

CAPABILITY PROFILE MISSING PERSONS INVESTIGATIONS

Rationale

A legacy of conflict is that it results in numerous Missing People and many survivors without certain knowledge of their loved ones' fate and whereabouts. Closure is essential for survivors to move on with their lives and for successful reconciliation processes within the region. The recovery and identification of the dead is paramount to a more peaceful future. In any such operations, it is essential that the local population is involved in all the stages of the process.



Principles

When a team or teams are deployed to such regions, the following are essential:

- All teams use the same protocols and standard operating procedures;
- all teams must work to the highest standards;
- all teams should be multidisciplinary;
- all teams must have awareness training for such issues as health and safety, political, economic and cultural issues

and impact assessment;

- the teams must work closely with the organisation is responsible for the collection of ante-mortem data;
- all information gathered must be recorded thoroughly and treated confidentially.

Inforce Experience

Inforce core staff have worked in a number of different missing persons investigations, where the aim was not of a forensic nature with trials or tribunals following the scientific examinations, but where the exhumations and subsequent analysis of the remains was purely a humanitarian operation.



The identification of the victims was the overall objective of such operations. Any information gathered in the exhumation and analysis process was treated in complete confidence and handed over to the relevant local authorities.

Inforce assisted local communities in Iraq in 2003-4. We have assisted the Committee for Missing Persons on Cyprus with emergency exhumations (where building work or erosion threatened mass or single graves) as well with planning and establishing a long term project to recover the dead from the conflicts in the 1960s and 70s.
