

# CASE REPORT THE ROLE OF DENTAL RADIOGRAPHY IN AVIASTAR AIRPLANE CRASH VICTIM IDENTIFICATION

*by Muliaty Yunus*

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## CASE REPORT

### THE ROLE OF DENTAL RADIOGRAPHY IN AVIASTAR AIRPLANE CRASH VICTIM IDENTIFICATION

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#### Background

- Identification process on victims of airplane crash is difficult due to several conditions such as severe burn and dismembered body parts.
- One of the identification methods that can be used is dental identification, since human teeth are able to endure high temperature, making them intact even though other body parts are shattered
- Dental identification through dental radiography is performed by Craniofacial Superimposition Technique, which is to compare ante-mortem and post-mortem dental x-ray.
- Dental radiography as ante-mortem data is a crucial primary data. During the identification process, forensic odontologists need dental x-ray equipment that is light, safe, inexpensive, and practical to perform post-mortem radiological examination.

#### Objectives

To identify victims of airplane crash disaster with severe burn and cannot be identified visually by using dental radiography superimposition technique.

#### Case

An Aviastar airplane has been reported to fall at Mount Bajaja, Desa Ulu Salu, Kabupaten Luwu Utara, South Sulawesi at 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2015, 2.25 pm. There were 7 passengers and 3 flight crew, and all of them were reported dead with severe burn. DVI team from Bhayangkara Police Hospital collaborated with Forensic team from Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Dentistry Hasanuddin University to perform victim identification.

Ante-mortem data was collected from family and relatives, and were compared with post-mortem data. There was one dental panoramic photo which belonged to a 45-year-old male among the ante-mortem data. This ante-mortem dental radiography was compared to post-mortem dental radiography using dental radiography superimposition method.

#### Identification Method

Dental radiography superimposition is a process of identification by overlaying ante-mortem and post-mortem x-ray photos. The data are matched by evaluating their anatomical similarity of the dental profile.

#### Materials & Instruments

- Dental X-Ray Mobile Digital unit
- Laptop
- Ante-mortem dental panoramic x-ray (softcopy)
- Plastic sheet

- Toothbrush.

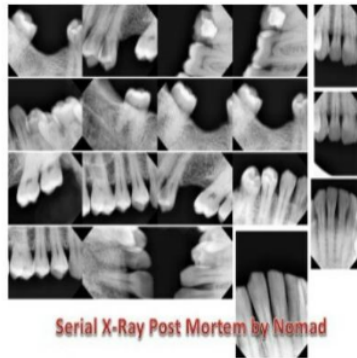
### Identification Process

#### A. Collecting post-mortem dental radiography

1. Teeth (maxillary and mandibular) were cleaned thoroughly using a toothbrush
2. Dental radiography was taken using periapical technique
  - a. Upper jaw (maxillary teeth)
    - The skull was positioned until the <sup>1</sup>occlusal surface of the maxillary teeth is parallel to the floor
    - X-ray sensor was placed on the region that would be photographed
    - Expose to all regions.
  - b. Lower jaw (mandibular teeth)
    - The skull was positioned until the <sup>1</sup>occlusal surface of the mandibular teeth is parallel to the floor
    - X-ray sensor was placed on the region that would be photographed
    - Expose to all regions.

#### B. Dental radiography superimposition process

Superimposition process was performed digitally by overlaying post-mortem dental radiography with ante-mortem dental x-ray and matching general features from both data. Next step was reduced the opacity of the overlaying photograph to show the features of the other photograph. The similarity was evaluated by checking the dental anatomical resemblance from both overlaying dental radiography.



Serial X-Ray Post Mortem by Nemad



## Conclusion

Victim identification can be performed through dental analysis using radiographic superimposition. Radiographic superimposition is able to identify victims with severe damage such as burn, decomposition, and skeletonization. This technique is effective and efficient for identifying a large number of disaster victim. Therefore, dental radiography superimposition method is one of the ideal methods to identify victims of disasters.

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