

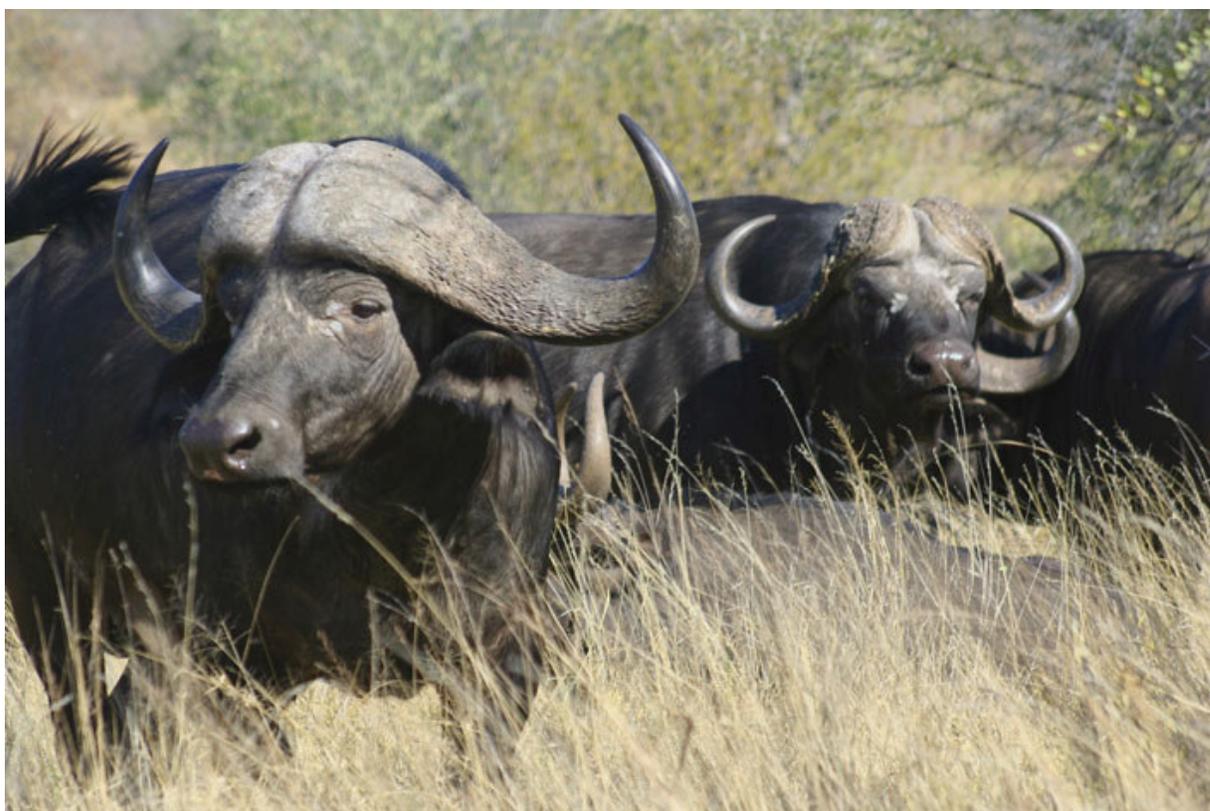


# NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR FORENSIC ODONTO-STOMATOLOGY

## Nr.2

August 2007



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## Editor's page



Dear Colleagues

It has been an exciting time for me and my husband as we were blessed with the birth of our first child Natanya, a 2,91kg, 48 cm baby girl. Although nearly a month too early, she is a healthy happy baby and now almost 9 weeks old. I can slowly get back to my usual duties.

Unfortunately there have not been many letters, comments or interesting stories from the National Societies. I again want to invite you all to contribute to the newsletter as its success is very much dependant on you. Without news, stories or cases from the members of your society there really is not much reason to send out a newsletter regularly as it will contain only information from South Africa!

I want to congratulate Dr Geoff Craig on his appointment as our new editor. I am sure that it will be exciting times for him and we are honoured to have him! Good luck on this huge task from all of us!

Best wishes to all

Sonja C. Boy

**Editor: IOFOS Newsletter**

## Presidents Page



All is on track for our “African IOFOS” meeting which will take place in November. The program covers a wide spectrum of forensic dental subjects and promises to stimulate both experienced and new members of the discipline. The programme can be downloaded from our web page [www.IOFOS.eu](http://www.IOFOS.eu).

I encourage those who have still not registered to come and enjoy some of our famous South African hospitality and meet likeminded colleagues in the shadow of Table Mountain.

I am extremely happy to announce that Dr Geoffrey Craig from the University of Sheffield, UK will be taking over as editor of the Journal of Forensic Odonto-Stomatology as from January 2008. As many of you may know, Geoff will be responsible for transforming the journal from a paper-based format to a fully electronic online publication. I wish him well in his endeavours, and encourage members to support the journal. A session has been put aside at our Cape Town conference to meet Geoff and discuss matters pertaining to the journal. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Helen James and her team for all the hard work and dedication that they have put into the journal over the years. Well done, your efforts have not gone unnoticed.

I would like to wish our news letter editor, Sonja well on the birth of her daughter, Natanya, who nearly arrived during an Oral Biology lecture. This newsletter will in fact be sent out during Sonja’s maternity leave, and we thank her for her unselfish dedication.

See you all in Cape Town,

Herman Bernitz

**President: IOFOS**

## From the National Societies

### Forensic Dentistry in Italy

Forensic dentistry in Italy is a relatively young, but growing discipline. Forensic pathologists have always paid some attention to odontology, but it has only been in the last few years, with the direct involvement of dentists, that the contributions this area of dentistry can make have become recognized in forensics. The main involvement of forensic dentists is related to legal evaluation linked to traumatology and/or malpractice. In this regard there is an increase in the number of dental malpractice disputes, and this emphasises the need for a proper education and training in legal dentistry.

Training is partially covered by some private courses organized by one of the National Association of Dentists (ANDI) and by one-year university courses, such as the ones in Chieti, Florence and Milan. Research in forensic odontology is carried out by the aforementioned Universities but also at Bari and Macerata. Aspects of identification, dental anthropology and age estimation are carried out by some very committed researchers such as Prof. Cristina Cattaneo, BSc, MD, MA, PhD (Milan), prof. Vilma Pinchi, DDS (Florence), Dr. R. Cameriere, MD, PhD (Macerata), Prof. F. Introna, MD and prof. G. Di Vella, MD, PhD (Bari). In these University groups the growing interests in forensics among dentists has contributed to the development of several research projects nationally and internationally and this in turn has given birth to a generation of young forensic odontologists like myself.

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001 in USA and the South East Asian Tsunami in 2004, the relevant Italian authorities have modified their approach to the identification process, and have begun to discuss the critical role that dentistry could play in future mass disasters. In 2006 the Italian police finally inaugurated 10 national DVI teams, with experts in forensic odontology. Unfortunately at the moment however, there are no full time positions for dentists within the DVI teams. The arrival of large number of migrants in the South of Italy, many of which are unaccompanied minors, have allowed for the first time the direct involvement of forensic odontologists in the process of age assessment together with forensic pathologist. This phenomenon also raises other ethical issues with regards to the identification of those who drown at sea prior to their arrival in at the Italian coast.

The air disaster at Linate Airport Milan, in 2001, the unidentified victims of migratory flows, age assessment of unaccompanied minors, local investigations on domestic violence and legal dental experts in dental malpractice suits are just some examples of the involvement of forensic odontology in Italy.

There are two national Societies for forensic dentistry (SIOF, Società Italiana di Odontoiatria Forense and SIOLA, Società Italiana di Odontoiatria Legale e Assicurativa). I can estimate that no more than 300-400 dentists in total are involved in legal dental matters. The main field of involvement, as previously stated, is as an expert witness in Court for dental legal matters and dental malpractice. Of these only a very few are involved in forensic odontology in the wider sense and in university research.

Italian forensic odontology is moving forward thanks to national scientific Societies, certain Universities and forensic odontology study groups (for example the so called Pro.Of. "Progetto Odontoiatria Forense" lead by prof. G.A. Norelli, MD and prof. V. Pinchi, DDS founded in 2006), with forensic odontologists taking the lead along side forensic pathologists in the international involvement of the forensic dental community.

Emilio Nuzzolese, DDS, PhD

Vice President

Italian Society of Legal and Insurance Dentistry

[www.siola.eu](http://www.siola.eu)

# IOFOS 2007 CONGRESS

**BREAKWATER LODGE  
V&A WATERFRONT  
CAPE TOWN  
SOUTH AFRICA**



**20 – 23  
November 2007**

Website: [www.IOFOS.eu](http://www.IOFOS.eu)

**Registration:**

Registration after 31 July 2007:

R4500

Accompanying person: R1000

Registration Includes:

Conference fees and venue facility

Teas, juices, confectioneries and lunches during the conference period

Tuesday evening cocktail party

Handouts

**African Evening:**

Thursday 22 July 2007, R350 per head.  
Experience something different!

**Account:**

African IOFOS meeting

Account number: 62121010748

Branch code: 270150

Swift code: FIRNZAJJ

Bank Address: First National Bank

19 O.R. Tambo st.

Middelburg

Mpumalanga

South Africa

1050

(Must be transferred in SA Rand)



**Accommodation:**

Each delegate to organise his/her own accommodation: Please see information on website.  
There are many hotels within walking distance from the conference venue.

### Journal of Forensic Odonto-Stomatology



As promised previously we are pleased to say that the new Editor can now be introduced as Dr Geoff Craig, Reader and Consultant in Oral Pathology at the School of Clinical Dentistry, University of Sheffield, UK.

Dr Craig has practised as a Forensic Odontologist for over 35

years and has been a Forensic Dental Adviser to the UK Home Office throughout this time. His experience extends to over 1000 individual cases of dental identification. He also enjoys an international reputation in the specialist area of bite mark investigation having examined and reported on over 350 cases. In recent times he appeared for the prosecution in the celebrated trial and re-trial involving certain Leeds United footballers and others. He is in demand as a speaker on the subject both in the UK and overseas. He is currently President of the British Association for Forensic Odontology and has been its Academic Advisor for the past two years. He also sits on the British Medical Association's Forensic Medicine Committee and is a member of the UK Government's DVI Steering Group. His forensic research interests have focused on bite mark analysis and he is currently supervising a PhD student who is quantifying the frequency of specified dental anatomical features in the adult human anterior dentition. Dr Craig has acted as a referee for numerous peer-reviewed forensic journals but this will be his first role as Editor. He will enhance the profile and impact of JFOS and will be instrumental in converting the present hard copy format to an electronic publication.

Good luck Dr Craig, we are honoured to welcome you!

## Interesting Cases

### **Report: Air Kenya disaster, Africa**

**By H Bernitz**

A South Africa DVI (Disaster Victim Identification) team recently travelled to Douala, Cameroun following the Air Kenya aircraft accident which claimed 114 lives, including those of at least 9 South Africans. The DVI team was tasked with the identification of the mortal remains of the crash victims. The team consisted of Professors Herman Bernitz and At Ligthelm (forensic odontologists), Drs Servaas Rossouw and Linda Liebenberg (forensic pathologists), a team of police fingerprint experts and a mortuary technician. The DVI team was transported by courtesy of Air Kenya, and travelled to Cameroun via Nairobi. The team worked side by side with two forensic pathologists from Kenya, and members of Blake Emergency consultants from the United Kingdom. The extreme heat and humidity of this West African country added to the logistic problems of the exercise. As little English is spoken or understood in Cameroun, the team was largely dependant on the French translators supplied by the South African High Commission in Cameroun. The high levels of co-operation between the respective government departments contributed to the smooth running of the operation. A high powered Cameroun delegation which included the Minister of Health visited the mortuary to thank the DVI team for the assistance rendered.

All possible methods for identifying the remains were utilised during the autopsies, which included fingerprinting, DNA sampling, dental examinations including x-rays and matching of clothing and other artefacts such as rings, watches etc. Toxicological and histological analysis was performed in selected cases as part of the forensic investigation. PlassData was used for matching the AM and PM dental records.

The forensic team expresses its gratitude to all instances who contributed to the huge success of the expedition, and offer condolences to those who lost loved ones.