Comment Deadline: October 31, 2022
ASB Std 170, Standard for Veterinary Forensic Postmortem Examination

#	Section	Type of Comment (E-Editorial, T-Technical)	Comments	Proposed Resolution	Final Resolution
1	Forward	E	"struck" has several meanings, one of which means "eliminated"	replace "struck" with "formed"	Accept
2	1	E	"identification, documentation" needs an and	"identification, and documentation"	Accept
3	1	T	Last sentence--are you sure you want to open the door this wide? If it is for legal and LE professionals, it may need to provide much more background and context	strike "The standard also provides a reference for legal or law enforcement professionals."	Reject with modification. Sentence modified to provide clarification that the document is only a reference for the legal and law enforcement professionals.
10	3.1	E	Missing note	Main definition is from OSAC lexicon (footwear & tire impression). This should be noted. Insert "NOTE: Monochromatic light source can be used in examination of an animal's body to enhance visualizaton, identification, documentation, and collection of bodily fluids, and fibers as potential evidence" to harmonize with live animal document (ASB Standard 169)	Reject. ASB has worked with OSAC and Lexicon definitions are not to include a citation as such. The note is not necessary and that additional description is not needed for this document.
4	3.3	E		remove second period at end	Accept
11	3.4	E	Veterinarian's designee is over prescribed in this definition	Add "veterinary assistant" to allow for the assistance provided by any person so designated by a veterinarian. "Veterinary technician" has various legal definitions depending on jurisdiction.	Reject. The list is a "may" list and is not intended to be all inclusive.
12	4 a)	E	As worded, biased to the prosecution.	"investigate cooperatively with, but independent from investigators and attorneys"	Accept
13	4 b)	E	As worded, biased to the prosecution.	"operate without any undue influence from investigators and attorneys"	Accept
5	5	E	Seems like 5.7 should be subsumedunder 5.4, and the elements broken out into 5.4a, 5.4b, etc		Accept with modification.
60	5		Section 5 needs to be formatted to match sections that follow - pull out "The Veterinarian or designate shall:" and bullet the standards. The rest of the sections appear to be formatted similar to each other. Content looks fine.	CB member ballot comment	Reject with modification. Section 5 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. 5.7 was moved up to now be 5.5 for better flow of the section.
6	5.8	E	awkward wording	The veterinarian or designate shall consult with the submitter to determine the intended disposition of the remains, and document the intended and final disposition. [could be broken up into 5.8a, 5.8b to make it more auditable]	Reject with modification. Section 5 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Sentence revised for clarification.

14	5.8	T	The veterinarian or designate should not be making recommendations on the disposal of evidence.	"The veterinarian or designate shall verify the plans with the appropriate authority for preservation or disposal of animal evidence."	Reject with modification. Section 5 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Sentence revised for clarification. "The veterinarian or designate shall establish, with the submitter, and document the intended and final disposition of the remains."
15	6.1.b	E	Inconsistent "micro-chip" and "microchip"	The use of a hyphen is not typical in veterinary practice	Accept
7	6.1c	E	two sentences need to be separated	"If unreadable…" is is the beginning of a new sentence [period, capitalization]	Reject with modification. Section 6.1 c had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Second part of sentence converted to a NOTE.
16	6.1.e	E	Not all animals can be weighed at all facilities.	"record the body weight or estimate of body weight. If the weight is estimated, record the method used for the basis of the estimate (e.g. species specific weigh or weight tape)."	Reject. Section 6.1 e had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Additionally, an accurate body weight is essential to the process.
17	6.1.h	E	phenotypic characteristics as defined is a human reference that includes cultural, and other descriptors that are not applicable to animals, and due to breed variations we do not have single references for height:weight ratios and other similar described phenotypic characteristics	Harmonize with Standard 169: "age [known, reported(if reported, indicate reporting individual or agency), or estimated (if estimated, describe how age was determined)]"	Accept
18	6.1.j	E	All photographs are documentary	Recommend "overall photographs". Consider harmonizing llanguage describing aspects of each body with 169 4.6.3	Reject with modification. Section 6.1 j had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. "overall photographs" accepted.
19	6.2.d	E	Document if the animal was frozen is not comprehensive enough	Recommend "document how the body was stored prior to postmortem examination." as it could have been chilled, or kept at room temperature, out doors etc.	comment on 6.3 d, not 6.2 d Reject. Section 6.3 d had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Additionally, The veterinarian may not know the preservation history.
24	6.4.c	T	Not descriptive enough for ear examination	The otic examination should include otoscopic examination, especially in cases of suspected neglect and suspected head trauma	Reject. Examination of the ear should include dissection of the middle and inner ear, areas that would not be seen by an otoscope in a live animal.
21	6.5 vs 6.6.b vs 6.7.b	E	describe injury by location vs descriptively locate wounds in an anatomical region vs locate cutaneous wounds of the head neck, thorax, abdomen, and limbs by measuring from two fixed anatomic reference points	recommend consistent language: " Describe injury by body region location and by measuring from two fixed anatomic reference points."	Reject with modification. Section 6.5 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. To clarify the sections, an intro was added to the subsequent sections to indicate that the requirements in 6.5 are done in addition to the specific injuries. This has been harmonized with the NAME standards for forensic autopsy.

20	6.6, 6.7, 6.9	E	unnecessarily duplicitive	consolidate	Reject with modification. Sections 6.6, 6.7, 6.9 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. To clarify the sections, an intro was added to the subsequent sections to indicate that the requirements in 6.5 are done in addition to the specific injuries. This has been harmonized with the NAME standards for forensic autopsy.
22	6.8	E	there is no reference to measuring burn wounds	recognizing that certain burns may be difficult to measure, recommend "describe the distribution and extent of the burn, including measurements if possible."	Reject with modification. Section 6.8 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Since the reference to section 6.5 was added to the intro, this has now been covered.
23	6.10	E	"cleaning the body" is not generally a veterinary activity	Recommend "Prior to changing the body (e.g. clipping fur, plucking feathers or removing debris) the veterinarian or designate shall:"	Reject. Section 6.10 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Additionally, the veterinarian may not know the preservation history.
25	7.1	E	"The veterinarian shall document and describe injuries to the subcutis" may be inaccurate based on soley on gross analysis, and omits the recommendation to measure changes to the subcutis	Recommend "The veterinarian shall document, describe and measure changes in color or other characteristics to the subcutis"	Reject with modification. Section 7.1 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Reference added to the general documentation of the injuries contained in 6.5.
26	7.2	T	Examination of the Oral Cavity is part of the external exam, and is previously described in section 6.4.e.	delete 7.2 and add "describe lesions in the oral cavity and describe and consider collecting foreign material in the oral cavity" to 6.4.e	Reject. Section 7.2 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Additionally, in a routine post-mortem, the entire oral cavity is exposed by dissection, it is therefor an internal examination.
27	7.3.b and c	E	Repetative and not consistent with veterinary language & process	Combine and clarify to read "ensure removal and examination of the pluck"	Reject with modification. The pluck includes the thoracic organs which are covered in 7.4. Section was reorganized for clarification.
28	7.3.e	T	Occult dorsal neck injury is not as common in veterinary medicine due to anatomy (nuchal ligament)	Recommend "perform dorsal neck dissection as needed". 7.3.e should come after 7.3.f as ventral neck dissection is indicated more frequently	Accept with modification. Combined dorsal and ventral, and reorganized section for clarification.
29	7.3.f	T	It cannot be know if a case is a neck trauma case until examined.	Recommend "perform ventral neck dissecton in suspected neck trauma cases"	Accept with modification. Combined dorsal and ventral, and reorganized section for clarification.
30	7.4.d	T	not all animals have abdominal & thoracic cavities. Additionally, removal of the pubis to examine pelvic cavity organs may be indicated in some cases (e.g. suspected ASA)	add "or coelomic cavity" and add "Consider removal of the pubic bone to examine pelvic organs insitu before removing them from the pelvic cavity."	Reject with modification. Section 7.4 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Section title revised to read "Body" cavities. Depending on the species, pubic bone removal may not apply.

31	7.5.a	T	Examination of the palpebra is external	Add palpebra to 6.4 General condition of the body. Add clarity of the cornea to 6.3 Postmortem changes	Reject. Section 7.5 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Additionally, the palpebra is part of the head dissection. And clarity of the cornea can fall under "other postmortem changes" in 6.3.
32	7.6	E	There is no reference to diagramming penetrating or perforating wounds	It is recommended to diagram wounds on a body diagram, especially in cases of multple injuries, and numbering or lettering the wounds both on the body for photographs and on the diagrams.	Reject. Section 7.6 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Additionally, the method of documentation is at the discretion of the veterinarian.
33	8.1	T	Rediography of all animals is optimal, but not required	Recommend "Radiographic imaging of the whole body is recommended in all cases, when possible and practical."	Reject. Section 8 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
34	8.1.1 - 8.1.6	E	70 kg is an arbritrary weight limit, depending on available equipment	Recommend "diagnostic imaging shall be performed in all cases of gunshot injuried in animals that can be imaged on available equipment based on their size and capacity of the equipment", etc. as appropriate for 8.1.2, .3, .4, .5 and .6.	Reject. Section 8 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
8	8.2.3	T	This is a "shall", but only when deemed necessary. Maybe it's a guideline, or maybe there needs to be more guidance on when it's necessary?	"if results of such analyses are necessary for accurate conclusions" or something like that	Reject. Section 8 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
35	8.2.4	T	Histo shall….unless….	This is a permissive statement which is in conflict with the SHALL in 8.2.5. We agree not all cases require histopathology	Reject. Section 8 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
36	8.2.5	T	Histo shall be performed "if he age of the injuries has evidentiary value"	We cannot know if tissues have evidentiary value unless we look. Even decomposing tissue can yield salient information. We suggest merging the two statements. Requirng histo in all cases is unrealistic (ivory tower) based on the investigative resources of many animal control depts. There are many factors that contribute to the decision to submit tissue for histopathology. We recommending 8.2.4 and 8.2.5 and making this a permissive statement.	Reject. Section 8 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
37	8.4	T	A veterinarian cannot necessarily influence a laboratory to do what they demand. This statement belongs in a standard for tox labs. Also, why is tox called out in a way that radiology, pathology etc are not	Omit and encourage laboratories to adhere to existing forensic toxicology laboratory standards in a separate standard.	Reject. Section 8 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
38	9	T	"Evidence item"is unclear language.	Change to "physical evidence"	Reject. "Evidentiary items" had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.

39	9	T	We advise adding a point c)	If the veterinarian or their facility is unable to maintain preserved evidence in a secure manner, the evidence must be transferred to the investigating agency. (This language should be harmonized with the draft Standard for On-Scene Collection and Preservation of Physical Evidence)	Reject. This is too prescriptive for this document.
44	10 i)	E	Too prescriptive.	Omit	Reject. Section 10 i had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
45	10 b) - i) (for all retained items)	T	We advise that all but a) should be "should" rather than "shall"	Redesignate	Reject. These are essential to the process.
40	10 d)	E	This duplicates 9 above	Omit	Reject. Section 10 d had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
41	10 e)	E	This is not clear. Does the statement mean that the number and numbering of photographs taken during the PM exam shall be documented? Or does this mean "you shall photo document your postmortem exam"?	Clarify	Accept.
42	10 g)	T	The veterinarian cannot force the consultant to document their communication history.	Change "of" to "with"	Accept.
43	10 h)	E	This is already covered in 5.8	Omit	Accept.
56	11.2	T	all of 11.2 should come before 11.1	Move 11.2 to above 11.1	Reject. Findings then interpretation is the appropriate order for the report.
46	11 (in entirety)	T	Overly prescriptive	Redesignate to should	Reject. The majority of this section was not redlined and therefore not open for comment, but this section is to aid the veterinarian as to what information is to be included in the report.
47	11.1.a	T	"narrative report" Is this to say that the veterinarian shall prepare a written report of findings and opinion? Or do you mean in fact a narrative report, where the definition is "a detailed chronollogical factual piece of writing"? If so, there is no room for expression of expert opinion in a narrative report.	Change to "written report" for each PM exam.	Accept.
48	11.1.b)	T	The cause of death may not be known until after a PM is performed (ie illegally disposed carcasses may have been euthanized)	Add "if known"	Reject. Section 11 b had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
49	11.1.c)	T	Who's case number? This is not clear, even though the "agency's case number" is articulated below in e.	Clarify to read "the investigating veterinarians assigned case identifyer (not necessarily a number)	Reject. Section 11 c had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Also distinction covered in 11 e.

50	11.1.f)	T	An independant veterinrian performing a necropsy may be unaffiliated with any laboratory or university, and they may be performing this work indepentdant from their regular employer	Add "if any"	Reject. Section 11 c had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Affiliation can also cover "self employed"
51	11.1.g)	T	We cannot "shall doument" something that does not exist	Add "if any"	Reject. Section 11 g had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
52	11.1.i)	T	Postmortem changes repeats 6.3	Omit or consolidate	Reject. Section 11 i had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
53	11.1.n	T	Documentation of injuries repeats 6.5	Omit or consolidate	Reject. Section 11 n had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
54	11.1.q vs o	T	These two lines are repetative	Omit or consolidate	Reject. Section 11 q had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment.
55	11.1.r	T	include a cause of death "if determined"	Add if determined or language to include undetermined as a cause of death	Reject. Section 11 r had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Undetermined is a cause of death.
9	11.1f	E	which veterinarian?	"The examining forensic veterinarian"? How is this different than the vet in 11.1s?	Accept. s removed, content merged into f.
57	11.2.1	T	Interpret is vague	Add "in the context of the totality of the available information"	Reject. Interpretation is part of the diagnostic process.
58	11.2.3	T	The "veterinarian deems relevant" seems to employ judgement prematurely. Also, as an active investigator, the veterinarian should request and review all available materials, not simply review what has been made available. This also brings the statement into alignment with the live animal exam.	Revise to read "The veterinarian shall request and review all available investigative reports, records, medication, scene imagry that are made available by investigators.	Reject. Section 11.2.3 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. The veterinarian/pathologist is not an investigator and must remain objective and unbiased.
59	11.2.4	T	The veterinarian shall determine the cause of death.	Add if determined or language to include undetermined as a cause of death	Reject. Section 11.2.4 had no redline changes, therefore the WG and CB are not required to address this comment. Undetermined is a cause of death.