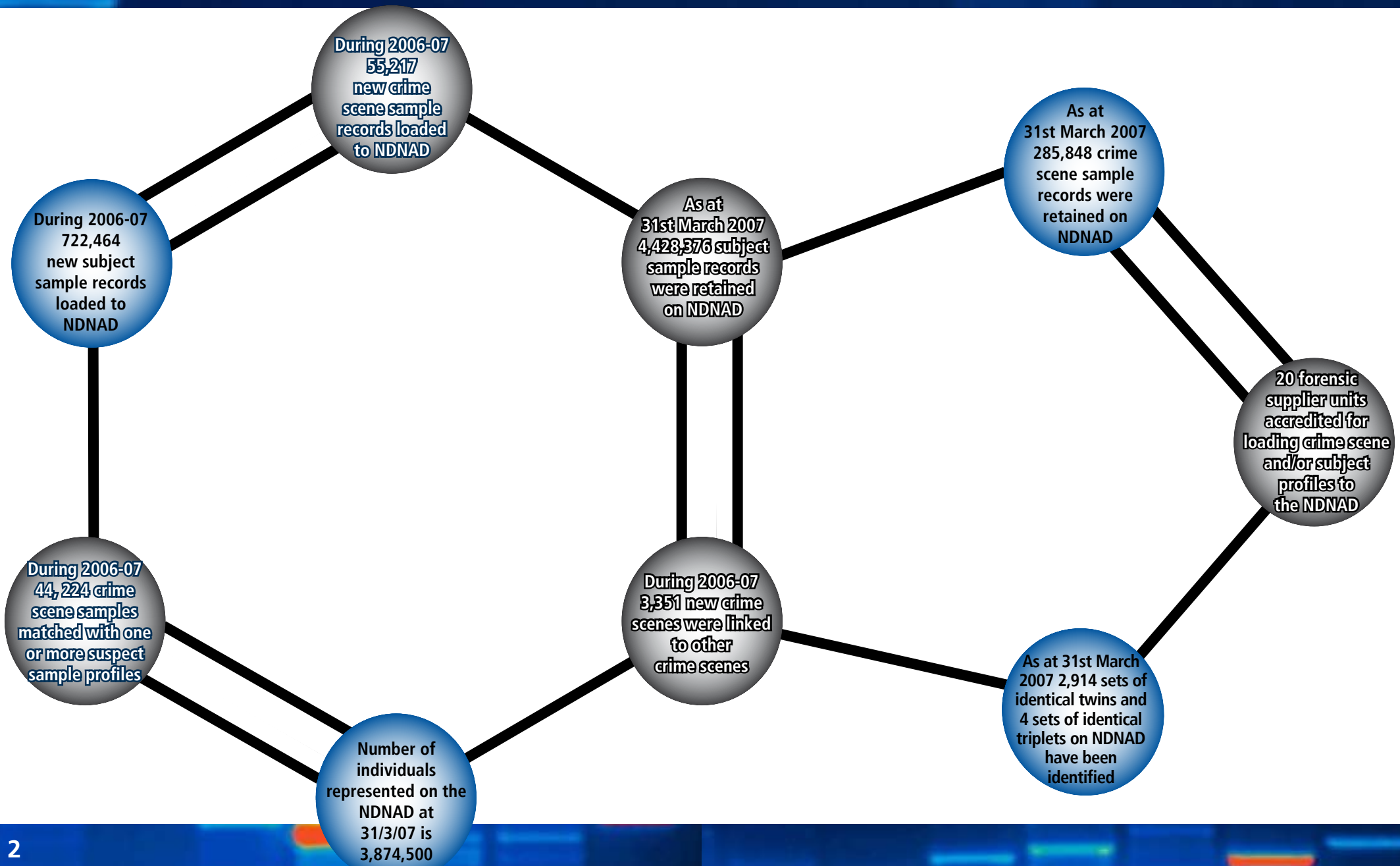


**NATIONAL DNA DATABASE
ANNUAL REPORT 2006 - 2007**

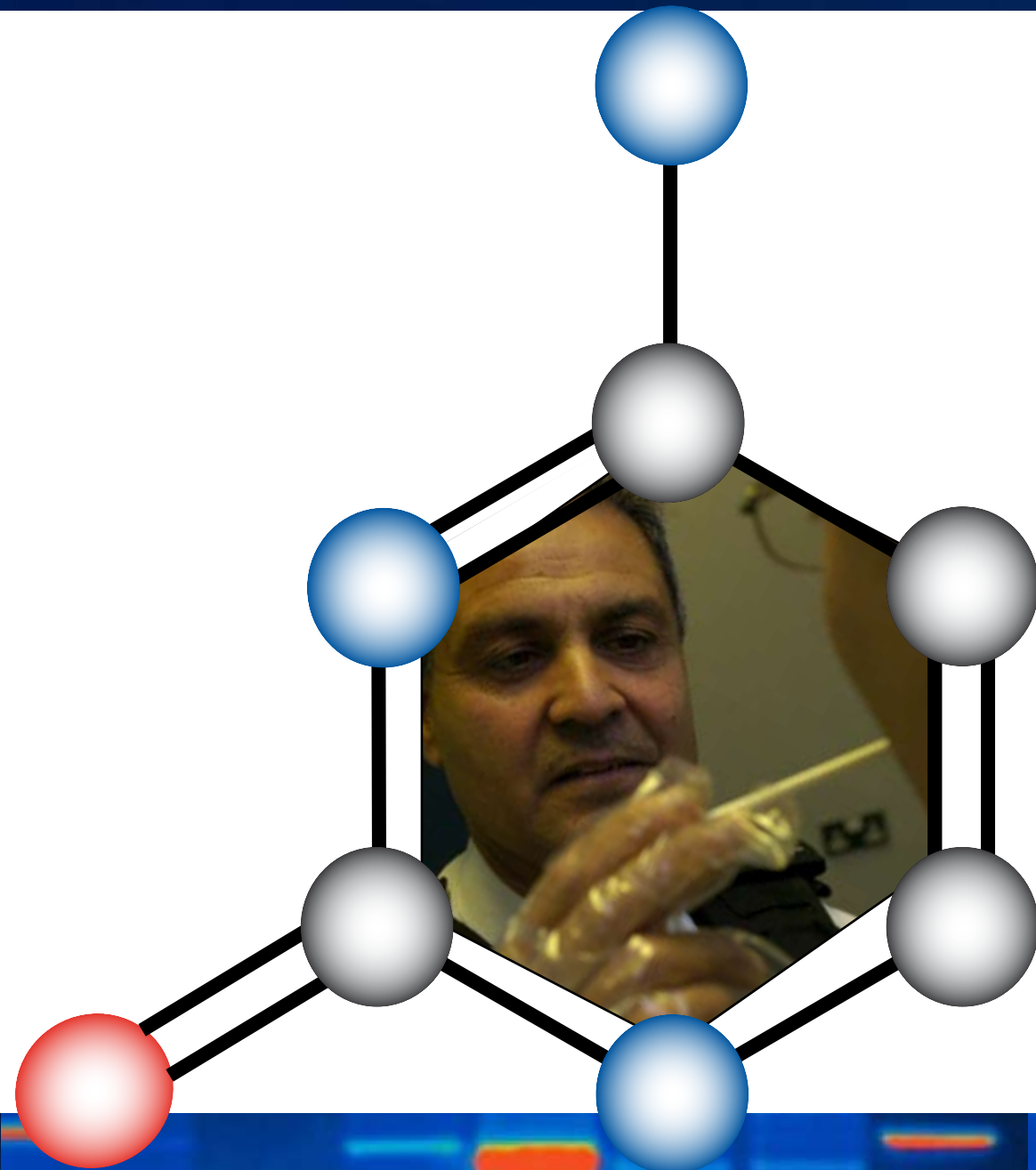


National DNA Database (NDNAD) Key Facts & figures

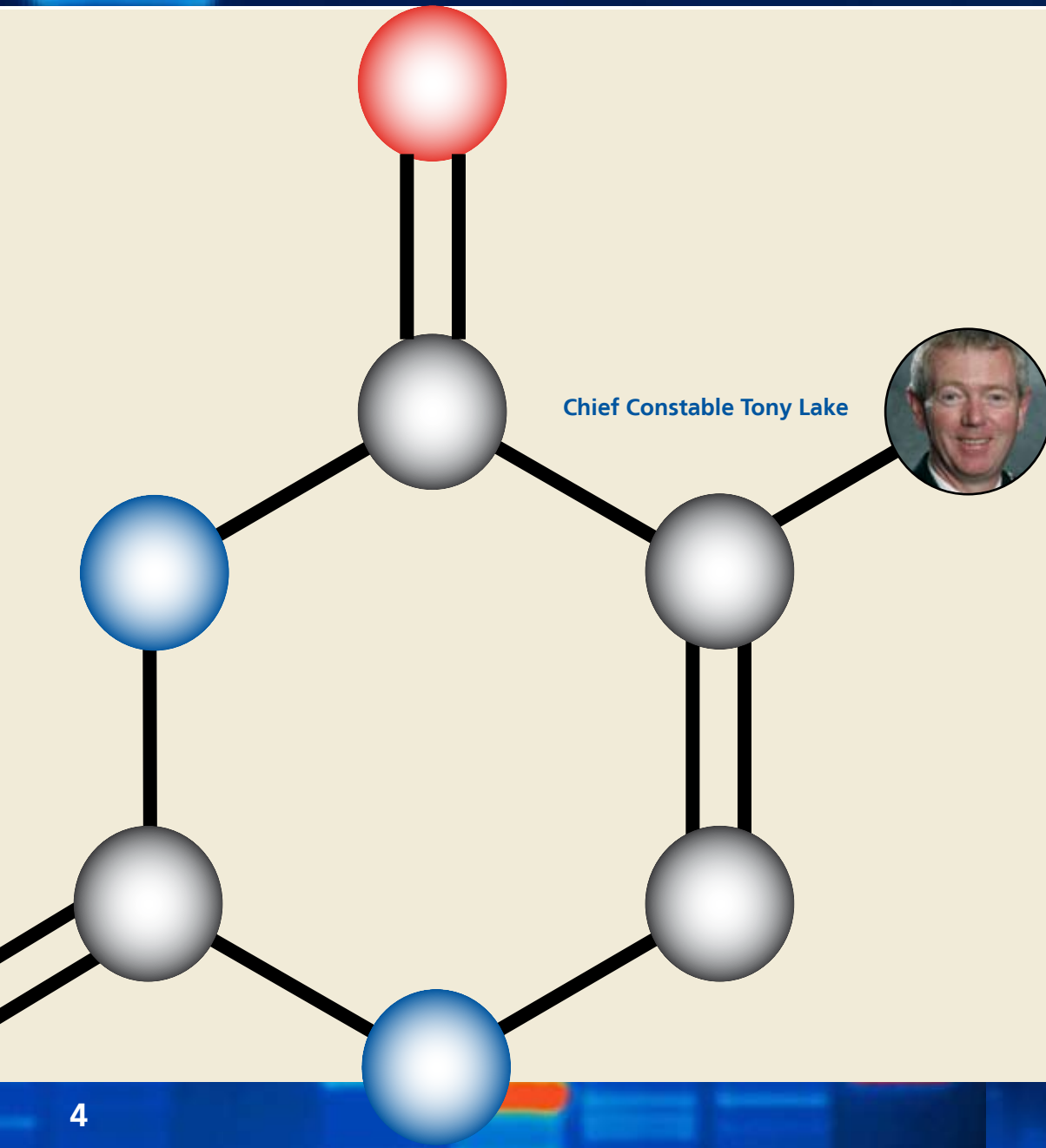


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Note The National DNA Database is a registered trademark	



Chairman's Introduction



Chief Constable Tony Lake

The UK National DNA Database (NDNAD), established in 1995, continues to provide the police service with a valuable intelligence tool. There are currently 4.1 million individuals represented on the Database, which makes it the largest in the world per head of population. In 2006/2007 it provided the police with more than 41,000 matches to DNA samples taken from crime scenes and helped to solve some of the most serious crimes.

The benefits of DNA science are not only in detecting the guilty, but also in eliminating the innocent from inquiries, focusing the direction of investigations, which increases police efficiency, and in building public confidence that elusive offenders may be detected and brought to justice as quickly as possible.

During the past year, there has been an unprecedented level of interest in the National DNA Database, which has manifested itself in a huge amount of press coverage and a significant number of Parliamentary Questions. I welcome this level of scrutiny, as it is imperative that the use of DNA as evidence in the criminal justice process continues to enjoy a high level of confidence amongst the public. Furthermore, it serves to add to the important debate that will help to gauge how the Database should develop in years to come. The invaluable role the Database plays in detecting crime, and therefore the powerful effect it has on victims, must continue to be balanced and proportionate to the general rights and freedoms that individuals enjoy.

I am delighted to announce that the Government has now created an Ethics Group, which will provide Ministers with independent ethical advice on the operation and practice of the Database. This followed a recommendation from the 2005 Report of the Commons Science and Technology Committee. Professor Peter Hutton has been selected as Chair of the Group, which will meet quarterly, and will publish its findings. The Ethics Group held its inaugural meeting on 3 September 2007, and at the request of the Strategy Board has already commenced valuable work into the process in which volunteers consent to have their DNA put on the Database.

The membership of the Database Strategy Board has also been enhanced. The Board continues to be made up of representatives from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Home Office, the Association of Police Authorities and the Human Genetics Commission. However, I am pleased to welcome colleagues from the National Policing Improvement Agency and also the Forensic Science Quality Regulation Unit. These appointments will serve to improve the efficiency and effectiveness in which the police service uses DNA evidence and will strengthen existing arrangements for assuring the quality of forensic science services.

The increasing ease of international travel and communication has resulted in a higher incidence of criminal activity crossing national borders. The sharing of DNA information

internationally provides criminal justice agencies with an important tool to tackle such crime. Since the UK presidencies of both the European Union and G8 in 2005, the UK has led work to make such cooperation more efficient and effective. I feel that the National DNA Database should play an integral part in maximising the sharing of DNA in the future.

This annual report details the progress we have made during the past year in achieving our strategic aims. Whilst there is still work to do to improve the value of the DNA Database, there is no doubt that it has developed into a highly effective tool for preventing, reducing and detecting crime.

Chief Constable Tony Lake (QPM)
Lincolnshire Police
Chairman of the National DNA Database Strategy Board



Foreword

by Chief Constable Peter Neyroud QPM



With the creation of the National Policing Improvement Agency on 1st April 2007, there have been dramatic changes in the national landscape for forensic science. For the first time, a new National Agency has responsibility for all aspects of the development of forensic science.

As part of this role, the NPIA has taken over Custodianship of the National DNA Database. This is a key responsibility for the NPIA. The Database continues to grow in significance as a national intelligence resource in support of policing. The Custodian's role in ensuring execution of the quality systems for protecting the integrity of the Database is therefore ever more important.

The Database has revolutionised the way the police work to protect the public. It provides forces with more than 3,500 matches each month, including some of the most serious crimes. The majority of the active criminal population now has its DNA recorded and police forces use DNA profiles to solve thousands of cases every year.

Undoubtedly the use of DNA and other forensic and biometric techniques will continue to grow. That is why the development of a fully integrated national forensics strategy for the police service is so important. Following its establishment, the NPIA will take a lead in this area.

However, we increasingly need to ensure that the information we hold on all police information systems is managed responsibly and within agreed guidelines if we are to maintain the trust and support of the public. The NPIA DNA Database Custodian Unit has a key role to play here, ensuring the ongoing quality and integrity of the information held and making sure that the suppliers of DNA services are managed effectively.

Chief Constable Peter Neyroud QPM
CEO

National DNA Operations Group



The National DNA Operations Group under the chair of Assistant Chief Constable David Shaw from West Midlands Police is focused on tactical and operational delivery of DNA services throughout the police and scientific environments.

The forum is represented by experts from the police service, National DNA Database Custodian Team, ACPO Criminal Records Office, Suppliers and other key stakeholders. The group reports directly through the chair to the National DNA Strategy Board and are available to undertake work on behalf of that group.

During this financial year, critical work streams have included a number of key initiatives to deliver improved processes and business developments in the area of DNA.

The ACPO DNA Good Practice Guide was developed by the group in 2004, and is now in the process of being revised to incorporate new operational developments.

An essential aspect of this revision includes an equality impact assessment to ensure that the views and interests of all diverse and minority groups within society are equally and fairly reflected.

Performance monitoring of DNA related activity within both the police and scientific environment is a major aspect to the work of the group. This essentially ensures a consistent approach to all business processes.

The group also has responsibility for tactical maintenance of the Database, and this is achieved with the wide representation of all stakeholders including the National DNA Custodian Unit.

Some key areas of work undertaken by the group during this year have included the continued development of International exchange of DNA Profiles and the complicated mechanisms to achieve this, both legally and technically.

Likewise, opportunities around alternative DNA storage media have been explored and potential changes have been identified.

A number of initiatives have been taken forward by the unit including a review of the volunteer DNA procedures and improvements to the Police Elimination Database.

All of this work has been underpinned by a robust communication strategy, which ensures the wider police and criminal justice partners are fully involved and appraised of continuous improvement to both business process and procedural changes.

We look forward to continuing this success during the forthcoming year.

David Shaw
Assistant Chief Constable
Chair of the National DNA Operations Group.

Custodian's Overview

*custodian/kustodi n/ • noun -
a person who has responsibility for or looks after something*

The role of National DNA Database Custodian is concerned with ensuring the highest standards of integrity in the management of the Database. Given the increasing scale of the Database and level of scrutiny and public interest in it, the role of Custodian is ever more important in terms of helping to maintain public confidence. I took over this responsibility from Dr Bob Bramley at the beginning of the 2006-07 year. Bob is synonymous with the title of Custodian, having held the role since the Database was established in 1995. It is right to take this opportunity of paying tribute to the huge contribution that Bob has made, particularly in setting up the systems, procedures and standards of performance for the Database. The NDNAD has an enviable reputation nationally and internationally, and this owes much to the foundations that Bob laid down.

The NDNAD Custodian Unit moved away from the Forensic Science Service (FSS) shortly before the start of the 2006-07 year. This separation was essential, given the transformation of the FSS to a commercially oriented Government-Owned company and thus the importance of retaining oversight and management of the NDNAD within a public sector environment. Nonetheless, the vital role that the FSS have played in providing the scientific and technical fundamentals for the NDNAD must be acknowledged.

The year was another one of significant change and challenge for the Custodian Unit. Following the separation from the FSS, the Custodian became part of the Home Office, linked to the Forensic Science and Pathology Unit. Being part of the NPIA provides exciting opportunities to link DNA processes and provision of intelligence with other systems such as fingerprints. Equally, the NDNAD will benefit operationally from the NPIA's expertise in delivering critical national infrastructure such as the Police National Computer (PNC).

Our systems for protecting the integrity of the Database are at the heart of the Custodian Unit's activity. The Custodian Accreditation Service, which scrutinises the DNA analysis by forensic supplier laboratories, and the Data Quality and Integrity Team, which checks data quality between the NDNAD and the PNC, have both been strengthened during the year. The outcomes of their work as described elsewhere within this report, demonstrate just how valuable these systems are.

Day to day operational NDNAD services, as well as delivery of technical enhancements, have continued to be provided by the Forensic Science Service, but under the contract that was put in place at the time the Custodian was separated. The contractual framework

continued

has provided a more robust and structured approach to performance management in this area, and there has been a high level of satisfaction with the service from police users.

The continued successful operation of the National DNA Database depends upon the skill, professionalism and commitment of the staff concerned – both within the Custodian Unit and in the NDNAD area of the FSS. I thank them for all their contribution.

Michael J Prior
Custodian, National DNA Database

