

Disposition of Remains Report: Australia

## **PART I. Name of Country**

Australia

Local requirements and current approximate costs for disposition of remains in New South Wales and Queensland are provided below.

## **PART II. U.S. Embassy Information**

U.S. Embassy

Address: Moonah Place, Yarralumla, A.C.T.

Phone: Country Code 61 Area Code 2 6214-5600

Fax: Country Code 61 Area Code 2 6214-3191

Website: <http://canberra.usembassy.gov/>

State Department Country Specific Information:

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_954.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_954.html)

State Department Travel Information: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html)

Registration with the U.S. Embassy:

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration\\_1186.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_1186.html)

## **PART III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available to visitors.**

Country Profile: See “Background Note: Australia” <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2698.htm>

Religions: A variety of religions are freely practiced in Australia. Christianity and Buddhism are the principal religions with an estimated 13 million adherents throughout Australia

## **PART IV. Funeral Directors and Related Services Available in New South Wales and Queensland:**

*DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Consulate General, Sydney, Australia, assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability or reputation of, or the quality of services provided by, the following persons or firms. Names are listed alphabetically, and the order in which they appear has no other significance. Professional credentials and areas of expertise are provided directly by the funeral directors:*

New South Wales:

1. France Family Funeral  
45 Stockland Street  
Nelson Bay, NSW 2315  
Tel: 02-4981-4488
2. Hubert Logue and Sons  
88 Percy Street  
Wellington, NSW 2820  
Tel: 02-6845-1946
3. Maurer & Bracks Funerals  
574 Pacific Highway  
Chatswood, NSW 2067
4. Metropolitan Funerals (affiliates with Boland Funerals and Gregory and Carr Funerals)  
Website: <http://metropolitanfunerals.com.au>

Boland Funerals

Newtown Tel: 02-9519-8272	Maroubra Tel: 02-9314-2778
North Strathfield Tel: 02-9746-9666	Parramatta Tel: 02-9630-6444

Gregory & Carr Funerals:

Brookvale Tel: 02-9977-8011	Gordon Tel: 02-9498-4455
Kogarah Tel: 02-9553-8560	Mona Vale Tel: 02-9999-1522

5. T.J. Andrews Funeral Directors (several locations in New South Wales)  
Website: <http://tjandrews.com.au>

Meadowbank (HEAD OFFICE) Tel: 02-9807-7923	Auburn Tel: 02-9649-7850
Carlingford	Frenchs Forest

Tel: 02-9871-6402	Tel: 02-9975-1010
Gosford Tel: 02-4322-2199	Hornsby Tel: 02-9477-3272
Newtown Tel: 02-9557-2873	Ryde Tel: 02-9807-2732
Seven Hills Tel: 02-9624-1385	

6. Value Funerals  
850 Pacific Hwy  
Gordon, NSW 2072  
Tel: 02-9360-5899

7. W. Larcombe and Sons  
52 Talbragar Street  
Dubbo, NSW 2830  
Tel: 02-6882-3199

Queensland:

1. Alex Gow Funerals (offices in Newstead and Cleveland)  
Website: <http://alexgowfunerals.com.au>

Newstead ( HEADOFFICE) Tel: 07-3852-1501	Cleveland Tel: 07-3821-4570
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2. Burkin Svendsen Funerals  
Website: <http://burkinfunerals.com.au>

Westcourt Tel: 07-4054-5400	
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3. Cannon and Cripps  
270 Kelvin Grove Road  
Brisbane, QLD 4059  
Tel: 07-3356-4277

4. K.M. Smith Funerals (several locations in Queensland)

Website: <http://kmsmith.com.au>

Bowen Hills Tel: 07-3252-2031	Goodna Tel: 07-3818-7833
Hillcrest Tel: 07-3800-7800	Ipswich Tel: 07-3281-7831
Strathpine Tel: 07-3205-8655	Wynnum 07-3348-4133

5. Metropolitan Funerals (affiliated with Beaudesert Funerals, Hiram Funerals, Gatton Lidley Lowood funerals, City Funerals, Mackay Funerals and Sarina Funerals  
Website: <http://www.metropolitanfunerals.com.au>

Metropolitan Funerals:

Aspley Tel: 07-3263-5044	Cleveland Tel: 07-3245-4358
Deception Bay Tel: 07-3888-6469	Palm Beach Tel: 07-5525-7777
Petrie Tel: 07-3285-4522	Mt Gravatt Tel: 07-3349-9211
Redcliffe Tel: 07-3284-3799	Springwood Tel: 07-3209-3555
Southport Tel: 07-5531-1722	Toowong Tel: 07-3870-1044
Wynnum Tel: 07-3893-2715	

Beaudesert Funerals:

Beaudesert Tel: 07-5541-2511	
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City Funerals:

Mackay Tel: 07-4957-4653	
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Gatton Laidley Lowood Funeral Services:

Gatton Tel: 07-5462-1808	
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Hiram Philip Funerals:

Toowoomba Tel: 07-4632-4211	
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Mackay Funerals:

Mackay Tel: 07-4957-3248	
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Sarina Funerals:

Sarina Tel: 07-4943-0880	
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6. Morelys Funerals

Website: <http://www.morleys.net.au>

Townsville Tel: 07-4779-4744	
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7. Newhaven Funerals

Website: <http://www.newhavenfunerals.com.au>

Stapylton Tel: 07-3807-4444	Burleigh Junction Tel: 07-5593-4777
Mackay Tel: 07-4953-1200	

**PART V. Profile of services available in Australia regarding preparation and shipment of remains:**

Cremation and burial are equally prevalent in Australia and adequate services are available to refrigerate, house, handle, transport, and process human remains. Embalming services are available, but not normally provided unless specifically requested since public law requires burial shortly after death. Police stations and hospitals usually have local funeral home contacts available for the family. Funeral homes typically assist family members with every aspect of the process and will prepare remains for interment in Australia or arrange export in repatriation cases.

### **(1) Maximum Period of Retention of Bodies Prior to Burial**

Neither local nor national law places a time limit on burial whether or not the remains are embalmed. Experience has shown that if bodies have been retained for more than 6 months the authorities in New South Wales and Queensland will proceed to dispose of remains through a destitute burial.

### **(2) Embalming**

Embalming is only essential if the body is to be entombed above ground in a burial chamber or transported overseas. New South Wales maintains sufficient facilities and trained, licensed staff to provide embalming services. They also allow for the embalming in cases where death was due to HIV and Hepatitis C.

While embalming is typically required for exporting deceased remains to the U.S., some exceptions can be made for religions that prohibit embalming. In these instances, the body can be prepared in accordance with said practices and hermetically sealed in the transport coffin for shipment.

### **(3) Cremation**

The cremation process may commence after the appropriate documentation has been issued by the local medical authorities regarding the cause and nature of death. Cremation services are readily available in Australia.

### **(4) Caskets and Containers**

Export –quality caskets and shipping container which meet the requirements of 7 FAM 260 are available in New South Wales and Queensland. Local funeral directors provide a variety of coffins and cost depends on the materials and construction of the coffin.

### **(5) Exportation of Remains**

Procedures and documents for the exportation of human remains are as follows. Except as noted, all are shipping company or U.S. Government requirements:

Embalmed Remains:

1. Death Certificate from the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages
2. Embalming certificate issued by the undertaker/funeral director
3. Health certificate stating that the remains have no quarantinable diseases, issued by the Department of Health.
4. Infectious disease certificate issued by the Department of Health/Human Services
5. Affidavit by undertaker attesting to contents and embalming and that the casket is hermetically sealed
6. Consular Mortuary Certificate issued by the Consular Officer

Cremated remains:

1. Local death certificate;
2. \*Cremation certificate and
3. \*Certificate from the crematory stating that the container holds only the cremated remains of the deceased.

\* The information requested in items 2 and 3 are often included on a single certificate.

Posting of cremated remains (air mail): Remains can be posted internationally via registered mail through the local post. Remains must be encased in a sealed container and a customs declaration form stating the contents of the container must be affixed to the package.

Army Post Office (APO) Mail: Persons entitled to use U.S. Army postal facilities may ship cremated human remains by APO parcel post provided they are packed in appropriate containers. The original container provided by the crematory generally suffices for this purpose. The container must be sent via registered post with return receipt service. A customs declaration form stating the contents of the container must be affixed to the article. U.S. Consulates General and U.S. Embassies may be contacted for information regarding location and accessibility of APOs in the area.

**(6) Costs**

All expenses associated with the burial and repatriation processes must be paid in advance. Fees may vary depending on the services provided. Cost of burial and repatriation of the remains of a deceased will vary depending on where the death occurred.

The following fee schedules include cost estimates for interment in Sydney or Brisbane and repatriation of deceased and cremated remains from Sydney and Brisbane, Australia to the U.S.

Additional charges apply if the deceased must be transported to Sydney or Brisbane from interstate for local burial or repatriation to the U.S. Costs have been converted to U.S. Dollars (USD) from the cost in local currency at the rate of exchange of 1.463. Australian Dollars (AUD) to one U.S. Dollar (USD), which prevailed on December 23, 2008.

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>NSW</b>		<b>QLD – Brisbane</b>	
	<b>AUD</b>	<b>USD</b>	<b>AUD</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b>INTERMENT IN AUSTRALIA (freight/parcel fees not included)</b>				
Cremation with funeral service	6565.00	4487.35	5000.00	3417.63
Cremation without funeral service	5690.00	3889.26	2290.00	1565.27
Internment of with funeral service and embalming	9125.60	6237.59	7000.00	1069.91
Internment without funeral service or embalming	7365.60	5034.58	4270.00	2918.66
<b>REPATRIATION TO THE U.S. (freight/parcel fees not included)</b>				
Repatriating deceased U.S. citizens to the U.S. with funeral service	6818.60	4660.69	5740.00	3923.45
Repatriating deceased U.S. citizens to the U.S. without funeral service	5883.60	4021.59	2635.00	1801.09
Consular fees (assessed for non-U.S. Citizens; AUD amount is converted from the USD fee; see exchange rate above)	87.78	60.00	87.78	60.00
Repatriating ashes with funeral service	3845.60	2628.57	5150.00	3520.16
Repatriating ashes without funeral service	2970.60	2030.48	2440.00	1667.80

Destitution and funeral costs: In cases of destitution where neither the deceased person's estate nor family members are able to pay funeral costs, the NSW Public Health Unit, in cooperation with local social service and medical authorities, is responsible for administering the process related to cremation and burial.

Air Freight (Remains): FedEx and DHL will not transport human remains in any form. Freight charges imposed by local cargo companies are not uniform and vary depending on the weight and dimensions of the item. The following shipping charges are estimates based on average weight of an export type casket with human remains averaging 330 Lbs (150 Kgs). Costs for air



freight transport from Sydney and Brisbane to various points in the United States are listed below and must be added to the cost of funeral and export preparation processes:

SYDNEY TO:	TOTAL AUD	TOTAL USD
California	2900.00	1982.22
Illinois	3100.00	2118.93
New York	3300.00	2255.63
BRISBANE TO:	TOTAL AUD	TOTAL USD
California	2797.00	1911.82
Illinois	3096.00	2116.19
New York	3171.00	2167.46

Cremated Remains: Remains may be sent to the U.S. by air or sea via local postal facilities provided that the remains are sealed in an air tight container and a customs declaration form is affixed to the container.

Air Mail: Cremated remains that are appropriately packaged may be shipped to the United States by air mail through Australia postal facilities. Air Mail service accommodates up to 20 kgs with the approximate cost of AUD 0.45/1kg = USD 0. 31/2.2 lbs.

Army Post Office (APO) Mail: The following chart provides approximate APO Priority Mail shipping charges to various locations in the U.S. Items too bulky to be sent in the standard Priority Mailer may be subject to additional shipping costs.

SYDNEY TO:	FLAT RATE	
	(AUD)	(USD)
California	18.94	12.95
Illinois	40.30	27.55
Florida	40.30	27.55

Surface (Sea) Mail is not recommended for various reasons.

### **(7) Exhumation and shipping**

Exhumation is the removal of deceased remains from a vault or grave for reasons other than re-burial. An exhumation can be ordered by a coroner for the purposes of forensic or criminal

investigation or an application to exhume remains may be submitted to the local government authorities. For more information contact the New South Wales Department of Health on 61-2-9391-9000 or Queensland Department of Health general switchboard on 61-7-3234-0111 during business hours.

Applicants are responsible for paying all the fees associated with exhumation. The fee schedule below is prepared using information provided by local funeral directors and estimates the costs for exhuming and preparing remains and export. Costs have been converted to U.S. Dollars (USD) from the cost in local currency at the rate of exchange of 1.463 Australian Dollars (AUD) to one U.S. Dollar (USD), which prevailed on December 23, 2008. Fees periodically change in line with the Australia Consumer Price Index.

EXHUMING AND SHIPPING REMAINS		
SYDNEY TO:	TOTAL AUD	TOTAL USD
California	11433.6	7815.17
Illinois	11633.6	7951.88
New York	11833.6	8088.59

EXHUMING AND SHIPPING REMAINS		
BRISBANE TO:	TOTAL AUD	TOTAL USD
California	7817.00	5343.13
Illinois	8346.00	5684.21
New York	8191.00	5598.77

**(8) Autopsies**

An autopsy is an inspection of the body that can assist medical authorities with establishing the reason for illness and death. The necessity for an autopsy and its extensiveness is determined by medical authorities. The decedent’s doctor or family may request an autopsy be performed. Family members requesting an autopsy should be aware that a fee of approximately AUD 3,000.00 (USD 2050.58) may be charged. A Coroner may also request an autopsy, without family consent when the cause of death is unknown or due to unnatural causes, such as accident or suicide. No fee is charged to the family for an autopsy ordered by the Coroner. Once the autopsy is completed to the Coroner’s satisfaction, the Coroner will issue a Burial/Cremation Permit and release the body.

Information regarding autopsies previously conducted in NSW is available to immediate family members of a deceased person or an agent of the family. The law regarding disclosure of

information varies among the Australian states and territories. Inquiries regarding autopsies conducted in NSW should be directed to the Office of Clinical Policy, NSW Health on 61-2-9391-9524, or 61-2-9391-9450 and in Queensland to the Coronial Counseling Service on 61-7-3274-9200.

#### **(9) Local Customs Regarding Funerals, Disposition of Remains, Mourning, Memorial Services**

Australia is home to a diverse religious population with varying funeral, and mourning practices and local places of worship should be consulted when preparing services. Australian funeral homes typically provide services for wakes, funeral/memorial ceremonies, cremation and/or interment of deceased persons. Relatives and friends of the deceased are usually welcome to attend each part of the service.

#### **(10) Remarks**

There are some cases when a death may be registered with the Registrar prior to establishing cause of death. When this occurs, the Coroner may be contacted to ascertain when the cause of death will be registered so that a complete death certificate may be obtained.

Death certificates may be requested from the relevant state's Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Fees apply.

**Revised 1/2009**