



Society of Radiographers of South Africa

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Professional Board for Radiography and Clinical Technology  
Health Professions Council of South Africa  
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Attention: Chairperson Dr Clark

Dear Dr C Clark

**RE: MAY 2021 STAKEHOLDERS MEETING ITEM 9.9 FORENSIC RADIOGRAPHY**

The Society of Radiographers of South Africa (SORSA) acknowledges receipt of the minutes of the stakeholders' meeting held on 6 May 2021. We note the definition of forensic radiography in 9.9. Such a narrow definition differs from that in the literature. The definition in 9.9 is limited to imaging of deceased patients. This means forensic imaging is only performed on patients that have died. A patient refers to a person who is under medical or psychiatric care, and receives medical attention, care, or treatment. The scope of forensic radiography is much wider. By definition, forensic radiography is described as imaging examinations to gather information that aids in civil or criminal investigations. Every imaging examination on living persons could be used in such investigations. In terms of the literature the reasons for forensic radiography of the living include bone age for criminal court case; suspected patient abuse (non-accidental injuries); drugs (e.g., body packing); people trafficking; and illegal immigrants. Forensic radiography of the deceased includes: cause of death, e.g. homicide; identification of deceased persons including mass fatalities; mass graves; and body remains. Forensic radiography also includes pathology specimens, for example, hyoid/ larynx.

In circa 2002, at the request of the then PB for radiography, SORSA compiled guidelines for forensic radiography. For your records we have attached a PDF of the guidelines in case they are not on file at the HPCSA.

As per the attached guidelines, and the literature, forensic radiography pertains to the scope of the profession and should thus be included in all undergraduate radiography programmes. We hope that the definition in 9.9 is changed to cover both living and dead persons and not limited to deceased patients.

Sincerely

Dr Riaan van de Venter  
SORSA President

Annexure: Guidelines for forensic radiography: 2002