

Revised: September 15, 2008

American Consulate General - Perth, Australia

CASC: DEATHS: Disposition of Remains Report.

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Local requirements and current approximate costs for the disposition of remains in the Consular District of Western Australia. All prices shown here in are in U.S. dollars at current exchange rate of US\$1.00 = A\$1.15.

International air shipments of remains to the United States are made through the International Airport at Perth or via the east coast at Sydney.

(A) Maximum period before burial.

There is no specific period within which burial must take place regardless of whether the remains have been embalmed or not.

(B) Embalming

Embalming is only required by regulation when remains are to be exported. Embalming facilities are available in major funeral establishments in Perth and major provincial cities and towns in Western Australia.

NOTE: Current West Australian practice does not allow for embalming in cases where the deceased tested positive for HIV infection and Hepatitis C.

(C) Cremation

Cremation is permissible under local law. Crematoria are located in Perth and in a number of cities and towns elsewhere in Western Australia.

(D) Caskets and Containers

Export-quality caskets and shipping containers which meet the requirements of 7 FAM 260 are available in Perth and other towns in Western Australia.

(E) Exportation of Remains

(1) Documentary requirements for exportation of human ashes are as follows:

- (a) Death certificate from the Registrar General.
- (b) Cremation certificate from the crematorium.
- (c) Ashes must be placed in a sealed container when they are to be carried by the Australian postal system.

(2) Documentary requirements for exportation of human remains are as follows:

- (a) Death certificate issued by the Registrar General.
- (b) Embalming certificate issued by the undertaker.
- (c) Health certificate stating that the remains have no quarantinable diseases, issued by the Department of Health.
- (d) Coroner's or doctor's transit permit authorizing export.
- (e) Affidavit by the undertaker attesting to contents and embalming and that the casket is hermetically sealed.
- (f) Consular Mortuary Certificate issued by the Consular Officer.

(F) Costs

Estimated local burial costs include undertaker's fees, use of hearse, medium priced casket, legal documentation, cemetery burial plot, and related fees:

Perth	US\$4,800
Albany	US\$4,600
Broome	US\$4,600
Exmouth	US\$4,600
Kalgoorlie	US\$4,800
Geraldton	US\$4,800

Estimated cremation costs include transportation of remains to crematorium facilities, casket, cremation fees, funeral director's fees and documentation:

Perth	US\$4,200
Albany	US\$4,200
Broome	US\$4,300
Exmouth	US\$4,300
Kalgoorlie	US\$4,300
Geraldton	US\$4,300

Estimated costs related to preparation of human remains for shipment (assuming 200kg) including embalming, medium priced casket, shipping container, required documentation, and shipping costs by air are as follows:

From	To:	San Francisco	Chicago	New York
Perth		US\$5,000	US\$5,500	US\$6,000

Note: As Perth is the capital city of Western Australia, the majority of shipments of remains to the United States would be sent to Perth for embalming and preparation for shipment. Most shipments of remains from Western Australia are sent from Perth to the United States via Sydney.

Approximate costs for international courier shipment of ashes between 2-4 kilograms is US\$80.00.

NOTE: All prices quoted above are estimated shipping costs only and may be subject to change.

Cremation urns range in price from sealed plastic containers for US\$80.00 to US\$250.00 for timber and other types of urns.

#### (G) Exhumation and Shipments

Bodies may be exhumed provided the required permits are obtained from the offices of the local city or shire council. A statement is required to accompany the request for exhumation to indicate if the remains are being exhumed for re-burial or for cremation. Exhumation may take place only within seven days of burial or after twelve (12) months from the date of burial. The usual procedure is for the funeral director to apply to the Minister for Local Government for approval to remove the remains from the cemetery. Upon approval, the funeral director then submits his application, together with the Minister's approval to the Cemeteries Board, who then carry out the exhumation.

## (H) Autopsies

The practice in Western Australia is that all accidental deaths or deaths due to suspicious or unnatural causes, or anyone who had not seen a medical practitioner in the three months prior to death (which would normally include U.S. citizen visitors), are referred to the Coroner's office for determination of death. The Coroner will decide whether to sign the Report of Death straight away or whether a post mortem is needed. When a post mortem is required, it can take from 3-6 months to obtain an official cause of death for release to the Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages in Perth. In some cases the Coroner's finding could be held up for a number of months depending on individual circumstances. A full death certificate showing the cause of death is not required for shipment of ashes or remains to the United States.

After the Coroner releases the cause of death, the next of kin may apply for a full certified copy of the West Australian Death certificate. Post must rely on the next of kin to provide a copy of the death certificate to assist with the completion of the Consular Report of Death.