



# Victim ID expert in a new job

By police writer  
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A NSW police officer credited with making Australia a world leader in forensic science is joining a US disaster management company.

State Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) commander Detective Chief Inspector Mark Edwards has helped hundreds of families gain closure in his nearly 30 years of work.

"You have to detach yourself, you can't get too closely involved with the families," he said. "It's very much a two-sided situation; you are doing a thorough investigation and at the same time you know you're helping the families out and that's a real driving force behind the process."

Using fingerprints, dental records and more recently DNA, Inspector Edwards has never failed to correctly identify what the NSW Forensic Services Group calls a "victim of mass casualty".

No wonder Inspector Edwards has been headhunted by US disaster management company Kenyon, which helped identify

September 11 victims.

He starts his new job on Tuesday, running the company's city-based Sydney bureau.

His resume includes the 1977 Granville train disaster, the Thredbo landslide, the Bali bombings and the Waterfall train crash.

Most recently, he coordinated the efforts of 25 DVI-trained police dispatched to tsunami-wrecked Thailand.

In 1998, he became the first chairman of Interpol's DVI standing committee to be appointed from a non-European country.

During his four year tenure, Inspector Edwards helped shift the Interpol's reliance on visual identification.

"Australia has a world-class capacity for DVI which started with the 1961 Viscount air crash off Mascot airport which killed 15 people," he said.

"(Interpol) used to be very much European and we gave it a different focus.

"Now in NSW, we have a world-class capacity for DVI. We can identify victims of mass disasters and not make errors."



Tragedy: Thredbo



The start: Granville 1977



Victims: Tsunami



Good one: Detective Chief Inspector Mark Edwards is farewelled by colleagues