

Cemetery Management Guidelines for MacDonnell Regional Council

Working toward Best Practice

2020 - 2023



Cemetery four (4) level implementation program 2020-2023

The MacDonnell Regional Council has developed Cemetery Guidelines, providing the basis for a four (4) level implementation plan for Cemeteries. This outlines the service level standards that we will aim to achieve within the various timeframes, taking into account the Council's Goal of Developing Communities; and, also in accordance with relevant legislation – *NT Cemeteries Act*.

Intent: to achieve best practice in Cemetery management across the Council.

In commencing this four (4) level development plan, it should be noted that only twelve (12) Regional Council Service Delivery Centres (SDCs) have cemeteries at different levels of development. Additionally, there have not been any documented practices and standards for staff to adhere.

Some SDCs have made significant advancements in improving their cemeteries over the past ten years. This is in part due to initiatives by MRC and the community. Proposed NT Legislative changes in 2019 to introduce a *NT Burials and Cremation Bill* was withdrawn.

In outlining the targets of the four (4) level plan, we note that some SDCs have already achieved some of the targets for various levels. These sites will be required to continue implementing acceptable standards and practices that have not yet been met. The objective is for relevant SDCs to meet each service level's targets for Cemeteries. Achieving the next level's targets is encouraged.

Twelve (12) priority actions have been identified for cemeteries in the Council. These actions are to be achieved in each community by the end of the four (4) service level periods that this plan applies.

Priority Actions

1. Fenced with secure gate	SL1	7. Water Tank with tap	SL2
2. Carpark	SL1	8. Signage	SL3
3. Open Grave Shoring Device	SL1	9. Plot Markers	SL3
4. Shade Structure	SL2	10. Register	SL3
5. Seating	SL2	11. Pathways	SL4
6. Wheelie bins	SL2	12. Landscaping	SL4

Service Level One: Site identification and clearing

Actions at this level are to ensure a perimeter fence is installed that has a gate. An adequately sized area should be designated as a carpark. An open grave shoring device is for OHS purposes to ensure the grave area is safe during times of funerals. Actions are to be taken to commence and complete Service Level One requirements in the timeframes below.

Service Level One Targets	Anticipated Time Frame	Completed (Y/N)
<i>Fenced with Secure Gate</i>		
Survey area and order sufficient fencing	12 months	
Install fencing in accordance with Technical Services specifications	12 months	
<i>Car Park</i>		
Develop a carpark to Technical Services specifications	12 months	
<i>Open Grave Shoring Device</i>		
Ensure a grave shoring device is available on site for use	12 months	
Store device at the cemetery when not required	12 months	
<i>Staff Management</i>		
Long term plan of cemetery to include capacity building with appropriate skills for civil workers in the operation of appropriate plant and equipment.	On –going	
PPE (safety wear) for all staff	On-going	
Staff are trained in the safe digging of holes, concreting, levelling and other appropriate skills	12 months	



Grave Shoring Device

Service Level Two: Shade Structure, Seating, Wheelie Bins and Water Tank

Actions at this level are to improve the overall facilities at the cemetery and will include installing an appropriate shade structure (usually a 6m x 6m gable roof) and constructed to standard by competent personnel. Waste bins are to be placed adjacent to the shade structure and regularly emptied as a part of routine waste management practices. Actions should be dealt with in months, rather than deadlines. Seating will be installed under the shade structure and non-potable water is to be provided to assist family members who wish to tend to individual graves.

Service Level Two Targets	Anticipated Time Frame	Completed (Y/N)
<i>Shade Shelter</i>		
Source an appropriate sized shade structure	12 months	
Erect the shade shelter	12 months	
Concrete or alternative floor for shade structure	12 months	
<i>Seating</i>		
Source an appropriate bench style seat for installing under shade structure.	12 months	
Install seat	12 months	
<i>Wheelie Bins</i>		
Install a double wheelie bin holder adjacent to shade shelter and supply two wheelie bins	3 months	
<i>Water Tank with Tap</i>		
Source and install a water tank (approx. 1000 litres) with tap (NB – where no mains water is available)	12 months	
<i>Staff Management</i>		
PPE (safety wear) for all staff	On-going	
Staff are trained in construction and concreting, using appropriate plant and equipment and other skills	12 months	



Service Level Three: Signage and Plot Markers

At this level, actions are aimed at improving the facilities at the cemetery to make it easier for people to find the location of deceased people. Actions should be dealt with in months, rather than deadlines.

Service Level Three Targets	Anticipated Time Frame	Completed (Y/N)
<i>Signage</i>		
Consider an appropriate Cemetery name by consulting with community members and the Local Authority.	12 months	
<i>Plot Markers</i>		
Compile an appropriate cemetery register that includes the information required within the <i>Cemeteries Act</i> .	12 months	
Develop a grid plan of the cemetery that identifies the location of each grave	12 months	
Install plot markers on the graves		
<i>Staff Management</i>		
PPE (safety wear) for all staff	On-going	
Staff are trained in relevant skills	12 months	



Service Level Four: Pathways and Landscaping

At this level, actions are primarily aimed at improving the overall ambience of the community cemetery by creating pathways and landscaping. Actions should be dealt with in months, rather than deadlines.

Service Level Four Targets	Anticipated Time Frame	Completed (Y/N)
<i>Pathways</i>		
Install appropriate pathways	12 months	
<i>Landscaping</i>		
Plant appropriate trees & shrubs for arid zones	12 months	
<i>Staff Management</i>		
PPE (safety wear) for all staff	On-going	
Staff are trained in basic horticultural and landscaping techniques and other appropriate skills	12 months	

