

The University of New South Wales
in partnership with:
Australian Federal Police
New South Wales Police
Queensland Police
National Institute of Forensic Science Australia
Australasian Speech Science & Technology Association
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid
Guardia Civil



DR GEOFFREY STEWART MORRISON
DIRECTOR
FORENSIC VOICE COMPARISON LABORATORY
SCHOOL OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
UNSW SYDNEY, NSW 2052, AUSTRALIA

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

Making demonstrably valid and reliable forensic voice comparison a practical everyday reality in Australia

The police obtain audio recordings of a criminal and a suspect, but what next? To assist Australian law-enforcement agencies and courts in the process of the conviction of the guilty and the exoneration of the innocent, we will develop and test a practical and demonstrably valid and reliable forensic-voice-comparison system for use with Australian English voices. This will allow forensic scientists to produce demonstrably valid and reliable strength-of-evidence statements for presentation in court – a capability which does not currently exist in Australia at reasonable costs and timeframes. The system will comply with the strictest international standards for the admissibility of scientific evidence in court, using the same evaluative framework as is used for DNA.

Participant selection and purpose of study

You are invited to participate in a research project with the aim of developing the infrastructure and conducting the research necessary to make demonstrably valid and reliable forensic voice comparison a practical everyday reality in Australia. We (i.e., the investigators) plan to build a database of voice recordings of 1000 speakers of Australian English. This database will be used to develop and test forensic-voice-comparison systems. This involves acoustic analysis of the properties of the voice recordings and statistical modelling based on the acoustic measurements. In order to foster scientific research and in the interests of justice, the database will also be made available to other researchers and forensic-voice-comparison experts.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a speaker of Australian English who has expressed an interest in contributing to this project. Australian English does not have to be your first dialect or language, but you should be someone who lives in Australia and habitually communicates in English.

Description of study and risks

If you decide to participate, we will record you speaking on up to three separate occasions. On each occasion you will complete three speaking tasks, 1. a casual conversation over the telephone, 2. and information-exchange task over the telephone, and 3. an interview. You will come to the recording site with a person you already know (such as a friend or a colleague) and for the first two tasks you will talk with this person over the telephone. One of you will sit in one room and the other in another room. For the third task you will be interviewed on everyday topics by a researcher or research assistant. During these tasks you will wear an ear-mounted microphone which will be used to record your voice. The recordings of your voice will be included in the database. Each speaking task lasts approximately 10 minutes and each recording session will typically be completed in under 45 minutes. The 3 recording sessions will typically be separated by a period of approximately 1 week.

office tel: +61 (2) 9385 6544
e-mail: geoff.morrison@unsw.edu.au
URLs: <http://geoff-morrison.net/>
<http://forensic-voice-comparison.net/>
<http://forensic.unsw.edu.au/>

Participation in the project is not expected to lead to any risk, discomfort, or inconvenience beyond contribution of your time.

Recompense to participants

Participants who are employees of the Australian Federal Police, New South Wales Police, or Queensland Police may contribute to the project during work hours.

Participants who are not employees of these organisations and who are contributing to the project on campus at the University of New South Wales (e.g., UNSW students) or at the Canberra Institute of Technology, will receive \$10 per recording session.

Confidentiality and disclosure of information

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission, except as required by law.

During the recruitment and data-collection stages of the research we will need to know your name and contact information, but once you have completed your recording sessions we will delete this information from our records.

In the database and in any presentations and publications, data which originate from the project, you will be referred to using an identification number. We will not maintain a record of the link between your name and your identification number. Your name will be recorded on the informed-consent document; however, it does not include an exact date so that the date on which it was signed cannot be linked to timestamps on the voice recordings.

You are advised to keep a record of your identification number in case at a later date you decide that you wish your voice recordings to be removed from the database, at which point you would have to inform us of your identification number. Also note that we cannot remove you from the database retroactively, i.e., we would only be able to remove your voice recordings from distributions of the database and from analyses which we perform subsequent to receiving your request to be removed from the database.

We will also collect some demographic data which will be linked to your identification number: sex (male/female), approximate age (18–20, 21–25, 26–30, etc.), city/region/country where you grew up, first language (the last two relate to accent). Providing us with this information is OPTIONAL, and you are advised not to provide it if you feel it would allow your identity to be deduced.

If you give us your permission by signing this document, we plan to publish the recordings of your voice and demographic data as part of the database. The database will be made available on request to other researchers and forensic partitioners. We will also conduct research based on the database in order to produce academic conference presentations, academic journal articles, reports for submission to the courts, and oral presentation of evidence in court. We will use data extracted from voice recordings to provide information about the population in general, rather than you as an individual, and to test the forensic-voice-comparison system. A list of academic publications arising from this project will be posted at <http://forensic.unsw.edu.au/> and copies of publications will be provided to you on request.

Your consent

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with the University of New South Wales or the other participating organisations. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask us. If you have any additional questions later, Dr Morrison will be happy to answer them.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Any complaints may be directed to the Ethics Secretariat, The University of New South Wales, UNSW Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia (phone 02 9385 4234, fax 02 9385 6648, e-mail ethics.sec@unsw.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be investigated promptly and you will be informed of the outcome.

Participants who are recorded at the Australian Federal Police, New South Wales Police, or Queensland Police sites may also address questions or complaints to the relevant contact person listed below.

Dr K Paul Kirkbride, Chief Scientist, Forensic and Data Centres, Australian Federal Police,
GPO Box 401, Canberra ACT 2601
phone 02 6203 6175
e-mail paul.kirkbride@afp.gov.au

Dr M A (Tony) Raymond, Chief Scientist, Forensic Services Group, New South Wales Police,
Locked Bag 232, Blacktown, NSW 2148
phone 02 9688 9300
e-mail raym1mic@police.nsw.gov.au

Superintendent Michael Keller, Superintendent in Charge, Forensic Services Branch, Queensland
Police Service, 4th floor, Police Headquarters, 200 Roma St, Brisbane, 4000
phone 07 3364 6564
e-mail: keller.michaelb@police.qld.gov.au

Approval number: HREC 11230

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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM (continued)

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You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that, having read the information provided above, you have decided to participate.

Signature of Research Participant

Signature of Witness

(Please PRINT name)

(Please PRINT name)

Year

Nature of Witness

REVOCAATION OF CONSENT

Making demonstrably valid and reliable forensic voice comparison a practical everyday reality in Australia

I hereby wish to **WITHDRAW** my consent to participate in the research proposal described above and understand that such withdrawal **WILL NOT** jeopardise any treatment or my relationship with The University of New South Wales or the other participating organisations.

Signature of Research Participant

Date

(Please PRINT name)

Identification Number

The section for Revocation of Consent should be forwarded to Dr Morrison.

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