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[REDACTED]

Our Reference:  
FOI2017/08296

Date: 31 October 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to my letter dated 4 October 2017, I am writing to provide a response to your email of 25 August 2017 in which you requested the following information:

***"Please provide me with a copy of the Atomic Weapons Establishment's document "Post Mortem Procedures for Alexander Litvinenko"."***

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act). I can advise that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds information in scope of your request.

I attach the following document:

Post Mortem Procedures for Alexander Litvinenko

I am sorry that it has taken longer to provide this response than we would have wished. The information provided contains a small amount of third party information in the form of names of individuals. This constitutes personal information under the Data Protection Act. This information has been withheld under absolute exemption Section 40 (Personal Information) of the FOI Act and has been redacted from the documents.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not

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normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

**Defence Equipment & Support Policy Secretariat**

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## Issue 1

PROCEDURE 3

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# Post Mortem Procedures for Alexander Litvinenko

This procedure is based upon a draft document produced by the HPA and modified by the Police Radiation Protection Adviser based on information from interested parties at the Post Mortem planning meeting held at 15:00 on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006.

## Personnel

- Home Office Pathologist Personnel
- Police Forensic Evidence Personnel
- HPA Contractor Supplied Health Physics Monitors

## Equipment Required

- Post Mortem Table Sealed in PVC.
- Post Mortem Equipment.
- 4 x Health Physics Contamination Monitoring instruments (2 for clearance of personnel and 2 for samples).
- Appropriate bags suitable for collecting post mortem items.
- Sealable plastic containers suitable for collecting the post mortem items.
- Contractor Equipment suitable for the processing and bagging of waste.

The following steps are guidelines and may be varied at the discretion of the pathologist or the lead health physics monitor.

## Set-Up Arrangements

1. The area around the post mortem site should be laid with plastic sheeting and sealed to the floor at the edges with tape. The area should be adequate for all personnel to undertake their tasks on the plastic sheeting without the need to move themselves off the plastic.
2. All foreseeable tools, containers etc should be immediately available at the site so as to avoid the need for movement off the plastic sheeted area once the post mortem has started. (An additional runner should be considered as a precautionary measure in case there is a need to obtain further items.)
3. A separate personnel clearance monitoring area adjacent to the main sheeted plastic area should be sheeted out with plastic and sealed at the edges with tape.
4. Security arrangements shall be made to ensure the security of the post mortem room.
5. The body should be placed, double bagged, within a tray on the examination table. The tray should prevent body fluids from spreading beyond the immediate area.
6. The tray should contain absorbent material to limit the quantity of free liquid in the tray.
7. A waste bag should be taped at a suitable location to accept waste arising from the post mortem.
8. Sealing off of the ventilation and air conditioning system.
9. Emergency Evacuation procedures are agreed.

## Dress State

All personnel who will have direct and close contact with the body shall wear:

- A surgical gown
- A powered hood respirator.
- Double gloves with the inner gloves consisting of a stainless steel material.
- An additional layer of changeable outer gloves should be worn.

- Tyvex overalls should be worn with a waterproof apron on top plus additional waterproofing of the exposed arms.
- Boots.
- Double Overshoes.
- A lightweight waterproof apron should be taped around each arm.

### **Other Participating Personnel present in the room during the Post Mortem:**

- A powered hood respirator.
- Double gloves with the inner gloves with the inner gloves taped around the cuffs.
- An additional layer of changeable outer gloves should be worn.
- Double Tyvex coveralls should be worn (this will aid the decontamination process).
- Boots
- Double Overshoes.

All waste arisings shall be monitored by a contract agency provided by the Government Decontamination Service. Once the Post Mortem is complete and personnel are monitored out. The contractor shall undertake collection of the material and undertake activities including a clearance survey to re-instate the area to pre-post mortem radiological status.

### **Post Mortem Procedure**

1. The pathologists should undertake the activities of the post mortem as per their standard procedures.
2. The post mortem should be undertaken without removing the corpse from the body bag. The body should be accessed by cutting away the parts of the body bag around the areas of interest.
3. After removal of a tissue sample from the body, the sample should be weighed and placed by the same individual into a suitably sized standard receptacle that is held by a second individual. This transfer process should be undertaken as close together as possible so to minimise the spread of fluids away from the body.
4. The sample container should be passed to a health physics monitor and placed into a clean bag. This sample should be removed to a storage area.
5. All three individuals should change their outer gloves and place them into the waste receptacle.

Once all samples have been collected and the post mortem is complete.

The body and the original bags should be double bagged again.

All personnel starting with the pathologists should move to the clearance area one at a time and undergo a standard barrier procedure to remove themselves from a contaminated environment.

Standing on the dirty side they should remove all of the outer clothing and remain in their surgical gown, their inner gloves and their tyvex coveralls. The outer clothing should be placed in the "dirty" area. They should remove their outer overshoes and step forward onto the clean area of plastic. The health physics monitor should the monitor and decontaminate the personnel out of the area leaving all items in the dirty area for removal by the decontamination contractor.

### **The Samples**

The samples should be packaged and monitored by the HPA supplied contractor in preparation for transfer to their next destination. (Note: the range of alphas in liquid is in the order of 50µm).

**The Waste**

Disposal of waste arisings will be arranged by the Government Decontamination Service.

**Emergency Response**

An AWE Health Physics monitoring team will be on location as a standby team to enable monitoring of personnel out of the post mortem location in the event of an emergency.

**Risk Assessment**

The total body radioactive content is in the order of  $10^{10}$  Bq.

The polonium-210 concentration in the blood and urine is in the order of 1-10 kBq/ml.

The polonium-210 concentration in body tissue is in the order of 1 kBq/g.

<b>Hazard</b>	Radioactive Contamination entering the body by: Ingestion, Inhalation or through open wounds
<b>Source of Hazard</b>	Blood, body fluids, tissues samples
<b>Controls</b>	Personnel will be wearing suitable respiratory protection. Personnel will be wearing two layer of gloves including a robust inner glove. Staff will use manual tools and not electric tools.
<b>Residual Risk</b>	Low

<b>Hazard</b>	Biological agents entering the body by: Ingestion, Inhalation or through open wounds
<b>Source of Hazard</b>	Blood, body fluids, tissues samples
<b>Controls</b>	Personnel will be wearing suitable respiratory protection. Personnel will be wearing two layer of gloves including a robust inner glove. Staff will use manual tools and not electric tools.
<b>Residual Risk</b>	Low



**Police Radiation Protection Adviser**