Subject: Necropsy Requirements Policy #22

References: AWA Section 13

9 CFR, Part 2, Section 2.33 and 2.40(b)(2)

History: This is a new policy statement.

Justification: Current regulatory and policy requirements for the performance of a necropsy

have focused on elephants and marine mammals. Notwithstanding these requirements, there are times when the performance of one or more necropsies is necessary to provide adequate veterinary care for a facility by providing diagnoses of conditions, thereby allowing for adequate prevention, control, and

treatment of the disease.

Policy: When warranted by circumstances including

When warranted by circumstances including--but not limited to--the list below, and at the discretion of the attending veterinarian, regulated facilities should perform necropsies as part of providing adequate veterinary care. Similarly, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) inspector, in consultation with their Regional office supervisor, may require a facility to perform necropsies on selected regulated animals which die (including euthanasia) at that licensed or registered facility. Necropsy records, like other medical information, will be maintained at the facility for at least 1 year or as otherwise specified in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) regulations and standards, and be made available on request to APHIS personnel. Necropsies should be conducted within an appropriate interval after the death, and/or the body should be kept at appropriate refrigerated temperatures to ensure a meaningful examination. All necropsy reports must be signed and dated by the veterinarian preparing the report.

Circumstances which may warrant necropsy performance:

-The facility is undergoing a high death loss.

- -There is a significant number of unexplained deaths at the facility.
- -There exists a strong chance that an undiagnosed infectious disease is present at the facility (with or without potential zoonoses).
- -Circumstances around a death indicate a violation of the AWA may have contributed to the situation.

For the purposes of this policy, a "necropsy" means an appropriate postmortem examination (which complies with currently acceptable professional standards) of the animal performed by or under the direct supervision of a

AC 22.1

veterinarian experienced with that species which may include, but not limited to, a systemic gross pathology examination (internal and external), appropriate microbiological culture and histopathology of lesions, and other indicated testing. All results are to be recorded in the animal's medical record.

22.2 AC