

Triennial Review of the National DNA Database Ethics Group

The National DNA Database Ethics Group (NDNADEG) is an advisory non-departmental public body. The NDNADEG was established to provide independent advice on ethical issues surrounding the operations of the National DNA Database (NDNAD) to Home Office ministers and the National DNA Database Strategy Board.

The application of quality standards is important to national forensic science intelligence databases. Of particular importance is the NDNAD, which is administered by the Home Office and governed by the NDNAD Strategy Board.

The current priorities of the NDNADEG are to:

- advise on the implementation of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012;
- monitor, advise, and review the implementation of the deletion of profiles from the NDNAD;
- provide ethical advice on elimination databases;
- ensure all police and supplier databases containing DNA information are subject to robust governance requirements;
- provide support and advice on ethical matters to the Biometrics Commissioner and others as required;
- continue to monitor the various agreements, including the Prüm Treaty, for the international exchange of DNA data and the use of the NDNAD;
- monitor developments on crime scene DNA testing and other new technology;
- continue to monitor the treatment of children and young people in relation to DNA sampling and retention with a view to ensuring that they are safeguarded and that their distinct rights are recognised;
- continue to monitor and assess potential disproportionate or discriminatory effects of the use and operation of the NDNAD may have on ethnic minority groups and vulnerable people; and
- support the NDNAD Strategy Board in developing more transparent, ethical and user friendly information about the forensic use of DNA and the database.

The NDNADEG comprises members from different disciplines and professions led by an independent chair, all of whom are appointed by Home Office Ministers in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice.

Further information on the NDNADEG can be found on their [website](#).

Page 1

Page 1 of 3

- To what extent do you agree or disagree that there is a need for a body to provide advice
1. on ethical issues surrounding the operations of the National DNA Database to Home Office ministers?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Please explain your answer in the box below:

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics published a report
The report is available at <http://www.nuffieldbioethics>

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the advice should be independent of Government?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Members of the National DNA Database Ethics Group are appointed by ministers from outside government in a personal capacity, because of their skills and experience in a relevant field. To what extent do you agree or disagree that members should be appointed in a personal capacity?

3. When answering this question, please consider alternatives, such as members representing organisations, the private, voluntary or third sector, or government departments, and whether any of those alternatives might be more appropriate. The various alternatives are set out in more detail in the Cabinet Office document [Categories of Public Bodies: a guide for departments](#).

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

Please explain your answer in the box below:

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the role of the National DNA Database Ethics Group could be provided by a different organisation?

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly to disagree

Don't know

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the role of the National DNA Database Ethics Group could be provided in a different way, for example, from within a government department, or by the third/voluntary sector, or the private sector?

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

6. Are you aware of any other bodies that perform similar functions?

Yes

No

Don't know

If yes, please specify in the box below:

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the National DNA Database Ethics Group could be merged with a similar body?

Strongly agree

- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Please suggest one similar body with which the National DNA Database Ethics Group could be merged in the box below:

There are three key reasons why a non-departmental public body should exist at arm's length from government. In order to be a NDPB, a public body must have met at least one of the following three criteria:

- it performs a technical function
- its activities require political impartiality
- it needs to act independently to establish facts

8.

In 2010 the Government concluded that the National DNA Database Ethics Group should be retained on the basis that its activities need to be, and seen to be, delivered with absolute political impartiality.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the National DNA Database Ethics Group meets each of the criteria?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
it performs a technical function	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
its activities require political impartiality	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
it needs to act independently to establish facts	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please tell us why you feel the National DNA Database Ethics Group does or does not meet each of the criteria in the box below: