The base camp laboratory constitutes the investigating team's own analytical capability. It will perform other functions, such as preparing samples for onward transmission to designated laboratories, but its main functions are to perform analyses, to guide the work of the team and to contribute in a major way to the evidence the team will consider in arriving at its conclusions. This paper describes a working formula different from that which appears in the report of the United Nations Group of Consultant Experts (see A/39/488 dated 2 October 1984, pp. 30-31). While both approaches could probably work, we considered it important to minimize the number of people handling the samples before they arrive at the designated laboratories. We also believe that in the other approach the investigating team would be delegating too much of its responsibility and that the team members would not be obtaining as much first-hand information as they could. In other words, the team would be too reliant on analyses being conducted (after some delay) by other (designated) laboratories. Clearly, there are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches, but we have come to the conclusion that the investigating team should possess its own analytical capability in situ.

In the same vein, it bears mentioning that, while a good deal of this paper addresses the problem of distributing samples to designated laboratories, it is the investigating team appointed by the international authority that will conduct the operation and submit its report to the international authority. The reports of the designated laboratories will be directed to the investigating team, and the results of their analyses will provide a set of data which the team will consider