DNA profiles entered into a data bank will result in matches or associations for many reasons: the likelihood that the MP is found as unidentified remains in the first place, the potential difficulty of extracting usable DNA in the recovered remains or enough information for conclusive comparisons, or, the possibility that no usable DNA can be found on personal items submitted.

- 3.11.13** It is a good practice to inform the family of the missing person or relative(s) who donated biological samples for DNA analysis whenever this has led to positive results, unless there are exigent circumstances (e.g., an ongoing criminal investigation).

This is part of keeping the family informed and also reinforces the value of contributing DNA.

3.12 Procedural

- 3.12.1** There should always be an active primary investigator. The investigating agency should ensure continuity of supervision, attention and knowledge from shift to shift, over weekends and holidays, or if the case is transferred from unit to unit or between agencies.

Incomplete transfer of knowledge or responsibility can jeopardize the success of an investigation.

- 3.12.2** The investigating agency should carefully and seriously consider the number of resources that are needed for the search and investigation, in order to prevent unnecessary delays because of resource issues. It is better to have too many resources up front than too few.

Time is critical at the beginning of an incident and there are benefits in front-loading an investigation where possible. Many missing persons investigations fail when they are not given appropriate resources or focus from the outset.

- 3.12.3** Investigators should be aware of their agency's procedures for investigating missing person cases and the resources available to them. Agencies should ensure that their personnel are adequately trained.

These are normal efficiency and adequacy standards.

- 3.12.4** Agencies should provide training on privacy policies and procedures to investigators, others involved with missing person investigations, and anyone using the information systems or handling information from the cases. Investigators should be aware of their agency's policies and procedures on the handling and release of information.

Awareness helps to avoid mistakes that could jeopardize a successful outcome for an investigation, and may even cause harm to family members. This may lead to resistance to cooperate with the investigation.

3.13 Closing

- 3.13.1** When a missing person is located, the investigating agency or assisting agency should first ensure adequate provisions are made to address the safety of that individual (e.g., medical attention, rescue, protection from media).

Safety must be the immediate concern.

- 3.13.2** When a missing person is found, the investigating agency or an assisting agency should confirm they are really found by a face-to-face meeting and confirmation of identity.

There have been situations where someone presumed found was not the missing person, or the report was incorrect.

- 3.13.3** The investigating agency or an assisting agency should interview the found subject to determine the actual facts of the case, the reason for going missing, what took place between the time they went missing and being found, places they were during the absence, names/addresses/phone numbers of persons encountered during the absence, and to determine any additional follow-up required¹³. The interviewer should document this thoroughly and convey the information to the investigator who should complete all closing documentation and statistics.

This is important for closure of the case and to learn how to improve the process. It may also be important if the person goes missing again, especially for runaway youth. Intelligence obtained during missing person investigations may show patterns of behaviour indicating visits to the same locations or persons while missing. Being familiar with a chronic runaway makes it easier to find them the next time when time may be critical to their safety.

- 3.13.4** The investigating agency should consider from the interview of a found person if there is a requirement for follow-up prevention or intervention activity (e.g., abuse, criminal charges to be laid, child welfare organisation to be called, drugs or other medical issues, counselling).

The resolution will uncover more information that may require follow-up and may prevent reoccurrences.

- 3.13.5** When a subject has been confirmed found, the investigator should withdraw/update any notifications, publications, or invoked services including: AMBER Alerts, border alerts, web sites, broadcasts, media alerts, CPIC, the NCMPUR program and any other information systems utilized during the course of the investigation. The investigator should also update the ViCLAS report if applicable.

Public confrontation, inappropriate accusations and duplication of effort are caused by leaving cases open in these locations, which often happens just because nobody thought to inform the chain of systems and persons involved. Statistics may also get skewed in a way that obscures successes.

- 3.13.6** Missing person entries should be kept on CPIC indefinitely and should only be removed when the person/body is confirmed as being located. In the case of a missing child, the record should only be removed from CPIC when it has been confirmed that the child was returned to the appropriate guardian.

Leaving an unsolved case on CPIC also keeps it available in the NCMPUR database, MC/PUR. Both systems do comparison matching that could resolve the case. In the case of children, keeping them on CPIC even when the location is known ensures law enforcement involvement until they are returned. For example, children abducted by parents to a foreign country may take years to get back, and the record on CPIC ensures they are caught at the border if the abducting parent tries to sneak back into Canada.

¹³ Appendix C includes a list of information to consider collecting during a return interview.

- 3.13.7** A missing person record for a person presumed dead should be left on CPIC until a body is found¹⁴. If a body is found but is not complete, the entry should remain on CPIC, updated to reflect the situation, and a BODY entry should be created for the partial remains if it does not exist (see 4.13.3). If local policy requires that a case be closed and the CPIC entry removed if enough of the body has been found to confirm death, the agency should inform their CMPUR of the situation.

This keeps the case available for comparison matching that could resolve the case if additional remains are found. If the record is removed from CPIC, notifying the NCMPUR program allows it to flag the case so that it is still compared in the MC/PUR (the NCMPUR database).

- 3.13.8** There may be times when it is an investigative strategy to leave a case published on CPIC and/or the website after the person has been found. Investigators should balance this with the needs of the person and their family. Where it will not jeopardize the investigation the subject and/or family should be notified of the decision to have the information remain publicly available.

In the case of foul play it may be useful to have the perpetrator still think the subject has not been found.

- 3.13.9** In any follow-up news releases, the agency should only release information that is in the public interest and should be sensitive to the privacy of the persons involved.

This may protect future missing persons as well.

- 3.13.10** Resolution of a missing person case should be announced to the missing person's family as soon as practical and before any media release or change to public facing publication (e.g., web site). The investigator should follow the agency's NOK notification policy and procedures. The complainant should also be notified if not part of the family. The notification should take place ideally in person if possible, particularly if the subject was found deceased. If the matter has evolved into a criminal investigation, notification decisions must defer to the requirements of that investigation.

This is common courtesy.

- 3.13.11** If the missing person is a child (determined per your provincial policies), the legal guardian should be informed of the location of the child. If the missing person is an adult, the complainant should be informed that the person was found but should only be told of the location if the subject agrees; if not, the agency should suggest to the subject to contact the complainant.

Adults have the right to privacy of their whereabouts in these situations. If there is a concurrent criminal investigation or civil litigation there may be additional considerations and policy that prevail.

- 3.13.12** Police should continue to be involved in the case of a child or dependent adult until they are returned to the appropriate guardian. In the case of an adult, police may not be involved in facilitating their return, depending on the circumstances and local policies.

Children are considered missing until returned.

¹⁴ Even in the case of a no-body homicide conviction.

- 3.13.13 The investigator should check local policies and procedures for travel arrangements for the return of a found child to their guardian (who will cover costs, assistance programs available, interim care). The NCMPUR manages a national travel reunification program that may assist depending on the circumstances. Several NGOs also offer assistance.

If the parents cannot afford reunification there may be a program to fund the costs.

- 3.13.14 When closing a file, the investigating agency should promptly return to the family any personal items that had been given to the police (e.g., original photos, documents, passports, personal items collected for DNA purposes etc.). The agency must follow its own policies and procedures based on local policy and legislation for retention of information, evidence and DNA samples.

Courtesy, privacy legislation and common law rules apply.

- 3.13.15 If the subject is not found, the case file should remain open indefinitely, but local retention policy may dictate otherwise. If a file is closed or removed from CPIC for any reason other than finding the subject, the investigating agency should inform their CMPUR so that this outcome can be taken into account.

The person is still missing and the wider systems it is shared with can still be searching. Missing persons can show up many years after going missing, and indefinitely as unidentified remains. If the CMPUR is informed the case can be tagged as still open for comparisons in MC/PUR.

4 BEST PRACTICES FOR UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS INVESTIGATIONS

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 Agencies should standardize police policies and procedures in regard to unidentified remains investigations in order to ensure consistency in delivery of services across Canada. Police agencies should have in place procedures that adopt these Best Practices and tailor them to the local jurisdiction and organisation. In the case of unidentified remains investigations, the provincial act governing the coroner/medical examiner service should be consulted as well. Agency policies and procedures should take into account differences in situations where foul play is indicated, and the relationship between the Unidentified Remains aspect of the investigation and the criminal investigation. Agencies should standardize their use of important terms (e.g., see Section 2).

Consistency ensures equal service to all persons; consistency around best practices ensures the best service from lessons learned. Tailoring achieves local relevance.

- 4.1.2 Agencies and investigators should recognise when they do not have the resources to follow the Best Practices. It is important that agencies and individual investigators know their own limitations in personnel or training and are aware of municipal, provincial and national resources available to help.

This reduces the likelihood of problems caused by lack of resources, and ensures that additional resources are called in a timely manner.

- 4.1.3 Consider the potential usefulness of DNA analysis in your investigation. DNA may be the primary - or only - means of identification between a missing person and unidentified remains. DNA testing can be performed even on cases involving decomposed, burned or very old remains and may be the only remaining connection to the missing person. Since the technology keeps improving, DNA analysis performed in the future on biological samples collected today may yield results that are not possible at present. DNA analysis does have limitations and should be used as one tool in the investigation.

DNA analysis can provide investigative leads and can be used to confirm identity to resolve a case. DNA analysis is becoming a matter of course in missing persons and unidentified remains investigations as one tool available to the investigator.

- 4.1.4 For unidentified remains where there are partial remains, DNA should always be used.

This is the best way to match other remains belonging to the same person that may be found at another time or location, and to separate comingled remains.

4.2 Response

- 4.2.1 A coroner/medical examiner or police agency should not turn away a report of found human remains on the basis of jurisdiction or location. Complainants should ideally contact the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction (see section 4.3). However, they should be able to report the case to ANY police agency. The initial call should be taken in wherever it is first received and must be conveyed to the agency of jurisdiction.

It is not the responsibility of the public to determine jurisdiction, nor are they always capable of doing so. It may not be possible for the complainant to report at a specific location.

- 4.2.2 There are no special Best Practices for attending to the site of discovery. An immediate response is warranted, especially if the report suggests foul play or recent death. Responders should not initially move the body or disturb the site.

An efficient response will better preserve the site.

- 4.2.3 Upon receiving a report of found human remains, the investigating police agency should immediately generate a police file in relation to the report. All steps taken to identify the person should be recorded in the agency's police file that is stored in the agency's Records Management System (RMS).

Even if the agency is only supporting the coroner/medical examiner's efforts, record keeping is important for continuity, especially if the case is not resolved quickly, and to ensure a proper record is maintained on investigative activities.

4.3 Jurisdiction

- 4.3.1 Coroners/medical examiners from across Canada have the legislated authority to lead investigations into the identification of found human remains. Police agencies in Canada have the responsibility to assist Coroners/Medical Examiners in the identification of found human remains, even where there is no foul play¹⁵. Investigative assistance should be provided at the coroner/medical examiner's request and direction.

It needs to be clear that police assist the coroner/medical examiner in these cases, - this is explicit in some provincial coroner/medical examiner legislation, implicit in others and generally accepted in practice.

- 4.3.2 The coroner/medical examiner should be considered the primary investigator for a UR case, with the police assisting¹⁶. The police agency in whose jurisdiction the remains were found should take responsibility as the assisting police agency as well as the primary police agency for entering data into police systems on behalf of the coroner/medical examiner.

Due to the possibility of a missing person turning up as unidentified remains, coroners/medical examiners and police must work together. Police systems such as

¹⁵ Where foul play is indicated, the police will have a parallel criminal investigation in which the identification of the remains, under coroner/medical examiner jurisdiction, plays an important role. These Best Practices only deal with the UR investigation.

¹⁶ An Unidentified Person (live person with coma or amnesia) is treated in CPIC and MC/PUR in the same manner as a UR case for analysis. In these rare situations, the police will be the primary investigator.

CPIC and MC/PUR are used to establish connections and generally only police have data access.

4.4 Priority

- 4.4.1 For reported unidentified remains, the initial responders should assume they are *human* remains and the result of foul play until it is determined otherwise, and act accordingly. The coroner/medical examiner should be informed immediately, even in cases where the remains appear to be archaeological or historic.

To do otherwise would risk delay and errors in dealing with the most important cases where there is foul play involved and the remains are human. For old remains, the coroner/medical examiner should make the decision to treat them as forensic or archaeological/historic.

- 4.4.2 Only a coroner/medical examiner should make the determination of human versus non-human in cases of partial remains or bones found.

Veterinarians, hunters, farmers and even medical professionals can make mistakes when trying to identify bones and tissues. The coroner/medical examiner is responsible for the determination and will call upon experts as needed, such as a forensic anthropologist.

- 4.4.3 The first responders to a report of an unidentified body should never assume that an individual is deceased unless there are obvious signs such as: decomposition, decapitation, transection/severance (dismembered/cut in half), gross rigor mortis, gross outpouring of cranial or visceral contents, mummification or grossly charred body. If there is any question, only a doctor or other trained medical professional is able to pronounce death.

Treating questionable cases as live may save a life. The signs that can be used to officially assume an individual is deceased may be different in various jurisdictions, and investigators should be guided by their agency's policies and procedures.

- 4.4.4 The police investigator should not make an early judgement as to the cause of death (e.g., gunshot wound, stab wound, myocardial infarction) or manner of death (e.g., suicide, natural death, accident). Determination of cause and manner of death is the responsibility of the coroner/medical examiner.

An uninformed conclusion early in the investigation could result in an inappropriate line of investigation that consumes unnecessary resources.

4.5 Gathering

- 4.5.1 .At the site of discovery of unidentified remains, the coroner/medical examiner should take responsibility for the body and any clothing, jewellery or other effects on the body. Collection of remains (especially skeletal) should be undertaken only by coroners/medical examiners and experts (e.g., forensic anthropologists). The coroners/medical examiners should take responsibility for the autopsy and collection of samples from the body for release to police for any criminal investigation.

Coroners/medical examiners and police will work together better if all parties understand that the coroners/medical examiners are responsible for the body and effects integral to their examination, and police are to handle the rest of the scene.

Collection of remains by experts ensures that as much of the remains as possible are identified as human and recovered, and that they are adequately gridded and locations recorded in a way that captures important relationships to other evidence and environmental features.

- 4.5.2 Once the coroner/medical examiner has agreed, the assisting police should take responsibility for other effects at the scene (may include wallet, cell phone). The assisting police should also take responsibility for collecting information at the scene, and for ensuring continuity of the body and its effects. In the case of a non-suspicious death, the effects on the body may be removed and taken by police as long as removal will not compromise an autopsy. The effects can be removed from the body by the coroner/medical examiner or by the police after receiving permission from the coroner/medical examiner.

Coroners/medical examiners and police will work together better if all parties understand that the coroners/medical examiners are responsible for the body and effects integral to their examination, and police are to handle the rest of the scene.

- 4.5.3 Body items are under control of the coroner/medical examiner and cannot be destroyed without permission. Body samples or personal effects, clothing etc. retained by police should not be destroyed prior to approval by the coroner/medical examiner.

In some non-criminal cases in the past, personal effects and clothing have been purged from police exhibit lockers for space reasons without considering that the items could be used at a later date by the coroner/medical examiner to assist with the identification.

- 4.5.4 The first responders to the site of discovery should consider that the location might be a potential crime scene until the investigation determines otherwise (e.g., the coroner/medical examiner determines the cause of death). They should ensure that any found skeletal remains are left undisturbed and take reasonable precautions to avoid contamination of the scene or animal scavenging. Skeletal remains should not be disturbed nor the site excavated before the arrival of the coroner/medical examiner or the forensic expert called upon by the coroner/medical examiner.

Standard precautions for crime scenes ensure preservation of evidence and should be applied until it is certain that the scene is not a crime scene..

- 4.5.5 When attending a sudden death scene, the responding officers should consider that this case could end up being an unidentified remains case and so should collect anything that could provide an identity itself or through forensic analysis. See Appendix D.

An opportunity could be lost to collect something that might not be easily regained later.

- 4.5.6 The investigator should interview the person who found the body, ideally obtaining a “pure version” statement followed by questioning.

The person who found the body is a key witness, especially if the scene has been disturbed in any way. Obtaining a pure version statement first avoids introduction of assumption by the interviewer. These statements are particularly relevant where allegations of a serious crime follow, as the information given, and the circumstances of it being given, and by whom, may be important to that investigation.

- 4.5.7 The coroner/medical examiner should obtain fingerprints at the autopsy stage if possible, for comparison. Depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary to consider collecting fingerprints at the site of discovery or to take measures to protect the epidermal layer.

Fingerprints are an established and definitive method for identification. Depending on the condition of the body, fingerprints may be fragile.

- 4.5.8 The coroner/medical examiner should take x-rays as a matter of course during the autopsy.

X-rays can be used to compare with known fractures or medical work for a missing person.

- 4.5.9 The coroner/medical examiner should obtain biological samples for the purpose of DNA analysis as a matter of course during the autopsy. This collection should be left to the professionals conducting the autopsy.

It is possible that the collection of biological samples could interfere with other measurements and analysis that must be made by different experts and so it is best left to those who have the knowledge and training.

- 4.5.10 DNA testing is very sensitive. Therefore, it is imperative that steps be taken to prevent contamination and mistakes when collecting biological samples. Wear appropriate protective equipment. Keep items being collected completely separate from each other. Change gloves when handling exhibits from different sources/donors. Avoid excessive handling. Treat each collection as a complete process before collecting a second exhibit. Double check all labeling and clearly label every component that could possibly get separated.

Good practices prevent mistakes, and avoid collections that cannot be used. They ensure tracking is accurate and that the DNA profile is attributed to the correct subject.

- 4.5.11 The same care should be taken to ensure the chain of custody, accuracy and documentation for the collection of biological samples for missing persons, relatives and unidentified remains as is taken for the collection of exhibits for criminal cases.

Good tracking is just as important for the accuracy and later verification of results for missing persons cases as it is for criminal cases, and depending on the course of the investigation it may turn into a criminal investigation.

- 4.5.12 Ensure that collected samples are dry before packaging, where appropriate, and refrigerate if there is danger of spoilage. Do not use chemical preservatives.

Biological samples can deteriorate if not stored and shipped appropriately.

- 4.5.13 Throughout the investigation, investigators should continually verify the accuracy and consistency of information. Nothing should be assumed and everything should be corroborated.

Far too often, critical details are overlooked because an investigator thought someone else had taken care of a particular aspect, or believed that a witness' account of the incident need not be verified because the witness "seemed credible".

4.6 CPIC

- 4.6.1 The coroner/medical examiner investigator should ensure that a UR case is put onto CPIC and thus onto MC/PUR as soon as possible. This can be done via the assisting police agency. A CPIC entry should be made as soon as it is determined that the remains are unidentified, there is some information of which the coroner/medical examiner is confident, and a case file has been generated.

Missing person cases often cross jurisdictions and a quick entry of a UR case onto CPIC may lead to discovery of a match. Services such as MC/PUR analysis and publication to the national web site cannot occur without a CPIC entry in place.

- 4.6.2 The coroner/medical examiner investigator and the assisting police investigator should ensure that full use is made of CPIC, including as much information as possible (e.g., dental chart, accurate site of discovery) and updating the information as more becomes available.

The information that is available on CPIC and MC/PUR is used by other law enforcement agencies and automated programs for analysis and matching. Every field can be searched and matched and may be the key piece of information that leads to solving the case. For example, descriptive fields are sifted by investigators using query tools, accurate location data can be used by mapping analysis tools, and dental charts can be compared automatically.

- 4.6.3 The investigator should ensure that physical descriptions, clothing, jewellery, distinguishing features, and surgical implants for the unidentified remains are entered on CPIC. These should use the secondary categories and fields designed for them instead of placing them in general Remarks fields.

The descriptive attributes are used on CPIC and MC/PUR for comparison and analysis. Having complete and accurate information increases the likelihood of a successful analysis. Using the correct categories and fields allows more accurate searching and system support for analysis than over-use of remarks fields.

- 4.6.4 The investigator should ensure that an accurate location for the place of discovery is entered on CPIC for the unidentified remains. This should include LOCITY and Latitude/Longitude.

Accurate location data can be used by mapping analysis tools. CPIC has the capability to enter latitude and longitude coordinates which greatly assist in these types of analysis. GPS devices and on-line maps are an easy way to obtain coordinates.

- 4.6.5 If the remains are partial, a skeletal inventory should be completed as soon as possible by a qualified professional and entered on CPIC using the SKEL secondary category. Even if the partial remains are immediately identified, the CPIC entry with the skeletal inventory should be entered.

This allows automatic comparisons in the MC/PUR database and better searching. The skeletal inventory is more precise than language-dependant comments buried in remarks fields that can only be interpreted by human readers. Having a skeletal inventory in the system allows analysis to match them up to additional parts found at a later date.

- 4.6.6 The investigating agency should use the CPIC Modify operation to make updates and the Transfer operation to transfer ownership of the CPIC entry to another unit or agency, rather than performing a Remove and Add operations.

Using the operations and features of CPIC for the purposes for which they were intended provides a more accurate record over time in MC/PUR, providing for more efficient analysis and more accurate statistical information for research.

- 4.6.7 The investigating agency should leave an unidentified remains case on CPIC until the identity of the body is confirmed by a coroner/medical examiner. CPIC entries should not be removed just because it has become a cold case.

The person is still unidentified and although a local investigation may grow cold until new information comes to light, sharing the case means that the national systems and other investigators will include the case in searches and comparisons. Missing persons are not always reported right away, and information may change years after a person goes missing, creating a potential match to a UR case. See also section 4.13.

- 4.6.8 Since the coroner/medical examiner office conducting the investigation does not have access to CPIC, the assisting police agency is responsible for the CPIC entry, in collaboration with the coroner/medical examiner to ensure accuracy¹⁷. When the agency of jurisdiction is a foreign coroner/medical examiner or police agency, then the NCMPUR is responsible for the CPIC entry on their behalf.

According to CPIC Policy, the agency putting an entry on CPIC is responsible for its maintenance. Foreign agencies cannot put an entry on CPIC themselves, and so if the NCMPUR creates an entry on CPIC for them, it becomes responsible for maintenance.

- 4.6.9 All entries of information to CPIC must be done in accordance with current CPIC policy.

In particular, CPIC has policies on accuracy, maintenance, the ability to validate records 24/7, and disclosure that are echoed in NCMPUR policy and these Best Practices.

- 4.6.10 Investigators and agencies should understand that missing person (MISS) and unidentified remains (BODY) information entered into CPIC is sent also to the MC/PUR database of the NCMPUR program.

Pulling in these CPIC entries without a data push from the investigator makes it possible for CMPURs to conduct comparisons with existing cases.

- 4.6.11 Investigators and agencies should understand that unidentified remains (BODY) information entered into CPIC is sent automatically to the US NCIC.

This makes the unidentified remains visible to American law enforcement agencies even if they are not querying Canada explicitly.

- 4.6.12 If foul play is suspected, the investigator should follow the ViCLAS policy and submit the appropriate information into ViCLAS.

This is ViCLAS policy/standing orders.

¹⁷ Forms that can be completed by a coroner/medical examiner to allow easier entry into CPIC are available from NCMPUR.

4.7 Information Management

- 4.7.1 For all information put into the records and information systems, the investigator is ultimately responsible for all content, quality, accuracy and maintenance.

Ensuring that as much information on the missing person or unidentified remains is obtained and shared during the course of the investigation will maximize the potential for a successful outcome to the investigation.

- 4.7.2 Throughout the investigation, investigators should continually verify the accuracy and completeness of information that is accessible to others (e.g. RMS, CPIC, MC/PUR, ViCLAS, web site). These should be kept up to date with the investigation. If the investigator has the information to complete a potential attribute in any of these databases, it should be added immediately. As changes occur, the investigator must inform the person(s) who enter information into sharing systems.

Shared information is important for those systems and if the information they have is out of date or incomplete then they will not be of benefit to the investigation (analysis, tips generated etc.). Every field can be searched and matched and may be the key piece of information that leads to solving a case.

- 4.7.3 In order to ensure data quality, certain fields should be verified by an expert before being accepted or put into a system (e.g., dental, skeletal).

Police are not expected to be dental and skeletal experts, but the investigator must call upon the coroner/medical examiner to assist in completing accurate data for comparisons. The coroner/medical examiner will consult with experts if necessary.

- 4.7.4 Where inaccuracies do come to light the investigator should ensure that the inaccurate information is corrected as soon as possible.

This will ensure that the correct information is used in ongoing and subsequent searches and comparisons. This improves the chances of a successful match and avoids time wasted on incorrect matches.

- 4.7.5 The investigator should not place keyfact/holdback information into CPIC or MC/PUR. It is questionable if such information should be in the RMS – the investigator must check with agency practices on storing and protecting holdback information.

Although access to these systems is controlled, it cannot be assumed to protect exposure to the extent needed for this type of information.

- 4.7.6 The coroner/medical examiner and assisting police agency should validate existing information in key systems periodically as follows:

These systems cannot achieve their purpose if the information is incorrect and outdated, with the result that analysis or public tips will be missed that could help solve the case.

- 4.7.6.1 Existing information in CPIC must be validated at 24 months from first entry.

This is CPIC verification policy.

4.7.6.2 Validation of MC/PUR information should occur at least every 12 months.

This is NCMPUR validation policy.

4.7.6.3 Review of any publication/renewal (e.g., web sites, INTERPOL notices, border alerts) should occur at least every 12 months.

This is NCMPUR verification policy.

4.7.6.4 The investigating agency should consider a full file review at the 6-month anniversary of the beginning of the investigation, at the 15-month anniversary, and every 12 months thereafter.

This can bring fresh insight and restart a stalled investigation.

4.7.7 The assisting police agency's investigative file should be diary dated to ensure these reviews are completed.

This ensures a reminder that the validation is due.

4.7.8 Appendix B contains a timeline diagram that includes the key milestones identified above for information management.

4.7.9 All records may be subject to federal and/or provincial access and/or privacy legislation and should be managed accordingly.

RCMP files including MC/PUR and CPIC information are subject to the collection, usage, disclosure, retention and disposal provisions set out in the federal Privacy Act. RCMP files are also subject to the federal Access to Information Act. All provinces have similar Privacy/Access legislation and agencies should be aware of these provisions in their jurisdiction.

4.7.10 Records should be kept and the unidentified remains must be tracked as exhibits even in the case where the unidentified remains are determined to be historic/archeological in nature.

This is responsible record keeping. There have been situations where historic remains are transferred to universities or other institutions but when they are later identified, incomplete records made it difficult to track them down for the family.

4.7.11 Subject to agency retention policies, in general, biological samples, extracted DNA if returned to the agency from the lab, and DNA profiles if returned to the agency, should be retained as long as the case remains unresolved, and should be returned/destroyed immediately after . In the case of partial remains, these should be retained even after they are identified.

Retention of DNA facilitates further testing if required to correct mistakes, confirm associations, or take advantage of new technologies. Privacy issues and good information management dictate destruction when no longer of use. Retaining DNA for partial remains even after they are identified allows matching to other remains if more body parts are discovered at a later date or another site.

4.8 Publication

- 4.8.1 Investigating agencies should ensure that its investigators have a clear understanding of the local, regional and national public alerting protocols that are available, the policies surrounding publication of information on a case, and the proper procedures for invoking them.

The channels for getting information out vary depending on the circumstances, type of case, urgency and jurisdiction. To make effective choices and timely decisions, the investigator and the agency need to have a clear understanding of the possibilities and mechanisms.

- 4.8.2 The investigating agency should inform its own personnel prior to any external publication of information.

External publication may generate interest that will cause additional questioning of personnel. It is good personnel practice to let internal personnel find out before the public does. The agency should be resourced and prepared to deal with tips and interest generated to ensure these are properly handled.

- 4.8.3 The investigating agency should consider local notices or CPIC zone alerts to let local and nearby police know about a found body or unidentified person.

The majority of unidentified remains will be found close to the point of origin and so local or regional alerts may be successful.

- 4.8.4 If appropriate to the circumstances, the investigator should consider contacting the INTERPOL unit at the RCMP to issue an INTERPOL Black Notice. Assistance may be obtained from the NCMPUR.

The Black Notice can make the unidentified remains visible to the international law enforcement community. Some remains found in Canada may be persons missing from other parts of the world.

- 4.8.5 Investigating agencies should appoint one person as a media liaison for any case, and should clear any information release with the agency's media relations group and ensure dissemination is done according to communications policies.

Otherwise information may be released inadvertently or inappropriately, which could have an adverse effect on the investigation and the family.

- 4.8.6 The coroner/medical examiner must approve any publication or release of unidentified remains information. If foul play is involved, publication of any information must be approved by both coroner/medical examiner and police.

The coroner/medical examiner is the primary agency in the investigation and may coordinate their own release of information or authorise an assisting police agency to release certain information.

- 4.8.7 The investigating agency should avoid publishing information for which the exposure would cause a long-term issue with the person once found/identified.

Any success in closing a case will be marred if the subject or family are adversely affected in the long run. Professionalism and forethought will enhance police/public relation.

- 4.8.8 Information deemed non-sensitive should be made available to the public. The national missing persons and unidentified remains website is recommended.

This will allow the public to provide feedback and information to assist in the recovery and/or the identification of those persons.

- 4.8.9 Providing it will not jeopardize the investigation, the coroner/missing person investigating agency should request publication to the national missing person and unidentified remains website for any unidentified remains where there is information suitable for publication and reason to expect the public may have information that could help identify the individual, as soon as practical at the investigator's discretion.

The purpose of the web site is to solicit tips from the public, which is of great benefit to the investigation. The longer the delay in publishing, the greater the chance that valuable information will be lost. (Contact your CMPUR regarding publication on the national website).

- 4.8.10 At the annual anniversary of the discovery, the investigating agency should consider renewing public interest by methods such as creating a new media release, and featuring the case on the national web site.

The renewed publications is a way to generate tips that might not come in if publication is just in passive mode, and to reach members of the public who may not have seen previous publications.

- 4.8.11 Once a case has been added to the website or otherwise published, the primary investigator(s) should review the website entry or other result to ensure accuracy and that publication has taken place as planned.

Checks and balances prior to publication notwithstanding, it is still possible that the result is not what was expected and will need to be changed immediately.

- 4.8.12 With any publication of information about unidentified remains, the investigating agency should provide contact information for anyone who may have information about the case, ideally using a method that is available at all hours and days. Contact choices should include a mechanism for anonymous tips.

People who have information that may be useful to an investigation must not be discouraged by lack of contact information, difficult methods, awkward business hours or fear. Although in practice not many choose anonymity, allowing information to be given anonymously may result in vital information that would not otherwise have been offered.

- 4.8.13 When a member of the public submits information, the investigating agency should acknowledge to them that the information was received, and should encourage them to provide information in future. If the information proves to be useful later, the investigating agency should make an effort to advise the person and to determine if there is more information.

Acknowledging and following up on information provided is acting in a professional manner. Doing this may result in extra information and the generated goodwill makes it more likely that that person or others will provide information in the future.

4.9 Escalation

- 4.9.1 Until the risk assessment indicates otherwise, an unidentified remains case should be considered as serious and, based on the evidence the investigation should be handled as a major crime investigation and in accordance with agency policy for such investigations.

Policies are well established for major crime investigations, and it is better to assume the worst and step-down the investigation later than to take the wrong approach from the start.

- 4.9.2 The investigator should consider using the services of the NCMPUR program. The investigating agency may contact their CMPUR at any time to have the case published to the national web site or to obtain specialised analytical services. In general, these services should be requested if a case has gone over 30 days with no resolution.

The specialised services can be useful to the investigator at different points in the investigation.

- 4.9.3 When other avenues have been tried and failed, consider placing DNA profiles in the National Missing Persons DNA Program (NMPDP) to provide a constant searching mechanism at the national level. Contact the NCMPUR for information on the NMPDP.

NMPDP has a national scope for comparisons and can share missing person DNA internationally. It is strictly controlled by federal legislation and policy. Once the sample is sent to NDDB, you will not actually have a copy of the DNA profile, and so may need to get it separately developed for other purposes outside of the national program. Regional or local DNA analysis and data banks where they exist may be sufficient for some cases and may have different restrictions. Contact NCMPUR for advice.

- 4.9.4 If there are indications that a missing person may have gone to another country or that the unidentified remains may belong to someone from another country, consider having an international comparison done on the DNA directed at that country via the National Missing Persons DNA Program (NMPDP), INTERPOL or direct contact with the foreign police services.

Many countries have DNA programs for missing persons and unidentified remains. With international travel, missing persons may cross national borders. The effort and privacy issues suggest that this only be used if it is likely for the specific case.

4.10 Analysis

- 4.10.1 The investigator should check his/her agency's RMS for applicable missing person cases.

Many unidentified remains will be identified as locally reported missing persons.

- 4.10.2 The investigator should query MISSING on CPIC for applicable missing person cases.

This will find missing persons reported elsewhere in Canada and those reported missing in other countries where Canada may be a destination. It is likely that the person was reported missing somewhere.

- 4.10.3 The investigator should consider making a request to CPIC Off-Line Search services for detailed CPIC queries.

The CPIC Off-Line Search is capable of more sophisticated searching than what is available to users on CPIC.

- 4.10.4 When investigating any unidentified remains case, the coroner/medical examiner investigator and assisting police investigator should compare MP to UR occurrences in case the unidentified remains are those of a person reported missing. They should also consider analysis to find similar cases or other unidentified remains that may be part of the same body.

These types of analyses may resolve the case and can be conducted with existing databases.

- 4.10.5 Police should only send queries to the coroner/medical examiner to confirm or examine MP-UR comparisons if there is a high likelihood of death of the missing person.

The coroner/medical examiner analysis is resource intensive and speculative probing is a waste of resources. Furthermore, privacy legislation in the jurisdiction may not allow coroners/medical examiners to view details of missing persons unless there is reason to believe the missing person could be unidentified remains. The assisting police should be aware of any privacy legislation and information sharing policies that apply.

- 4.10.6 Analysis can be done directly by the assisting police investigator using the police RMS, CPIC, or the national website. The coroner/medical examiner or police investigator should also request analysis support from their CMPUR (either the NCMPUR or their regional CMPUR where it exists), or a ViCLAS unit.

CPIC and the NCMPUR program can help especially when the missing person and body are in different jurisdictions. The CMPURs have special tools and expertise to assist analysis.

- 4.10.7 When comparing the case at hand with other cases, the investigator should share any findings of the analysis with the investigators of the other cases and with their CMPUR, including any matches ruled out by further analysis.

Any comparative analysis between two cases produces a result relevant to both cases. Sharing the results can avoid the same analysis being done again.

- 4.10.8 An association or match from DNA should be taken into account with other information in the associated investigations. Consider a consultation on all factors with all investigative parties and other expertise as appropriate.

DNA results by themselves are not necessarily conclusive, and it is important to think critically if other factors do not corroborate DNA evidence. DNA results may be misleading if samples were contaminated or tracking mistakes were made and so they need to be treated like any investigative lead as one component in the larger puzzle.

- 4.10.9 When DNA matching needs to be confirmed between a UR case and an MP case, the UR investigator should send any DNA profile to the MP investigator for confirmation, rather than the other way around, especially if international.

This minimizes the privacy risk by minimizing the identity information exchanged until after confirmation. The DNA profile that has an associated identity presents the greater

privacy risk for inadvertent disclosure. Also, the population statistics needed to make the best analysis should be based on the known characteristics of the person, such as biological affinity, which are better known to the MP investigation.

4.10.10 Analysis efforts should be repeated periodically.

Analysis results will be different as new information becomes available, new cases are included in the collections against which analysis is performed. Unidentified remains may be entered many years after the person went missing, and even missing persons are sometimes reported years after they actually disappeared.

4.11 Dealing with Family

- 4.11.1 Once the unidentified remains have been identified, or when a potential identity is determined for which family contact is necessary for confirmation, the person who contacts the family and investigators should be aware of cultural sensitivities of the community of the family towards death and dealing with bodies. An agency should make appropriate training available to its personnel. Cultural and community organisations are willing to assist in providing this awareness.

Appropriate sensitivity helps the police, family and community understand each other and can increase the chance of success and general cooperation with the investigation.

4.12 Procedural

- 4.12.1 There should always be an active primary investigator. The investigating agency should ensure continuity of supervision, attention and knowledge from shift to shift, over weekends and holidays, or if the case is transferred from unit to unit or between agencies.

Incomplete transfer of knowledge or responsibility can jeopardize the success of an investigation.

- 4.12.2 The investigating agency should carefully and seriously consider the number of resources that are needed for the search and investigation, in order to prevent unnecessary delays because of resource issues. It is better to have too many resources up front than too few.

Time is critical at the beginning of an incident and there are benefits in front-loading an investigation where possible.

- 4.12.3 Investigators should be aware of their agency's procedures for investigating unidentified remains cases and the resources available to them. Agencies should ensure that their personnel are adequately trained.

These are normal efficiency and adequacy standards.

- 4.12.4 Agencies should provide training on privacy policies and procedures to investigators, others involved with unidentified remains investigations, and anyone using the information systems or handling information from the cases. Investigators should be aware of their agency's policies and procedures on the handling and release of information.

Awareness helps to avoid mistakes that could jeopardize a successful outcome for an investigation, and may even cause harm to family members.

4.13 Closing

- 4.13.1 Unidentified remains should be kept on CPIC indefinitely and should only be removed from CPIC once they have been identified.

Leaving an unsolved case on CPIC also keeps it available in the MC/PUR database. Both systems do comparison matching that could resolve the case.

- 4.13.2 There may be times when it is an investigative strategy to leave a case published on CPIC or the website after the body has been identified. Investigators should balance this with the needs of the deceased person's family. Where it will not jeopardize the investigation, the next of kin should be notified of the decision to have the profile remain publicly available.

In the case of foul play it may be useful to have the perpetrator still think the body has not been identified.

- 4.13.3 If a body is identified but is not complete, the entry should remain on CPIC, updated to reflect the identification. If there is a corresponding missing person entry, it should also remain on CPIC if possible, and suitably updated (see 3.13.7). If local policy requires that a case be closed and the CPIC entry removed because identification has been made, then the agency should inform their CMPUR of the situation. Regardless of whether the entry remains on CPIC or is removed, a skeletal inventory should be added first if not there already (see 4.6.5).

This ensures that the case is still compared perpetually for the matching of remaining parts that could be discovered at a later date.

- 4.13.4 In any follow-up news releases, the agency should only release information that is in the public interest and should be sensitive to the privacy of the persons involved.

This may protect future missing persons as well.

- 4.13.5 If the unidentified remains are identified as someone with a criminal record, the assisting police investigator should notify the Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services (CCRTIS) branch of the RCMP to update any criminal records.

This is typically part of a police agency's policy or practices and helps to make this important information available to others.

- 4.13.6 Police should not release any determination of cause of death or classification of the case before final determination; nor should they notify next of kin or claim an identity until the coroner/medical examiner has made the determination and agreed to release the information.

Media can sensationalize the case and families can be upset by information carelessly disclosed. In unidentified remains cases where there is no foul play, when to release information is not the decision of the police agency since it is assisting the coroner/medical examiner. Where there is foul play, it is a joint decision.

- 4.13.7 When announcing that an unidentified remains case is resolved, all agencies involved should follow local procedures and deal with the notification with sensitivity. Consideration should be given to partnering with victim services, NGOs or social services on these notifications where appropriate.

Once the person is identified, the person's family may be in distress or shock.

- 4.13.8 Coroners/medical examiners should not get involved in informing next of kin if there is an ongoing police investigation into the unidentified remains case due to foul play, or if the UR case was matched to a missing person investigation. The police agency's family contact should be the person to speak to the family. The coroner/medical examiner should be informed of any communications with the family, including what information was and can be released.

In these cases, the police investigation carries on and the police agency becomes the primary investigating agency.

The coroner/medical examiner will often need to communicate with next of kin at some point (e.g., to organize release of remains to the family), and so must be aware of what information may be discussed and to whom further next of kin questions may be directed. The family could also be provided the coroner/medical examiner's contact information and case number.

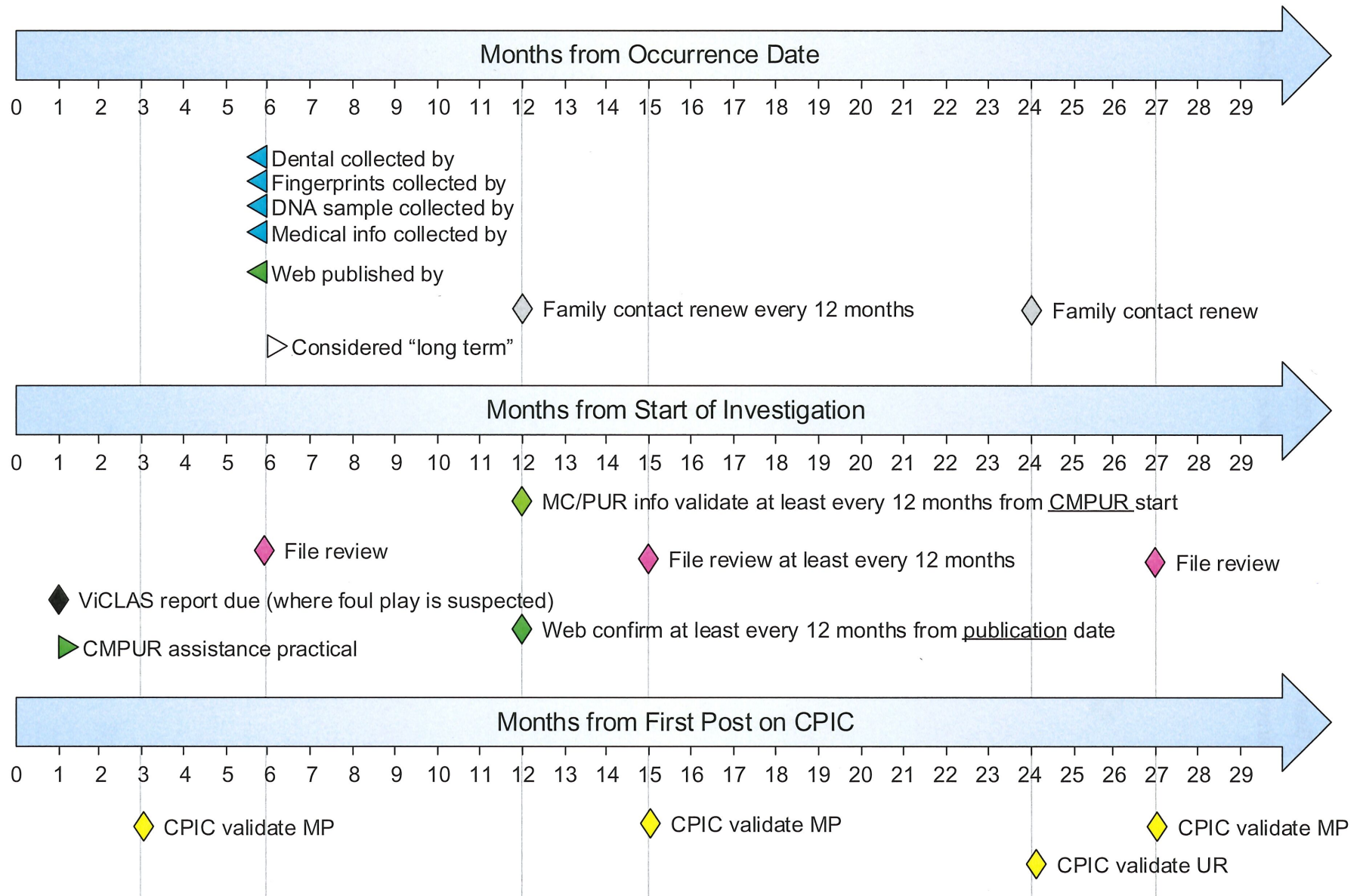
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APPENDIX B: BEST PRACTICES TIMELINE



APPENDIX C: INFORMATION CHECKLIST – MISSING PERSONS

Many of the sources used to develop the best practices were procedural documents that included checklists of information the investigator should consider gathering, questions to ask, or angles to consider when investigating missing persons cases. The lists that follow were compiled from those not as an attempt to get the best or most complete list, but as a means for sharing with everyone what agencies have felt worthy to put in their lists. It may provide some ideas for items to add to local checklists, and so provide some value as a compilation.

The Subject

- Names
- Date of Birth
- Aliases and other names, middle name, nick names to which they respond
- Addresses
- Eye colour, hair colour and style
- Height, weight, build
- Recent photograph(s) of the subject
- Videotapes of the subject
- Clothing worn when last seen, including brand names, sizes, colours, and date/location purchased.
- Shoe description and size, preferred footwear
- Personal belongings with them (such as backpack, lunch box, purse, etc.), including brand names, sizes, and date/location purchased.
- Distinguishing marks, tattoos, scars, piercings, deformities
- Previous bone fractures, amputations, surgery, transplants, internal implants
- Braces, dentures, appliances, implants
- Acne, skin blemishes
- Eyeglasses, what is eyesight like without glasses
- Jewellery when last seen, wristwatch, rings
- Items usually in pockets, purse, carried
- Smoker, gum chewing, other habits
- Languages spoken, accent
- Dental records including charts, photos, x-rays, descriptions of permanent work done
- Known fingerprints (including major case prints, family fingerprint kits, handprints)
- Items with the person's fingerprints, footprints, tooth impressions
- Items believed to have been handled by the missing person (hairbrush/comb, toothbrush, personal papers, computer, CDs, toys, etc.) from which latent prints may be obtained. Suitable fingerprint can be collected from non-porous surfaces, in particular, (for instance, from mirror/glass/plastic/metal surfaces as well as varnished, enamelled or glazed surfaces, foils), but

even from porous surfaces (paper, such as diaries, exercise books, notebooks, pocket diaries, children's books, painting books, magazines, newspapers).

- Sample of handwriting

Possible DNA Sources

- Blood from the subject (bandages, tissues, biopsy samples, blood samples, baby teeth)
- Blood samples from family members (preferably from twin, parents or children of the missing person)
- Razor, toothbrush or other hygiene items used only by the missing person
- Fingernail clippings, body swabbings, cigarette butts
- Unwashed clothing used only by the missing person next to their body, such as hooded clothing, hats, hat band, toque, helmet, other headgear, eyeglasses, shirt collar, sport gear
- Cell phone, ear buds or jewellery used/worn only by the missing person
- Bed linens

Medical and Behavioural

- State of health
- Health problems such as illness, allergies, disability
- Whether subject requires or is taking medication (current or recently discontinued)
- Possible consequences of the person not taking medications (seizures, loss of consciousness, mental incapacity, etc.)
- Diagnosed or suspected physical or mental condition and the professional care, if any, obtained
- Emotional disturbance, mental illness or developmental disability
- Whether subject may be suffering from dementia/Alzheimer's disease
- Clinic/Doctor's name and contact information (most recent) and/or location of last hospital visit
- Name and contact information for Dentist
- Releases for medical/dental records, including previous X-rays, eyeglass prescriptions
- Medical records if it appears the file will turn into a prolonged investigation
- Dental billing records – may be more accurate about work done than the dental charts
- Subject's "normal" behavioural pattern(s), personality, interaction with peers
- Normal and recent behaviour at home/work/school, especially anything unusual
- Degree to which the situation around the disappearance is out of character
- Attitude/appearance/manner when last seen
- Recent changes in behaviour or comportment
- Behavioural changes that may indicate substance abuse or stress
- Recent physical changes (weight loss/gain, hair style change, etc.)
- Reputation in school, family, community, any groups or teams they belong to
- History of alcohol or substance use / abuse
- Gambling, gaming, other compulsive activities
- Obsessions, compulsions, tics

NCMPUR Best Practices

- Goals and ambitions
- Lifestyle high risk or vulnerable
- Suicidal ideation
- Personality; e.g. active, lethargic, antisocial, competitive
- Fears; e.g. dark, animals
- Feelings towards adults/strangers
- Reactions when hurt
- Pets; general attitude towards animals
- Dynamics/relationship between persons missing together
- Philosophy, religion, moral, personal values and attitude, truth, responsibility
- Target of or holder of racial, cultural, physical prejudices
- Feelings expressed about their own appearance, situation, abilities, self-esteem, guilt
- Ability to deal with conflict, fear, loneliness, affection, sexuality
- Comportment or features that might attract attention
- Organizations or groups particularly trusted or distrusted by the subject
- Other info that can help develop a victimology
- Personal writings, diaries, or drawings
- School reports, diaries/ journals, schoolwork
- Use of personal computer (home and school) or interaction with any online computer service.
- School computer access, such as in the library, front office, etc.
- Personal photographs (albums or mounted photos owned by the subject) or art

Activities and Communications

- Hobbies and interests
- Recently developed interests/habits
- Membership in clubs, sports teams, or any other organizations
- Recent participation/events by the child.
- Recent participation/events - identify/interview all participants
- Membership in groups such as gang, organized crime, cult or sect
- Cell phone, personal digital assistant, or pager
- Forms of communication most often used by the subject, including phones, computer
- Immediately check location through any device that tracks location (cell phone)
- E-mail addresses for the subject
- Determine if the child had access to an online computer, cellular telephone, and/or pager.
- Local telephone records, including text messages, for all relevant telephones
- Internet usage
- Personal web pages, Facebook account

- Recent e-mail (both to the missing child's family and from the missing child's family), chat room conversations, blogs, computerized files, and/or computer data that is still present on the missing child's family's ISP server
- Recent blogs, computerized files, and/or computer data that is still present on the missing child's family's ISP server

Situation

- Domestic difficulties
- Family dynamics situation
- Culture of the family and any bearing that may have on the incident
- Marital status
- The status and stability of the relationship between the missing person and the person who reported them missing, other friends and persons involved in the case
- Prior incidents with family or at the child's home such as child abuse/neglect calls, disturbances, prowlers, voyeurism etc.
- Custody status of child
- Employment
- Income and payment information from employment
- Problems or issues with the missing person where they work
- Subject's schedule at work
- Income sources besides employment
- Financial difficulties
- Debts and debtors
- Current financial status of the family, including any large or recent debts, any life insurance policies involving the subject
- Life insurance policies and beneficiaries
- Banking activity to determine if accounts have been active, time/date/place
- Pending criminal/civil trials
- Whether the subject is bound by a Court Order
- Passes issued to an absconder
- Education/training/experience or lack thereof that might affect risk; scouting, military, medical, first aid
- Training on what to do when lost
- Equipment they might have with them (camping gear, outerwear, firearms, first aid)
- Geographic familiarity with the area
- Likely amount of money on them at time of disappearance
- Strength and endurance
- Missing purse, wallet, credit cards, money
- Missing personal items such as toiletries, clothes
- Missing cell phone
- Missing keys, health card
- Missing luggage, outer wear

- Missing objects of sentimental value

Timeline

- Circumstances surrounding the disappearance
- Activities, movements, actions etc. prior to going missing
- Plans/intentions when last seen
- Possible reason for the disappearance
- Time frame between when the subject was reliably last seen and when discovered missing
- Any indication of abduction or foul play
- Any indication of possible physical danger to the subject
- Previous disappearances (when, frequency, reported or not reported to police)
- Previous disappearances outcome (where the person was found, circumstances, for how long)

Friends and Family

- Contact information for a close friend or relative who can serve as a contact person if the complainant has no phone number
- Contact information for close friends, family, and associates
- Names, addresses, DOB, of family members and friends; relationship, intimacy and conflicts
- Recently new friends
- Enemies, persons disliked or with whom there were conflicts (e.g., bullies)
- Particulars of the last known person to speak with the missing person
- Names and particulars of all persons at the scene including family members, friends and neighbours.
- Likely persons they would contact on return on own or to check in
- What the family has already done (e.g., poster distribution, searches) to locate the missing person

Environment

- Video equipment for security purposes by area businesses (banks, ATMs, bars, liquor stores, convenience stores, etc.) - review video surveillance recordings
- Aerial photographs of all relevant areas to ensure the depiction of current conditions
- Dynamics of the neighbourhood, including recent criminal activity such as attempted abductions, prowling, suspicious persons/vehicles, and nuisance complaints, especially those sexual in nature, etc.
- Media reports on the incident
- What is being said/was on social media about the person

Location and Travel

- Location where the missing person was last seen.
- Addresses and locations known to be frequented by the missing person.
- Possible locations the subject might visit
- Any vehicle involved in the incident
- Transportation the person has access to/ is familiar with

- Modes of transportation used habitually
- Passport, do they have it with them? Number? Foreign passports?
- Citizenship. If not a Canadian Citizen does he/she have a status in Canada?
- Permanent Resident or Citizenship Card Information if applicable
- Possible routes that the person may have taken from the point last seen
- Former places of residence
- Vacations or trips recently taken (where, with whom)

Information to collect during a return interview

- Why the person was missing, especially if caused by abuse
- Who if anyone helped them leave, sheltered them, helped them return
- Where the person stayed and frequented while missing
- If the person had access to food/shelter/money
- The mode of transportation used
- Names, address, phone numbers, and vehicle information of who they were with while missing
- If the person has any new phone numbers, tattoos, personal property, injuries
- If the person knew they were reported to police and being investigated as a missing person
- Did they consider notifying anyone of their whereabouts
- Their daily habits while missing
- Were they engaged in any high risk activity while missing (drugs, alcohol, strangers, gangs, prostitution, illegal activity)
- Did they encounter any illegal activities, locations or groups handling runaways
- Does the person use social media and how did they use it while missing
- Whether they were exploited or harmed leading up to or during their absence
- Do they need help to avoid the same circumstances from recurring and them going missing again

APPENDIX D: INFORMATION CHECKLIST – UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS

Useful items for UR Identification

- medications – expiry dates may provide timeline
- receipts – may be traceable, provide timeline
- newspapers, published material – may provide timeline
- technology/electronics – model/manufacturing may provide timeline, location ro origin
- clothing labels – CA # on clothing can be traced
- serial numbers on devices, implants, jewellery
- If a body is in good condition, a passport-style straight-on photo should be taken for possible use with facial recognition software.

APPENDIX E: TRAINING

The following courses are available from the Canadian Police Knowledge Network or from Agora (within RCMP).

Since available training is being updated, contact NCMPUR for the latest recommendations if these are not available to you.

COURSE TITLE: MPUR: Missing Children Level One Investigator

SUMMARY: This online course explores the various stages of an investigation and the associated roles of the investigator. This course also provides information on the role of the NCMPUR.

COURSE TITLE: MPUR: Missing Adults Level One Investigator

SUMMARY: This online course uses a simulated investigation to take learners through the life cycle of a missing adult investigation. At each stage of the investigation, this course explores the roles of NCMPUR.

COURSE TITLE: MPUR: Unidentified Remains Level One Investigator

SUMMARY: This online course explores the life cycle of an unidentified remains investigation and the respective roles of the police agency/investigator and coroner/medical examiner.

COURSE TITLE: MPUR: Child Abduction – Amber Alert Syllabus

SUMMARY: Provides information pertaining to the history, partnerships, and roles and responsibilities those participating in the AMBER Alert program. Enables the participant to determine whether an AMBER Alert is appropriate in the circumstances, then the steps necessary to issue the alert and complete any follow up.

COURSE TITLE: MPUR: Child Abduction – Applicable Legislation and Charging Guidelines

SUMMARY: Explains Criminal Code abduction offences and information about when criminal charges may be appropriate & the approvals required to lay a charge. Explains other relevant legislation that defines parental access & custody rights. Provides information to aid in the recovery of a missing child domestically or internationally.

APPENDIX F: ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Experts and specialised services can be useful to the investigator depending on the circumstances of the investigation. The following list could never be complete but may provide some useful ideas.

Current contact information for most of these specialized service may be obtained from the NCMPUR.

F.1 Law Enforcement and Social Services Databases

National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains/Canadasmissing.ca

The National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR) of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) provides support to law enforcement, medical examiners, and chief coroners through specialized investigative services. As part of its operations, the NCMPUR manages the National Missing Children/Persons and Unidentified Remains (MC/PUR) Database, the provision of investigative advice and case analysis to law enforcement partners and the provision of specialized services to investigators of primary jurisdiction. The NCMPUR includes the National Missing Children Operations, which continues to assist law enforcement agencies in the investigation, location, and safe return of missing children. The NCMPUR may also be able to assist with the coordination of other services such as criminal and geographic profiling, and ViCLAS and NSOR database searches (see below for more information on these services). The NCMPUR also provides on-line training for missing persons investigators. Five courses are available through AGORA for the RCMP and the Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN) for all other police agencies (see Appendix E).

Website: <http://www.canadasmissing.ca/index-eng.htm>

Canada's Missing, managed by the NCMPUR, is a public website that contains current cases that represent a sample of missing persons and unidentified remains in Canada. The public can search case profiles to find up to date information about these missing persons and unidentified remains cases. Any missing person or unidentified remains profile which has been entered into Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) can be published on the Canada's Missing website upon request of the primary investigator. Investigators are strongly encouraged to submit their cases to the NCMPUR for inclusion on the website.

Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System (ViCLAS)

ViCLAS is a computer system that assists investigators to identify serial crimes and criminals by detecting linkages that exist among crimes by the same offender. All police services in Canada contribute to ViCLAS by submitting information about the violent crime investigations conducted within their jurisdiction. ViCLAS contains solved and unsolved homicides and attempts, solved and unsolved sexual assaults and attempts, missing persons and unidentified remains where foul play is suspected, non-parental abductions and attempts, false allegations of sexual assault and attempted murder and solved, unsolved and attempted child luring. In cases of missing persons or unidentified remains where foul play is suspected, investigators should consider contacting their Provincial ViCLAS Centre for case consultation. Investigators may wish to consult ViCLAS to obtain additional information on a suspect or victim, or to determine if any potential linkages to other incidents exist. Please visit the RCMP website below, contact NCMPUR (ncmpur@rcmp-grc.gc.ca) (law enforcement use only) or your ViCLAS Provincial Centre for more information.

RCMP Website: <http://infoweb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/to-ot/bs-sc/viclas-contacts-eng.htm>

National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)

The NSOR is a national registration system for sex offenders who have been convicted of designated sex offences and who have been ordered by the courts to report annually to police. The NSOR can provide up to date information relating to convicted sex offenders to all accredited Canadian and

International law enforcement agencies to assist police personnel in the investigation and prevention of crimes of a sexual nature. The NSOR includes information such as the offender's name, date of birth, current address, current photograph, identifying marks (tattoos, scars, etc.), vehicle information, type of employment, employment address, and the sex offence(s) for which the offender has been convicted. NSOR performs services such as producing suspect lists based on offender criteria or geographical location and determining current and historical addresses/telephone numbers for known offenders. NSOR can also supply current and historical photographs of known offenders (tattoos and other marks included), provide potential offender aliases, marks and descriptions to corroborate with witnesses/victims. If a missing persons/unidentified remains case has elements of a sexual nature, NSOR consultation may be appropriate.

Other Government Databases

Various government databases may be able to offer information for a missing person or unidentified remains investigation. Provincial or territorial healthcare, welfare benefits, and driver/vehicle licensing offices may be able to provide information relating to when services were last used or requested, and could potentially provide additional addresses, photos, or background information. Please consult your provincial or territorial office to determine which databases may be available to your investigation and what mechanisms are required to access that information (i.e. Production Orders, etc.) as these requirements may vary across the country.

F.2 International Investigative Assistance

Passport Canada

Passport Canada may be able to provide information regarding an individual's passport status and additional information submitted in the passport application process. The Passport Program Integrity Branch, Intelligence Division, exchanges intelligence with Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), RCMP, regional law enforcement bodies, etc. on issues pertaining to Travel Document abuse and attacks, identity and entitlement fraud, children issues and national security. This Division receives information on suspicious or abnormal activities, and on judicial restrictions from external partners. The Intelligence Division may disclose information pursuant to section 8(2)(a) of the Privacy Act when a person is charged with an indictable offence or when it is believed the passport was used in the commission of an offence. When there is an active investigation for reasons other than identity fraud and there is no indication that a passport has been misused, the request will be forwarded to the CIC Passport Program Access to Information and Privacy Division under sections 8(2)(e) or 8(2)(f) of the Privacy Act.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

In cases with an international component, Citizenship and Immigration Canada may be able to provide information regarding an individual's status in Canada or help develop a pool of individuals known to be in Canada for unidentified remains cases. Please contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada to see how they may be of assistance.

Canada Border Services Agency

Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) delivers a variety of programs and services. Many of these services focus on enforcing laws and ensuring the safety and security of Canada's borders, while others are designed to help travelers and trade enter Canada smoothly. In investigations with an international component, CBSA may be able to provide assistance or additional information on individuals arriving or leaving Canada. Please contact CBSA for more information.

International Liaison Officer Network

There are currently 38 RCMP Liaison Officers in 30 different strategic locations. Liaison Officers (LOs) are highly skilled multilingual RCMP officers who are trained and deployed to various strategic locations around the world, in support of the RCMP's mandate to fight transnational crime. Working in partnership with international law enforcement agencies, foreign governments and Canadian embassies, the role of an LO is to maintain a link between Canadian law enforcement and the law enforcement agency of a host country to prevent and detect criminal offences against Canadian Federal laws. They also collaborate with INTERPOL Ottawa, which is often the first point of contact for foreign requests for police assistance, such as subscriber checks, locating travelers, criminal record checks, and fingerprint verification. They may also be able to assist in various aspects of a missing person or unidentified remains investigation with an international component. If dealing with a missing person or unidentified remains case, use of international resources may be facilitated through the NCMPUR. Please contact the NCMPUR for assistance (ncmpur@rcmp-grc.gc.ca) (law enforcement use only).

INTERPOL Ottawa (The Canadian National Central Bureau)

For investigations with an international component, investigators should consider utilizing services through INTERPOL Ottawa. INTERPOL Ottawa represents the interests of the INTERPOL organization in Canada. It supports Canadian law enforcement agencies that are conducting criminal investigations by facilitating international cooperation between Canada and other countries through the exchange of timely, accurate and relevant information. One of INTERPOL's most important functions is to help police in its 190 member countries share critical crime information using the organization's system of international notices. Notices are published in four official languages (English, French, Spanish and Arabic) at the request of the National Central Bureaus (NCBs). Of particular interest to missing persons and unidentified remains investigations may be the YELLOW Notice (to locate missing persons), the BLACK Notice (to identify bodies), or the BLUE Notice (to locate persons and collect information on identity or illegal activities in relation to a criminal matter). Canadian police who wish to enter a foreign country for the purpose of assisting authorities in that country in a criminal investigation must request permission from the foreign country through INTERPOL Ottawa. Each request will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, as regulations vary by country. For further information, please consult the RCMP INTERPOL public website.

F.3 Forensic Science and Identification Services

Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC)

CPIC is Canada's national database for criminal records and information regarding wanted and missing persons, stolen property, and vehicle licensing. CPIC has recently collaborated with the NCMPUR to make numerous enhancements to the CPIC system to capture more specific descriptions of missing persons and unidentified remains. Investigators must ensure that all information entered onto CPIC for their missing person or unidentified remains case is accurate and up-to-date. CPIC also offers Offline Searches which is a method of processing and searching the system and its logs for records in a computing environment independent of the CPIC online computer system. The data being searched is information that cannot be obtained from direct CPIC queries. This search process may only be executed by the CPIC Offline Search Unit in an offline capacity by using specifically designed computer programs. For all CPIC Offline Search related enquiries, CPIC Users should contact their CPIC Field Ops as listed in the CPIC National Directory under the Provincial/Federal Control Points or under the CPIC Coordinators.

Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services

Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services (CCRTIS) maintains the national repository of fingerprint and criminal record information and is mandated to provide direct operational support to

Canadian law enforcement, criminal justice and public security communities, as well as international partners such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Interpol for criminal, civil and immigration purposes.

Disaster Victim Identification

Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) teams help with the rapid, accurate and dignified identification of victims of disaster so that they can be returned to their loved ones. The repatriation of a family member can often help start the healing process.

Forensic Services

The RCMP's National Forensic Services (NFS) offer a variety of forensic programs in support of Canadian police agencies. The Forensic Assessment Centre (FAC) in Ottawa is the first point of contact for investigators requiring RCMP laboratory analysis. FAC staff are equipped to answer questions relating all disciplines within NFS, and will help to ensure that the correct services are selected. In general, only cases involving the investigation of a designated offence (as defined in Section 487.04 of the Criminal Code of Canada) are accepted for analysis. Cases involving a missing person or the identification of human remains are not accepted unless associated with the investigation of a criminal offence. Please see below for private laboratory contacts.

Note that the RCMP NFS is available to all law enforcement agencies across Canada, with the exception of those located in Ontario and Quebec. Please refer to the Centre of Forensic Sciences (Ontario) and Le Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale (Québec) below for more information on the services offered in these provinces.

The following programs and services are available within the RCMP's NFS:

DNA Recovery and Analysis

The RCMP's Biology Services offer biological evidence recovery (recovery and identification of body fluids, hair, and cellular material), DNA analysis (generation of DNA profiles), and reporting (DNA profile comparison and the reporting of findings).

Trace Evidence

The RCMP's Trace Evidence Services (TES) offer services relating to the recovery, comparison and/or identification of non-biological trace evidence (e.g. paints, fibres and textiles), and the analysis of gunshot residue and explosives.

Toxicology

The RCMP's Toxicology Services Section (TSS) offers casework analysis to detect and quantify drugs and/or poisons in the body or on surfaces. Analysis can be done on body fluids or items recovered from a crime scene (e.g. drug paraphernalia).

Counterfeit Documents

The RCMP's National Anti-Counterfeiting Bureau (NACB) offers forensic counterfeit and document expertise (e.g. examination of currency, travel and identity documents, handwriting, etc.)

Firearms

The RCMP's Firearms and Toolmarks Identification Section (FTIS) may assist in determining whether an ammunition component has been fired from a particular firearm, determining the distance the muzzle was from a target at the time of discharge, and may conduct an analysis of bullet path at a crime scene or autopsy. Toolmark identification services may assist in determining the type of tool which may have created an impression mark.

Centre of Forensic Sciences (CFS) - Ontario

The CFS offers forensic examination and analysis services for Ontario law enforcement agencies in the areas of biology, trace evidence, documents, firearms and toolmarks, and toxicology.

General submission and packaging guidelines are outlined in the Handbook of Forensic Evidence for the Investigator and in the Technical Information Sheets.

Le Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale (LSJML) - Québec

The LSJML offers forensic examination and analysis services for Quebec law enforcement agencies in the areas of biology, trace evidence, documents, forensic imaging, fire, pathology, firearms, and toxicology.

Private Laboratory Facilities

Private laboratories are available for DNA recovery and analysis for cases that fall outside of the RCMP's mandate. Note that DNA profiles developed by private labs will not be eligible for entry into the national missing persons DNA database unless the laboratory meets the accreditation standards and are audited by the NDDB.

F.4 Advanced Forensic Identification Techniques

Haplotype Analysis

Haplotype analysis is a type of molecular genetic testing used to identify a set of closely linked segments of DNA. This type of analysis can be used to determine shared genetic ancestry and may be helpful in the investigation of unidentified human remains.

Isotopic Hair Analysis

Isotopic hair analysis utilizes the stable isotopic ratios of drinking water (and other dietary items) as a function of location and geology that the water percolates through. Regional variations (worldwide) are reflected in human hair, such that analysis has the ability to determine recent geographic histories by examination of hair strands.

Forensic Odontology/Dentistry

Forensic Dentists are available to assist law enforcement to identify recovered human remains, and may be able to determine the age, race, occupation, previous dental history, and socioeconomic status of an unidentified individual. Identification is performed through the comparison of ante mortem and post mortem dental records, as well as by using unique identifying features visible on dental x-rays. Forensic dentists may also provide bite mark analysis.

Forensic Anthropology/Archeology

Forensic Anthropology is the application of the science of anthropology in a legal setting. A forensic anthropologist can provide assistance in the recovery and identification of deceased individuals whose remains are decomposed, burned, mutilated or otherwise unidentifiable. A forensic anthropologist can assess the age, sex, stature, and ancestry, as well as determine if an individual was affected by accidental or violent trauma or disease at the time of death. They often work in conjunction with forensic pathologists, odontologists, taphonomists, and entomologists in relation to criminal investigations.

Bloodstain Pattern Analysis

Bloodstain patterns at a crime scene can reveal important information. By studying the shape, size and distribution pattern of bloodstains, a highly knowledgeable bloodstain pattern analyst can give an expert opinion on the events that gave rise to their origin. The application of modern science including biology, chemistry, math and physics can refute or confirm suspect, victim, or witness statements and produce bloodstain pattern forensic, solid evidence.

Forensic Meteorology

Forensic Meteorology is the study of weather, as applied to the process of reconstructing weather events for a certain time and location. Forensic Meteorologists utilize local weather reports, including surface observations, radar and satellite images, and eyewitness accounts. Forensic meteorology is occasionally used in murder investigations, personal injury cases and insurance disputes, and is a growing area due to the increasing losses from severe weather events in recent years.

Forensic Entomology

Forensic Entomologists apply the study of insect and other arthropod biology to criminal investigation. Forensic Entomology is most often associated with death investigations, but may also be used to detect drugs or poisons, determine the location of an incident, and the presence and time of the infliction of wounds to a body.

F.5 Criminal and Geographic Profiling

Criminal Profiling

The services of a Criminal or Geographic Profiler may be appropriate in cases of missing persons to ascertain information regarding unknown/known offenders, the victim/missing person, or the location in which an incident took place. The following services are available:

Unknown offender profile: A detailed behavioural analysis to derive information about an unknown offender.

Indirect personality assessment: An assessment derived via interviews with individuals with intimate or significant knowledge of individual suspected of committing a violent crime.

Equivocal death analysis: An in-depth crime scene reconstruction undertaken to provide an opinion on the manner of death: homicide, suicide, accidental death, death by natural causes or death by misadventure.

Consulting/expert analysis: A service to help focus interview techniques, develop investigative strategies and develop an appropriate trial and courtroom strategy.

Criminal profiling services are available across Canada through the RCMP, OPP, and Sûreté du Québec.

Geographic Profiling

Geographic profiling is an investigative aid that predicts the serial offender's most likely location including home, work, social venues and travel routes. Using information from a series of related crimes, a geographic profiler uses a mathematical model to analyze the locations of the crimes and the characteristics of the local neighbourhoods to produce a map showing the areas in which the offender most likely lives and/or works. Other maps related to a crime or a series of crimes can be produced, which may be useful for court, briefings, presentations and reconstructing historical cases. Time, speed, and distance calculations can also be produced to help investigators estimate travel time and distances.

Forensic Psychology

Forensic Psychology is the intersection of Psychology and the legal system. Forensic psychologists provide assistance to law enforcement in many areas, such as evaluating individuals in criminal cases on mental health issues related to their case or risk of recidivism, providing psychological treatment services, and acting as expert witnesses or trial consultants. Investigators may wish to contact one of the individuals listed below, or another forensic psychologist in their area. The below are some resources that have developed a strong working relationship with police.

F.6 Truth Verification/Interview and Interrogation

Polygraph

The polygraph instrument is a device designed to detect and record physiological functions of the body that indicate stress or guilt, such as pulse rate, increase and decrease in blood pressure, respiration rate, and change in sweat gland activity. The polygraphist evaluates physiological changes that determine if they are consistent with truthfulness or attempted deception. Please contact the regional representative in your area/agency to determine if polygraph testing is appropriate in your investigation.

Investigative Statement Analysis (ISA)

An Investigative Statement Analysis (ISA) is a systematic method of analyzing the content and structure of a statement. ISA is conducted to identify areas of strength and weakness in the statement of a victim, witness or suspect, which speak to overall veracity. It is an informed, unbiased opinion and an investigative aid. ISA can be used in all case/file types with victims, witnesses, or suspects alike. It can also be used at any stage in the investigation as long as a pure version statement has been obtained.

Interview and Interrogation Teams

Interview Teams may be consulted to provide assistance and/or guidance to investigative units in the preparation and execution of Investigative Interviews and related investigational strategies. Teams are comprised of experienced members who have expertise in interview and interrogation techniques. They provide assistance in investigations and interviews that are generally high risk, high profile, or hold a high degree of difficulty. Investigators from provincial and municipal law enforcement agencies are encouraged to contact their Major Crime or Polygraph Unit for services available in their jurisdiction. RCMP investigators should contact their regional Interview Team or Polygraph representative for more information:

F.7 Computer/Digital Forensics and Technological tools

Computer Forensic Analysis

Canadian law enforcement requiring investigative analysis of computers, mobile technology, or networks may wish to consult the experts in the RCMP's Technological Crime Program. The Technical Crime Program provides support services covering the collection of evidence through the search, seizure and forensic analysis of computers and other technological devices, as well as providing expert testimony in criminal court proceedings. Investigators outside the RCMP may wish to first consult the regional representative in their area/agency to explore the options available in their jurisdiction.

Robert Aboumitri is a Criminal Intelligence Analysis Manager based in the Greater Toronto Area. Robert is a subject matter expert (SME) in the analysis and interpretation of communication data. In January 2014, he was declared as an expert "in the analysis and interpretation of cellular telephone communications and data, and in the analysis and interpretation of cellular telephone records as it relates to the location and movement of cellular devices in conjunction with cellular communication transmission towers" by the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. Law enforcement across Canada may wish to contact him for investigative assistance in this area.

Audio/Video Analysis

The RCMP's Audio and Video Analysis Unit (AVAU) perform forensic analysis of audio and video recordings to assist Canadian law enforcement and provide evidence for court purposes. The AVAU is responsible for the Forensic Audio Analysis Program, Forensic Video/Image Analysis Program, and

the Authentication Program (authentication refers to the process of analyzing an audio/video recording to determine whether or not recordings have been edited).

Open Source Investigation

Open source investigation techniques may provide investigators with a wealth of information about individuals in their MP/UR investigations. A thorough review of the missing person's online presence, especially social media accounts, may indicate aspects of their lifestyle, their associates, and locations they may have frequented. Individuals may post a status update on Facebook or other social networking sites about where they may have gone, why they disappeared, or perhaps even a goodbye to friends and family. Electronic service providers may also be able to provide investigators with information regarding when a user account was last accessed and by whom.

Related Training

Cohen Training & Consulting, LLC provide training and consulting for members of the Intelligence Community along with federal, state, and local entities. They provide advice internationally on topics including the implications of online social networks in criminal investigations and criminal intelligence gathering, cyber crime, online fraud, money laundering, corruption investigations, and the investigation of skilled criminal offenders. This company has provided training to the Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children in the past. If a Canadian law enforcement officer has an operational need for assistance in a criminal investigation, Lt. Cohen offers his assistance in his full-time capacity with the Indiana State Police:

Electronic Service Providers

Investigators wishing to obtain information relating to cell phone records or on-line activities should contact their local electronic service providers. Please note that information may not be provided in the absence of a production order.

Geo-location

Investigators may be able to ascertain an individual's location by utilizing various types of mobile technology. Cell phones may provide location information through activity on cellular networks, wireless internet networks, or onboard GPS services. Many tablet (e.g., IPAD, Samsung Galaxy) and laptop computers may also present such investigative opportunities. Accessing some of this information may be time-sensitive, as electronic services providers (ESPs) may only retain customer/user information for limited periods of time, and investigators are advised to contact ESPs as soon as possible.

F.8 Facial Approximations and Forensic Art

Age Progression

Age Progression is the process of altering the known physical features of a person's face to create an idea of what they may look like after a certain amount of time has passed. Age Progression techniques may be of use in investigations where a significant amount of time has passed since a missing person was last seen, or if a person was a child when they went missing. Photographs of the missing person and the missing person's family members may be required for analysis. National Missing Children Operations offers a Computer Photo Age Progression service. This service is available to all police agencies, across Canada and internationally, where the service is not available. It may be utilized at any time by contacting NCMPUR.

Facial Reconstruction

Facial reconstruction is a unique alternative when all other investigative techniques have been exhausted. In cases of unidentified human remains, facial reconstructions can be created based on ante mortem photographs or a skull. These reconstructions can be in the form of a two-dimensional

drawing or a three-dimensional model (i.e., sculptures made of clay or other material; or more recently, high-resolution computer-generated images). These visual representations could provide the stimuli that eventually lead to the positive identification of the unidentified remains.

Forensic Artists

Forensic artists create visual representations that can be used for investigative or court purposes. Within this field are such skills as composite drawing, crime scene sketching, image modification and image identification, courtroom drawings, demonstrative evidence, and post-mortem and facial approximation aids. Police forces across Canada have full-time or part-time forensic artists available for consultation.

F.9 Legal

Investigators may consider contacting their provincial Coroner's office to inquire about their services and investigative options. A coroner's warrant may increase access to additional information that is not available through typical law enforcement channels. Please contact the provincial office in your jurisdiction for advice.

F.10 Media

Utilizing Social Media for Case Promotion

There are many ways in which investigators can use social media to assist with missing persons and unidentified remains (MP/UR) cases. In particular, the potentially wide reach of social media may help to generate new leads and to provide the public with the opportunity to contact law enforcement with any information that they may have. Most police services in Canada have a social media presence in the form of an official Facebook or Twitter account. Investigators should contact their service's communications department for further advice and options for promoting their case through social media. There are many Facebook groups and Twitter accounts dedicated to disseminating information about MP/URs. Once information has been disseminated, Facebook and Twitter users can "share" or "retweet" the images and information to their friends to spread the word about a case. On several occasions in the past, the NCMPUR held national social media campaigns featuring cases of Missing Persons, such as the Missing Women Campaign in October 2014.

Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers is a non-profit, locally run program that brings together the public, police and media. It allows for individuals to anonymously assist in solving local crimes. Information is provided anonymously through a TIPS line, by text message, and online in order to assist law enforcement. Crime Stoppers often post information on their websites regarding missing persons who have disappeared in their area. This program can be found in all provinces across Canada and has proven to be successful in solving a multitude of crimes. Anyone in Canada can call 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) and they will be connected to their closest locally operated Crime Stoppers program. Investigators should consider submitting their case to their local Crime Stoppers organization.

F.11 Investigation of Clothing and Personal items

For clothing and other personal items, it may be possible to obtain information relating to dates of production and information pertaining to distribution (e.g., location of origin, retail outlets, point of sale). Please refer to the following websites for more information.

CA Identification Number Search through the Competition Bureau

http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/h_02575.html

Canadian Anti-counterfeiting Network

<http://www.cacn.ca>

Canadian Intellectual Property Council

<http://www.ipcouncil.ca>

International Anti-counterfeiting Coalition

<http://www.iacc.org>

F.12 Other specialties

Spectral Imagery

Landfill Specialist

Animal specialist - predation and scavenging

Bank information, financial institution, credit card companies – financial transaction tracing -
Equifax/Transunion

CATSA – air travel

Intelligence/IT support - IP tracing

Homeland Security – US travel

Vehicle tracking – ONStar

Inmate phone call recording network

Human Trafficking unit

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