

# UK Missing Persons Bureau Newsletter

## iFIND Launch

On 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016 the Bureau released iFIND, a much anticipated search tool for Police Search Advisors and other search trained personnel. This document is inspired by the 2007 booklet issued by Grampian Police – 'Missing Persons: Understanding, Planning and Responding' (often referred to as 'Grampian').

Prior to release, iFIND was evaluated using a selection of new cases to test the 'hit rate' as well as compare to Grampian. Several PoLSA's attended an evaluation exercise where they worked through cases using iFIND. This was followed by a focus

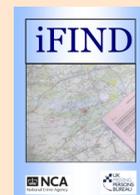
group where they discussed various aspects of using the data.

The case comparison analysis showed many similarities between Grampian and iFIND. Its ease of use means we expect search personnel who are already trained in Grampian to be able to use iFIND. There are a number of new categories which have been added as PoLSAs have been finding these categories are becoming more frequent in cases they are working on. The consistency of layout allows for a smooth transition to incorporate understanding of these new categories into PoLSAs' knowledge base. The findings of this evaluation adds rigour to

Grampian, previously not evaluated, and provides confidence in the use of iFIND as an additional search tool. iFIND received

endorsement from the NCA director for CEOP Command, Johnny Gwynne, and the National Police Leads for Missing Persons, Search and Search & Rescue. A formal launch is scheduled to take place on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at the College of Policing, Ryton with our colleagues in the Police National Search Centre.

You can access iFIND by using the following link - <http://missingpersons.police.uk/en/resources/ifind>



## Migrant Children Located

The Missing Children Team were tasked to assist the Home Office Visa and Immigrations Department (UKVI) in trying to trace 17 Somali children who entered the UK between 1999 and 2006. From initial work carried out by UKVI, one investigation was identified as involving two related children whose guardian was believed to be residing in the Birmingham area. In conjunction with UKVI

and West Midlands Police, the guardian was located and informed authorities that she believed the children to be living in Canada. The MCT worked with international colleagues to develop an investigative strategy and understand the feasibility of locating the two children who were now in their mid teens. A formal request for assistance was then sent to Canada

through Interpol. The children were identified as having entered Canada on the 1st July 2004 with Canadian Passports. After ascertaining this and conducting further enquiries, the children were located, safe and well in Ontario. The search for the other children continues.

## Child Rescue Alert (CRA)

Missing People launched a two week Child Rescue Alert campaign last month, starting on the 15<sup>th</sup> February, with the aim of raising public awareness of the tool and increasing sign-up to the text service. The campaign was supported by significant media coverage.

Stephen Fry, a celebrity supporter, voiced a short animation to highlight the key message that 'You don't have to be a superhero to save a child's life'. This campaign has led to approximately 40,000 new sign-ups to receive the service. Additionally there were key

events arranged throughout the weeks including two parliamentary events to engage ministerial support and the first CRA Awards Reception to recognise those who had made significant contributions to the development of CRA. Congratulations to all the winners!



## Meet an Intelligence Officer (IO)

### Liz Gillies



**Q:** Tell us about your Role?

**A:** The main role I have is to assist Cheshire, Merseyside, Staffordshire, West Midlands, and a couple of Metropolitan Police Force areas in their search for missing people and unidentified bodies. This involves keeping our database up to date with those who go missing, following up with the police forces about specific cases, and conducting open source research to assist with searches. Another role IO's

have is to promote the work that the UK MPB do by giving presentations at conferences and meetings. I am also working at building up a portfolio on mental health, so that I can be a point of contact within the UK MPB.

**Q:** What do you enjoy the most about your work?

**A:** One of the things that I most enjoy is helping progress investigations. It's great to be able to help forces, and assist them in finding individuals. When the force gets back to me, and thanks me for my input it makes what I'm doing worth it.

**Q:** What hobbies do you have outside of work?

**A:** In my spare time I enjoy learning about wine. I have a higher certificate from the Wine and Spirit Education Trust, and so enjoy the theoretical not just

the practical side of wine tasting. I love travelling, and have been lucky enough to travel with work, but I enjoy exploring new places and cultures. I'm a member of a local tennis club although I'm waiting on the weather to pick up before playing regularly.

**Q:** How did you get into Law Enforcement?

**A:** After working as a diamond sorter, and then in science working in a number of chemical laboratories, I emigrated to Australia. When I moved back to the UK I became interested in working in Law Enforcement and managed to get my foot in the door after applying for a job advertised in a newspaper. I took my current role as I wanted to be actively helping people rather than monitoring the 'bad guys'.

## Upcoming Items to Note

### Research Group

UK MPB, CC Mike Veale (Wiltshire, National Police Lead), Portsmouth University and the College of Policing (Research Evidence Partnerships) are planning on holding a research day in late May/early June. This will be an opportunity for researchers, academic partners and individuals to come together and discuss present and future research on the missing people phenomenon. It will be a great opportunity to share ideas and resources. Further information will be available at the beginning of April if you are interested in joining.

### Data Report

The Data Report for 2013/14 and 2014/15 is due to be published shortly. It will contain analysis on data regarding missing persons, including demographics, risk assessment, the issue of missing from care, links between missing and Child Sexual Exploitation, and unidentified bodies.



*Happy Easter*



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