



Supplementary Criteria for Accreditation  
**Mortuary Specifications – Classifications of  
Mortuary Facilities**

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# Supplementary Criteria for Accreditation

## Medical Laboratory Accreditation Programme Mortuary Specifications – Classifications of Mortuary Facilities

### AS LAB C7.1

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## 1 Introduction

**1.1** International Accreditation New Zealand's (IANZ) Supplementary Criteria provide supplementary information to the General Criteria and Specific Criteria for Accreditation for specific types of testing activities. They provide detail or add extra information to the generally stated requirements of IANZ General Criteria for Accreditation and IANZ Specific Criteria for the particular field.

**1.2** This supplementary criteria details the specific requirements covering the accreditation of medical testing laboratories operating or overseeing mortuaries within their scope of accreditation.

**1.3** This is a supplementary document to IANZ Specific Criteria 7 (AS LAB C7) which includes general requirements for medical testing laboratories. This document must be read in conjunction with the current issues of the following standards and IANZ publications:

- (a) ISO 15189 *Medical laboratories — Requirements for quality and competence*
- (b) *Specific Criteria for Accreditation: Medical Testing (AS LAB C7)*
- (c) *Procedures and Conditions for Accreditation (AS1)*

**1.4** This document has been developed in collaboration between IANZ, the New Zealand Society of Pathologists and the Ministry of Justice and is intended to be applicable to the management of mortuary services within New Zealand.

## 2 Minimum Specifications for Mortuary Facility Classification

### 2.1 Level 1 Body Storage Facility

- (i) A storage facility that is able to meet regular local demand for storage of bodies.
- (ii) A secure storage facility that is capable of being locked with access only by authorised personnel.
- (iii) Suitable facility for allowing identification by family / whanau as required on a local or regional basis.
- (iv) Monitored and alarmed, refrigerated body storage at appropriate temperatures (2°- 6°C).
- (v) Staffed by personnel suitably trained for body preparation, receiving and releasing.

### 2.2 Level 2 Autopsy Facility

Level 1 Body Storage Facility minimum specifications; and

- (i) A secure storage facility that maintains chain of custody of the deceased and all evidence collected from the examination.
- (ii) Secure storage facility for autopsy files, digital photographs, microscopic slides & blocks, and retained tissue.
- (iii) Facility capable of performing hospital, coronial and forensic post-mortem examinations to internationally accepted standards that fulfil all medicolegal requirements and includes the integration of post-mortem digital photography and/or imaging in all examinations.
- (iv) Minimum ventilation (6 air changes/hr).
- (v) Adequate sluicing and body fluid disposal.
- (vi) Access to Portable X-ray.
- (vii) Provision of suitable Personal Protection Equipment, including that for potentially infectious cases.
- (viii) Equipped with an appropriately maintained set of autopsy tools including a necropsy bone saw with extractor system.
- (ix) Access to clinical databases and digital communication technology.
- (x) Access to multi-head microscope.
- (xi) Access to a nearby conference room for staff and visitors.

- (xii) Provision of an appropriate in-house library and/or internet access to relevant journals.
- (xiii) Oversight by an IANZ-accredited pathology laboratory and according to health and hygiene standards with reference to “*Managing health and safety risks in New Zealand mortuaries*” (Reference 1) and any authorised documents.
- (xiv) Access to advisory and support services in the event of any mental or physical health issues impacting staff as a direct result of the provision of mortuary services.
- (xv) Have separate IANZ accreditation to the ISO 15189 standard.
- (xvi) Have at least one registered medical laboratory technician (Mortuary Technicians) with an annual practising certificate issued by the MSCNZ with relevant competencies supervised by a suitably qualified pathologist.
- (xvii) Facility capable of training mortuary technicians and scientists.

### 2.3 Level 3 Autopsy Facility

Level 2 Autopsy Facility minimum specifications; and

- (i) Facility capable of isolating biosecurity cases suspected of highly infectious or toxic diseases with negative pressure ventilation of the isolation suite, and appropriate personal protective equipment.
- (ii) Facility contains separate storage and freezer facilities for high risk cases.
- (iii) Dedicated/disposable equipment for high risk cases.
- (iv) Access to CT.
- (v) Minimum ventilation requirement (12 air changes/hr).
- (vi) Access to facility capable of cremation of body fluids and tissues and contaminated processing equipment.
- (vii) Staffed by forensic pathologists / mortuary technicians and scientists, and administration personnel.
- (viii) Provides suitable office accommodation for forensic pathologist(s) and registrar/fellow, administration / technicians / scientists.
- (ix) Have at least two registered medical laboratory technicians (Mortuary Technician) or registered medical laboratory scientist, both appropriately trained with annual practising certificates issued by the MSCNZ.

## 3 References

1. “*Managing Health and Safety Risks in New Zealand Mortuaries: Guidelines to promote safe working conditions*”; Occupational Safety and Health Service of the Department of Labour; November 2000 (I ISBN 0-477-03633-3)
2. NPAAC: Requirements for the Facilities and Operation of Mortuaries (Third Edition 2013)
3. Other relevant criteria
4. Reference to BSL-2 and BSL-3 (AS/NZS 2243.3:2010 Microbiology safety and containment)