



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FORENSIC SCIENCE

NIST
National Institute of
Standards and Technology
U.S. Department of Commerce

Electronic Networking of Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices in the United States (MECIN)

Subcommittee

Medicolegal Death Investigation

Type of Work Product

Adjudication of Public Comments on Draft Document

Public Comment Summary

There was one public comments received. Additionally, comments were provided by subcommittee members after the meeting suggesting minor editorial changes or with language choice in the document. Although these concerns were not reduced to a written public comment, it was the decision of the subcommittee to also address those concerns raised in the adjudication process.

Adjudication Process Used by Subcommittee

Following the April NCFS meeting, the subcommittee used its on-line project management system to review changes made to the document by the project leader, such changes based on comments of Commissioners and Subcommittee members following the meeting. The entire networking project group reviewed the proposed changes, agreed to them and voted to pass the document to the full MDI Subcommittee for approval.

Itemized Issues and Adjudication Summary

1. Inquiry regarding the intent and vision on the networking system.

One public comment was received: "A model already exists with the NAME LISTSERV managed by Emory University and Randy Hanzlick. It is voluntary and available to NAME members only. If your vision is more comprehensive and includes real time data sharing it would require direct data interface to avoid dual key entry. Otherwise participation would low because of the increase workload of dual data entry."

The Subcommittee's response is as follows:

The MECIN is not envisioned as a listserv and the target audience would be broader than that of the NAME Listserv. The MECIN would not be intended as a data collection system, so the issue of dual key entry is not relevant. Medical Examiners and coroners would need to access the MECIN system and/or review information which is distributed through the system, but the need for replies or input of information would probably be minimal. With this clarification, we see no need to modify the recommendation in this regard.

Other changes to the original document

The 8th bullet on page one was changed to “The International Association of Chiefs of Police and/or other law enforcement organizations” to be more inclusive. This was based on the suggestion of a Commissioner.

The 9th bullet on page one was changed to “An entity which has developed on-line databases, preferably familiar with medical examiners and coroners and their work” to broaden the scope of qualified entities while emphasizing importance of knowledge about the work of medical examiner and coroners. This was suggested by a project group member.

An additional bullet point was added on page two: “How social media and other emerging technology might be utilized to facilitate the system and communication.” This was based on the suggestion of a Commissioner.

On page three, NIST and NTSB were added to those agencies which would be interested in the networking project. This was suggested by a project group member.

On page four, middle paragraph, “For example, it could provide a vehicle to conduct national or regional short term surveillance for conditions of public health or public safety” was added to clarify that the system could be used for data collection in special circumstances. This change was suggested by a project group member.

On page four, item #1 was modified to include “information to facilitate training, accreditation, and certification,” and was suggested by a project group member to tie in previous MDI-Subcommittee recommendations on these topics.

On page five, the one public comment was included as was the Subcommittee’s response so that readers of the document would know of the comment and how it was addressed.

None of the above changes impact the document in a substantive manner.