

NOTICE

REGARDING THE RETENTION OF BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES AND DNA EXTRACTS

In the exercise of its functions the ICMP processes large amounts of personal data on missing persons and their families, including sensitive personal data, such as biological samples and DNA extracts.

ICMP applies stringent data protection measures to such data. In Particular, ICMP does not make use of personal data for purposes other than those for which it was provided. ICMP is also committed to retaining personal data no longer than necessary to achieve those purposes.

In June 2014, ICMP adopted a revised Retention Policy, which specifies how long ICMP will retain biological samples and DNA extracts, amongst other matters. Henceforth, ICMP will retain biological samples (e.g. blood samples provided by relatives of the missing) and DNA extracts for 5 years - if:

- DNA match reports for these samples have been issued; and
- There are no other reported missing persons who could be identified by the use of the samples or DNA extract.

The revised Retention Policy applies to all biological samples currently kept by ICMP. Retention of samples and extracts for a period of time after a DNA match report has been made is beneficial because it permits the possibility to re-examine the case, should there be any reason. However, it is not necessary or warranted to retain samples and extracts indefinitely. Therefore, relatives who have reported missing persons, and who provided DNA reference samples to ICMP, should expect their biological samples to be disposed of in early April 2015 - provided:

- ICMP has issued DNA match reports for all reported missing relatives for which a sample has been provided; and
- Five years have passed since ICMP has issued these DNA match reports

If, for instance, a DNA reference sample was provided in 2001 and two persons were reported missing, ICMP will dispose of the reference sample, provided that both missing persons have been located and identified with the help of the reference sample before April 2010. If only one of the two missing persons was located and identified by that date, and the other only in 2014, for instance, ICMP would dispose of the reference sample in April 2020.

ICMP will continue to retain records of DNA match reports and the scientific data that forms the basis of these reports. ICMP will not release that data to any third party for any purpose without the express consent of those concerned by the data.

Relatives who have reported missing persons and provided personal data to ICMP, including DNA reference samples, may withdraw their data and reference samples at any time before DNA match reports based on their data have been issued. Withdrawing personal data may mean that missing persons will not be found or identified.

ICMP's POLICY ON THE RETENTION OF DATA, RECORDS AND PHYSICAL EVIDENCE can be accessed [here](#).

ICMP's POLICY ON THE PERSONAL DATA PROCESSING AND PROTECTION can be found [here](#).