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DEPLOYMENT OF NORWEGIAN DVI-TEAM AFTER TERROR ATTACK IN ALGERIE 2013

Sigrid Ingeborg Kvaal

** Institute of Clinical Dentistry, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Oslo, Norway*

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Background: The Norwegian DVI-team, formed in 1975, have responsibility for identification of Norwegian citizens who die in accidents at home or abroad. In January 2013 an oil installation at In Amenas, Algeria, was attacked by terrorists and more than 30 foreigners were killed among them 5 Norwegians. The DVI-team was asked to assist the Norwegian Embassy in Algiers with the identification of the Norwegian victims.

Methods: The presentation will evaluate dental equipment, transport, access to bodies, facilities for examination and integration and use of forensic odontologists in the DVI-team.

Results: The prepacked DVI-equipment was in large metal containers which were too heavy for transport as luggage and had to be sent as diplomatic cargo. This was a disadvantage as the equipment for forensic examination arrived several days after the DVI-team. All necessary equipment, including the dental handheld x-ray machine were sealed by the Foreign Office as diplomatic goods and this simplified entry and passage through Algerian customs.

In the beginning access to and examination of the bodies was restricted, but after a short time international groups were formed under the supervision of the Norwegian DVI-team and the British counter terrorism command (SO15). Despite delegations from many countries there were only two dentists, both from Norway. The working conditions were simple and lighting especially for dental examination insufficient. One power socket in the examination room restricted the use of electrical equipment and simple aids like extension leads, adaptors and extra light sources would have been useful. The portable X-ray machine was good and efficient, and digital post mortem pictures an advantage as retake was easy.

Dental AM-material included dental records from UK, Japan and Malaysia, but only the Norwegian records had been transferred to the Interpol form. The x-ray quality varied from digital radiographs which were downloaded on computers or Ipad to poor quality photocopies but all comparison could be made in the mortuary. This greatly speeded up the identification. For the Norwegian citizens the Interpol forms were filled in but for the UK and one of the Malaysian citizens letters explaining the findings were written to the coroner. The bodies were released by the Algerian authorities when the DVI-team's findings corresponded with the manual DNA-

comparison from the Algerian forensic team and accepted by the individual national authorities and families supported by documentation from the forensic team.

Conclusion: *The forensic odontologists made a substantial contribution to the identification of the victims aided by prepacked instrument-kits and tools. Transport as diplomatic courier was a great help. When a DVI-team is deployed in a foreign country they are guests in that country and their work is to aid the national forensic team.*

KEYWORDS: Forensic Odontology, Mass disasters, Terror Attack, DVI.

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