

13-Dec-21

ASB Standard 170, Standard for Veterinary Forensic Postmortem Examination

#	Section	Type of Comment (E=Editorial)	Comments	Proposed Resolution	Final Resolution
1	Foreword, para. 2	E	The "all" suggests a perfection of prediction that standards cannot achieve. Given the wide variety of animals, it's possible that some subjects will require additional information. This proposed change also tracks the language of the "scope" section, which specifies the document provides "minimum requirements."	Change "all the information" to "the minimum information"	Reject with modification: Majority of paragraph was removed as the appropriate points are covered in the scope.
6	Forward	Technical	Remove "all" from following sentence: " This document also lists all the information a veterinarian needs in the formulation and consideration of opinions and interpretation of a forensic case."	To read " This document also lists the information a veterinarian needs in the formulation and consideration of opinions and interpretation of a forensic case."	Reject with modification: Majority of paragraph was removed as the appropriate points are covered in the scope.
2	p. 1, Scope, line 2	E	The list of items covered in this section differs from that in the Foreword, thus indicating a different (narrower or broader) application of the standard depending on which list is read.	Conform description here with that provided in the Foreword.	Accept with modification. List removed from Foreword and maintained in Scope as written.
11	3	Technical	Define "medicolegal" used in section 5.4	Proposed definition "Having both medical and legal aspects." From Touroo, R., et al. "Minimum standards and best practices for the clinical veterinary forensic examination of the suspected abused animal." Forensic Science International: Reports 2 (2020): 100150.	Reject: definition as contained in dictionaries such as Merriam Webster are appropriate, therefore it does not need to be defined here.
12	3	Technical	Define "animal sexual abuse" used in section 6.10	Proposed definition "A spectrum of sexual acts, including coercive, violent, and non-violent sexual contact with or without penetration; behavioral conditioning of animals to perform sexually on or with people; solicitation for sex with animals; and deviant behavior including sexual torture and necrophilia. Note: Various jurisdictions may have different specific legal definitions and terminology, such as "crimes against nature" or "bestiality" and in some jurisdictions some acts may fall within the definitions of animal abuse or animal cruelty." From Touroo, R., et al. "Minimum standards and best practices for the clinical veterinary forensic examination of the suspected abused animal." Forensic Science International: Reports 2 (2020): 100150.	Reject: The intent of section 6.10 is to guide the postmortem examination for veterinarians who suspect sexual abuse, not to define it.
13	3	Technical	Define "diagnostic imaging" used in section 8.1	Proposed definition "Non-invasive imaging techniques such as radiographs (x-ray images), Computed Tomography (CT), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), ultrasound(U/S), and other diagnostic imaging modalities used to assess and document condition, injury, or disease processes." From Touroo, R., et al. "Minimum standards and best practices for the clinical veterinary forensic examination of the suspected abused animal." Forensic Science International: Reports 2 (2020): 100150.	Reject: Since diagnostic imaging can be a multitude of techniques, and others may be added over time, it is not necessary to define it for this document.

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14	3	Technical	Define "evidence" used in section 9.	Proposed definition "Anything that can prove, support or disprove a fact or facts in contention in a legal proceeding. Note: In cases of alleged or suspected animal abuse, the animals themselves, as well as anything, within or derived from the animal is considered evidence. Evidence may include the environment the animals were in at the time of the event or items or conditions discovered in the animals' environment." From Touroo, R., et al. "Minimum standards and best practices for the clinical veterinary forensic examination of the suspected abused animal." Forensic Science International: Reports 2 (2020): 100150.	Reject: definition as contained in dictionaries such as Merriam Webster are appropriate, therefore it does not need to be defined here.
15	3	Technical	Define "alternative light source" used in section 6.10	Proposed definition "Equipment used to produce light at various wavelengths to enhance or visualize potential items of evidence." From OSAC lexicon- from footwear & tire committee 2/23/18	Accept with modification: defined term "alternate light source" with suggested definition
16	3	Technical	Define "animal" used throughout document.	Proposed definition "A creature or living being, other than human. The legal definition of animal may be further defined by local law." From Touroo, R., et al. "Minimum standards and best practices for the clinical veterinary forensic examination of the suspected abused animal." Forensic Science International: Reports 2 (2020): 100150.	Reject: definition as contained in dictionaries such as Merriam Webster are appropriate, therefore it does not need to be defined here.
17	3	Technical	Define "body condition score" used in section 6.4	Proposed definition "A published quantitative numbering system used to estimate energy reserves in the form of fat and muscle. Published body condition scales are species specific." From Touroo, R., et al. "Minimum standards and best practices for the clinical veterinary forensic examination of the suspected abused animal." Forensic Science International: Reports 2 (2020): 100150.	Reject: Section 6.4 states "If" a species-specific body condition scoring system... therefore it is not appropriate to define it, as some practices may not use a body condition scale.
7	3.2 now 3.3	Technical	Recommend replacing definition for "chain of custody" with current OSAC Lexicon definition from Digital Evidence, Facial Identification, Video/Imaging Technology & Analysis.	To read "The procedures and documents that account for the possession of a sample by tracking its handling and storage from its point of collection to its final disposition."	Reject with modification: OSAC preferred term for Chain of Custody used instead. "Chronological record of the handling and storage of an item from its point of collection to its final return or disposal."
8	3.3 now 3.5	Technical	Add "veterinary" to the term being defined as standing alone outside of this document (i.e., in a lexicon search) this definition may not be correct.	To read "Veterinary forensic postmortem examination"	Accept
9	3.4 now 3.6	Technical	Add "veterinary" to the term being defined as standing alone outside of this document (i.e., in a lexicon search) this definition may not be correct.	To read "Veterinary postmortem examination"	Accept
10	3.4 now 3.6	Technical	Remove "autopsy" as a synonym, as the root "autos" means self.	To read "Synonyms include necropsy."	Reject: both terms are used by the intended user group for the document.
18	4	Technical	Address that the name(s) of any person(s) present during the postmortem examination shall be documented.	Add section F to state " Document the name(s) of any person(s) present during the postmortem examination."	Reject with modification: Not appropriate for this section, section 10 a) has been revised to read: "a) those assisting in the forensic postmortem examination;"
19	6.1	Technical	Add that the date and location of the postmortem exam shall be documented	Make b) "document the date(s) and the location of the postmortem exam" and shift letter below accordingly.	Reject. This is included in Section 11 d)
20	6.1 h)	Technical	Add how the age was approximated	Section h) should read " document the approximate age and how determined such as weight, dentition, radiographic evidence, or other method".	Accept with modification: section modified to be more general: "h) document the actual age, if available, or the approximate age based on phenotypic characteristics;"
21	6.1 i)	Technical	Remove "trace", as it may be more that just trace evidence that is removed.	Section i) should read "retrieve and document evidence on the body or items that accompanied the body if indicated;"	Accept.
22	6.2	Technical	The name of the photographer(s) should be documented	Add to section "document the name(s) of the photographer(s)."	Reject: If a photographer is assisting, they will be documented as required in Section 10 a)

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23	6.2 b)	Technical	Add blood or foreign material. As injuries should be photographed before and after alteration of any kind.	Section d) should read "photograph external injuries prior to removing hair or feathers, blood or foreign matter;"	Accept
24	6.4 c)	Technical	Integument should also include skin, fur coat, feathers, scales, claws, foot pads, hooves, beak	add as an e.g. to clarify	Accept with modification. c) and d) combined to one item, "foot pads" added and examples of integument added.
25	6.6 a) thru e)	Technical	Duplicative with section 6.5	Remove a) thru e) and add any necessary information to section 6.5	Reject: the intent of the section is to cover any injuries not covered in the other sections. These sections are based on the National Association of Medical Examiners, Forensic Autopsy Performance Standards, included in the bibliography
26	6.7 a) thru c)	Technical	Duplicative with section 6.5	Remove a) thru c) and add any necessary information to section 6.5	Reject: the intent of the section is to cover any injuries not covered in the other sections. These sections are based on the National Association of Medical Examiners, Forensic Autopsy Performance Standards, included in the bibliography
27	6.9 a) thru c)	Technical	Duplicative with section 6.5	Remove a) thru c) and add any necessary information to section 6.5	Reject: the intent of the section is to cover any injuries not covered in the other sections. These sections are based on the National Association of Medical Examiners, Forensic Autopsy Performance Standards, included in the bibliography
28	7.3 b)	Technical	What is meant by "proper"?	Clarify	Accept with modification: "proper" removed.
29	7.8	Technical	What is meant by "examine"?	Clarify if this is gross or microscopic and types of analysis.	Reject: except in section 8.2 where it is more specific, "examine" is used throughout the document to describe the gross examination. Reference 3] in the bibliography contains the pertinent information.
30	8.2.1	Technical	Add other evidence	Should read" The veterinarian or designate shall collect, package, label and preserve biological specimens and other evidence."	Reject: this section is specific to biological specimens. Section 9 is included for all evidence
31	8.3	Technical	Add "camera". Must have access to a camera in order to perform the requirements of this document.	Insert f) to read "Camera"	Reject: addressed as a requirement in 6.2
32	9 a)	Technical	Duplicative with 8.2.1	Consolidate	Reject. Section 9 is general, 8.2.1 is specific to biological evidence.
33	10 e)	Technical	Clarify what is meant by "photographs". Does this mean photographs taken, received or both?	Clarify what is meant by "photographs". Does this mean photographs taken, received or both?	Accept.
34	11.1	Technical	Add that reports must be signed and dated	Add t) to read " Include the signature of the veterinarian performing the postmortem examination" Add u) to read " Include the date the report was finalized".	Accept with modification: added "t) sign and date the finalized report"
3	p. 10, 11.2.1	E	Regarding the language: "The veterinarian shall review and interpret all requested laboratory results," need specific guidance if there is a right / wrong way to interpret results. Or have a disclaimer that the standard does not purport to take the place of standards that offer such additional guidance.	How should results be interpreted? Please provide specific guidance, examples or a reference.	Reject with modification: this document is intended for the process of the postmortem examination, it is not intended to instruct on the practice of medicine. "from the forensic postmortem examination" added for clarification.
4	p. 10, 11.2.3	E	Regarding the language, "The veterinarian shall review the investigative reports, medical records, medications (where applicable), and scene imagery that the veterinarian deems relevant in his/her professional opinion," The qualifier "in his/her professional opinion" doesn't provide guidance; it merely describes what is being done (the professional is providing an opinion). The documentation requirement will assist in making transparent the veterinarian's decisions re relevance and inclusion/exclusion of items to be reviewed.	Delete "in his/her professional opinion" and insert guidance re defining and assessing relevance (e.g., according to published sources, existing standards, the specifics of the case?). Require documentation of choice(s) and justification for choice(s).	Reject: this is guidance based on the National Association of Medical Examiners, Forensic Autopsy Performance Standards, included in the bibliography. Opinion and determination given are based the veterinarian's knowledge, experience, and methods that would qualify them via voir dire questioning as an expert witness, as applied to the postmortem examination.

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5	p. 10, 11.2.4	E	Regarding the language, "The veterinarian shall determine the cause of death," more specificity is necessary to ensure the veterinarian follows a scientifically valid procedure.	How should it be determined? Please provide specific guidance or a reference.	Reject with modification: this document is intended for the process of the postmortem examination, it is not intended to instruct on the practice of medicine. The purpose of this document is to provide the steps for the postmortem examination in order to determine the cause of death. Opinion and determination given are based the veterinarian's knowledge, experience, and methods that would qualify them via voir dire questioning as an expert witness, as applied to the postmortem examination.