

Report calls for more military crime labs

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. military could save money and lives by overhauling how it collects and uses DNA evidence in Iraq and Afghanistan, a Defense Department report says. A team of 100 military and civilian scientists suggested, among other things, opening four new crime labs in Iraq and Afghanistan and developing a DNA database from the 30,000 detainees tested each year. Collecting iris scans and DNA samples from detainees and fingerprints from captured cellular phones and explosive devices are "among the most valuable data" the military has for targeting insurgents, the Pentagon said in its report. Implementing the group's suggestions would cost an estimated \$195 million over the next two years. Among other recommendations: creating a "forensics academy" in the Defense Department and placing the forensics programs run by the Army, Navy and others under one umbrella, USA Today reported Monday. The report also calls for hiring more personnel to cull telephone numbers and text messages from seized electronic devices and hiring others to lift fingerprints from bomb fragments.

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