

ANZPAA National Institute of Forensic Science

STRATEGIC PLAN

2016–2019



OUR STRATEGIC INTENT PROMOTE AND FACILITATE EXCELLENCE IN FORENSIC SCIENCE

The National Institute of Forensic Science is a directorate within the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA)

ANZPAA VISION

Driving excellence in Australian and New Zealand Policing

ANZPAA MISSION

ANZPAA will work in partnership to develop, promote and share strategic policing initiatives that enhance community safety in Australia and New Zealand

Acknowledgements

ANZPAA acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are Australia's first peoples and the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work. ANZPAA is committed to fulfilling the principles of New Zealand's founding document The Treaty of Waitangi. Central to the principles is a common understanding that all parties will relate and participate with each other in good faith with mutual respect, co-operation and trust.

This Strategic Plan is the direct result of the hard work and collaboration of the ANZPAA NIFS and ANZPAA teams and the generous forensic stakeholders who provided important input and feedback.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO & DIRECTOR OF ANZPAA NIFS

This Strategic Plan (the Plan) represents an exciting new direction for the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency National Institute of Forensic Science (ANZPAA NIFS).

It sets out strong, ambitious and clear goals for our Institute over the next three years. These goals will be delivered through ten programs of work, approved by the ANZPAA Board of Australia and New Zealand Police Commissioners. Within these broad programs, specific activities and projects are approved by our newly created governance body, the Australia New Zealand Forensic Executive Committee (ANZFEC). Our new structure creates not only greater accountability to the whole forensic community, but also an agility which will enable us to efficiently deliver products and services that represent true value for money.

Research and innovation remains a key focus for us. The development of a research and innovation strategy will help provide a definitive roadmap for our future investment. The work program will also improve the exchange of forensic information, enhance education and training, and promote quality through practitioner certification, proficiency testing and standards development.

The successful delivery of this Plan will be achieved through harnessing our stakeholders' commitment and collaboration, and to continually challenge ourselves to deliver excellence in support of forensic science in Australia and New Zealand. The next three years are certain to be a motivating and rewarding time for both the NIFS team and the forensic science community.

In commending this Plan to you, we acknowledge the support received from the ANZPAA Board, and its approval of many of the recommendations made by the Independent Review of NIFS, conducted by the Hon. Frank Vincent AO QC.

Jon White

Chief Executive Officer, ANZPAA

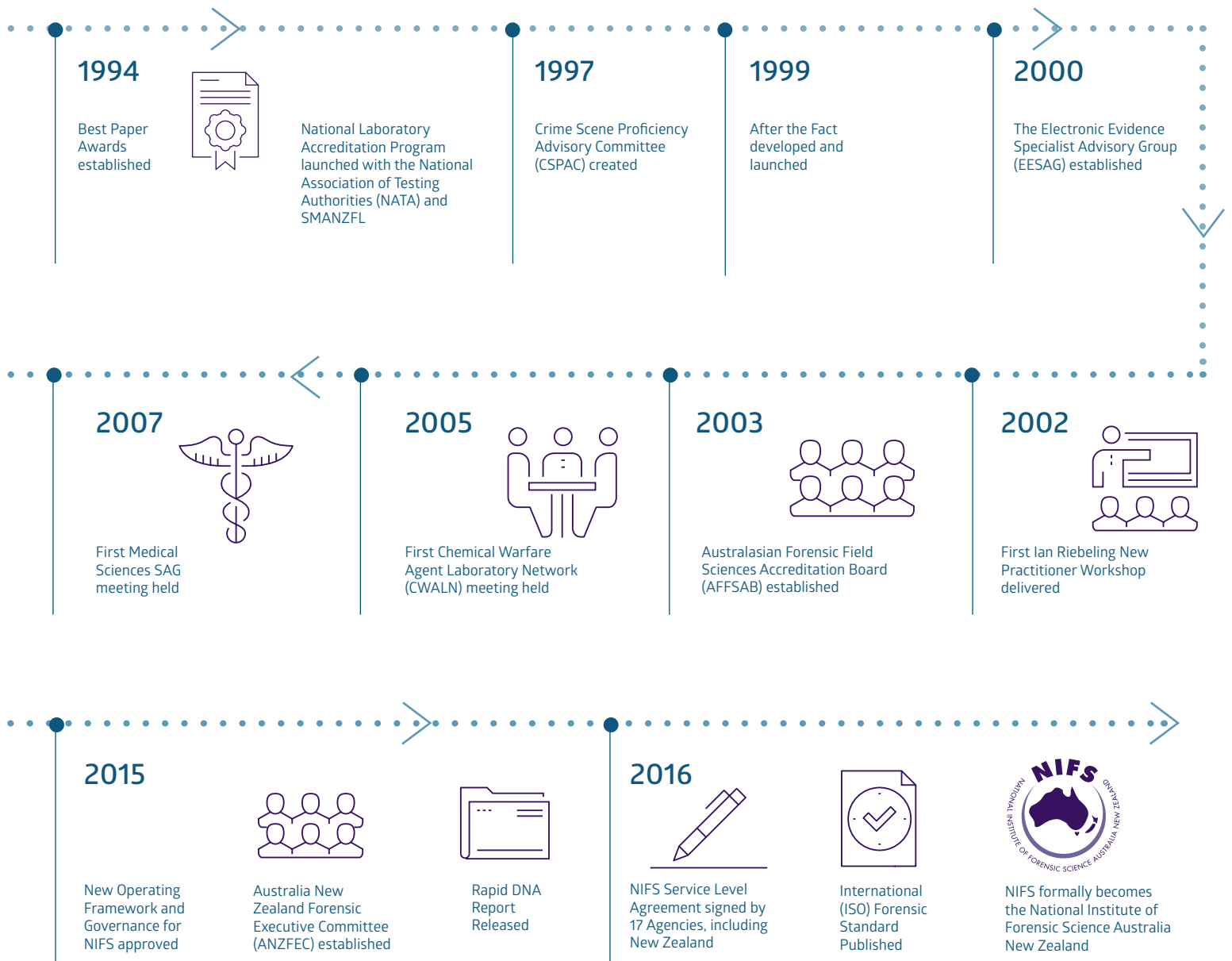
Dr Linzi Wilson-Wilde OAM

Director, NIFS



In 2014, ANZPAA's Board engaged the Honourable Frank Vincent AO QC to undertake a review of ANZPAA NIFS. The Hon. Frank Vincent found very strong stakeholder support for ANZPAA NIFS and identified the need for greater investment by the broader forensic science community in the activities of NIFS. As a consequence, a new governance strategic framework was approved in 2015.

Our new framework strengthens our role within the forensic science community in Australia and New Zealand and recognises the necessity for ANZPAA NIFS to work closely with a wide range of criminal justice stakeholders.



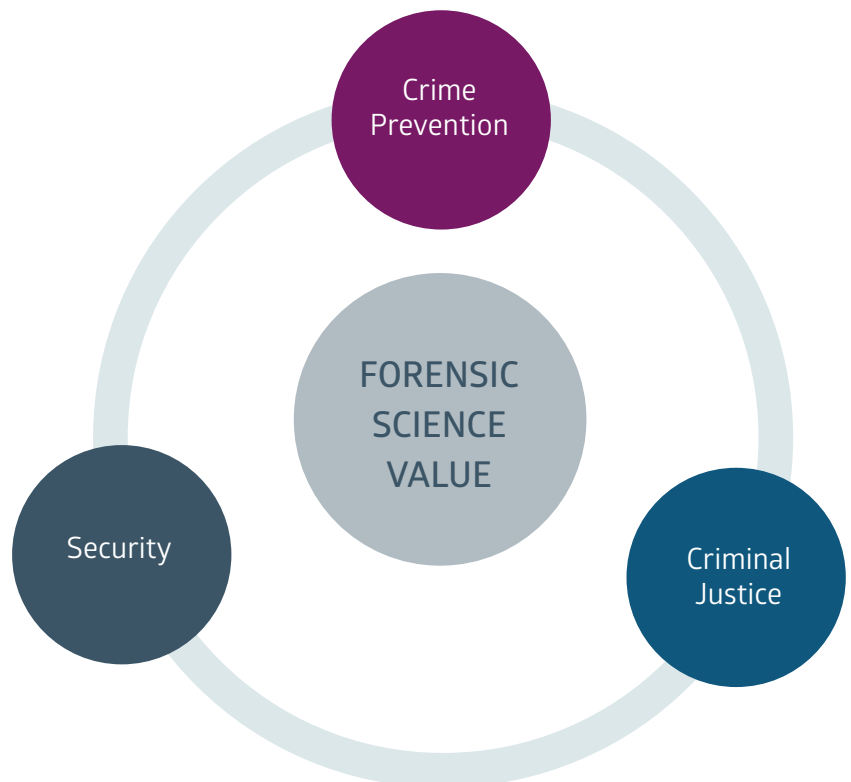
OUR FOCUS

The challenge for forensic service providers is to balance the service needs of the criminal justice system, crime prevention and security at a time of rising demand, increasing cost pressure and growing importance placed on the reliability of evidence.

DEMAND	COST PRESSURE	RELIABILITY
<p>Advancements in legislation, technology, expanded capability and increases in the perceived value of forensic science have contributed to a rise in demand for forensic services.</p>	<p>The downstream effects of contemporary financial issues impact on forensic science service delivery and have led to a focus on finding new ways to deliver services and opportunities to reduce costs.</p>	<p>Since the release of influential reports, such as the 2009 National Academy of Sciences report on Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States, the criminal justice system is placing increasing importance on evidence reliability and standardisation of practices.</p>

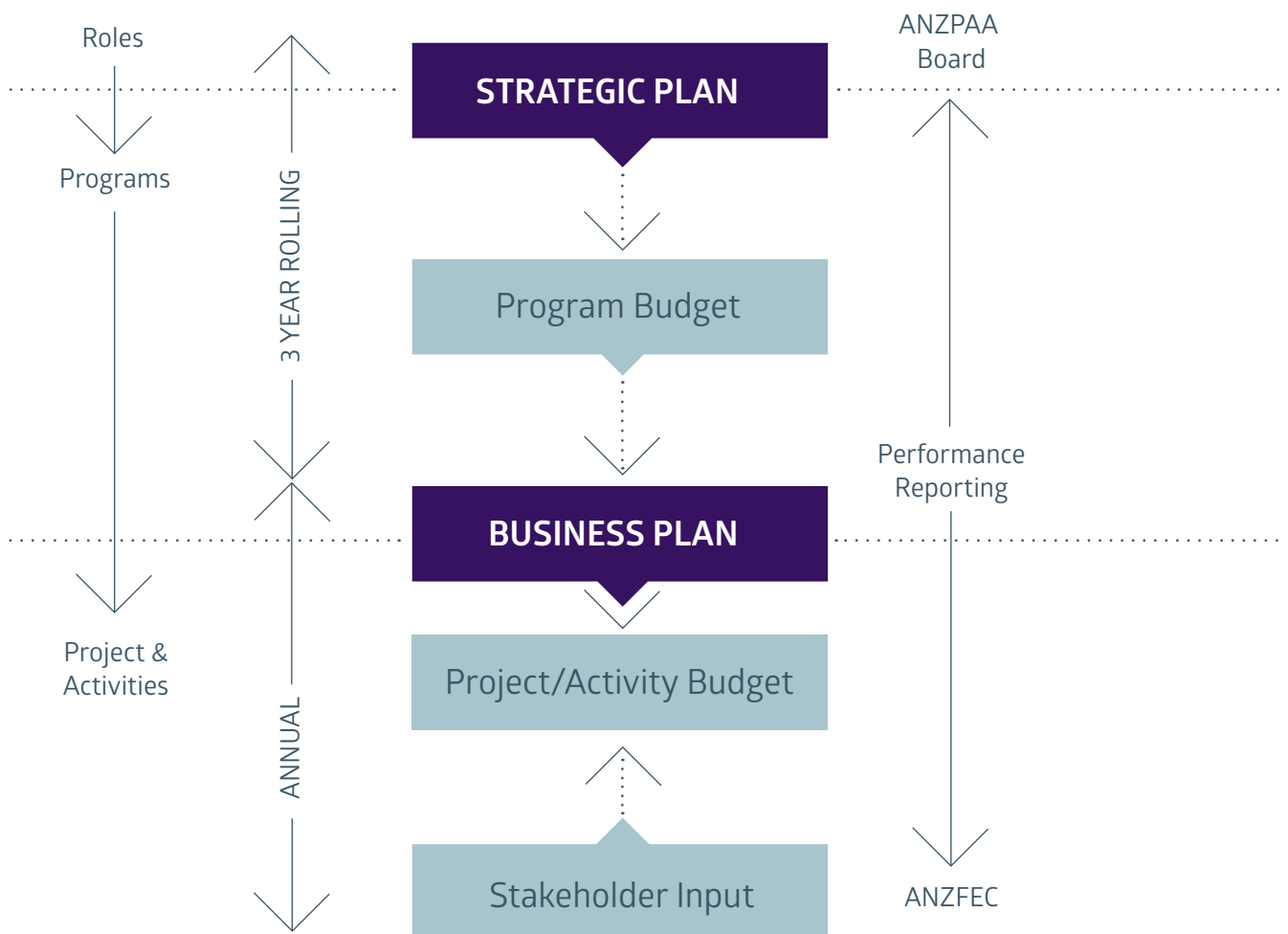
The criminal justice system must have confidence that forensic evidence is relevant and reliable to support a fair and just legal process. To meet this need, it is essential that forensic science is supported by robust quality systems and underpinned by sound science and standardised practices. It will be important to address this through multi-jurisdictional initiatives, promoting quality and standardisation and investigating benchmarking opportunities.

Police depend on the prompt delivery of a broad range of forensic services to help investigate crime in a continually changing community and international environment. Moreover, it is recognised that forensic science has a greater potential to support police in crime prevention initiatives and in the area of national security through the linking and analysis of forensic data. To meet these needs forensic science must be innovative and results must be timely, fit-for-purpose and easily shared.



OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

We are governed by a three year strategic plan developed in collaboration with the ANZFEC and approved by the ANZPAA Board. The strategic plan is given effect through the implementation of an annual business plan developed in conjunction with and approved by the ANZFEC, comprising of representatives from all of the forensic science agencies who are signatories to the ANZPAA NIFS service level agreement.



OUR ROLES AND PROGRAMS

Our programs were developed in close collaboration with key forensic leadership and subject matter expert groups. They are designed to address priority needs and issues in forensic science. Our programs of work are aligned to the ANZPAA NIFS roles. Our programs contain specific projects and activities that make up the ANZPAA NIFS work program.

	OUR ROLES	OUR PROGRAMS
1	<p>CO-ORDINATION: builds jurisdictional and cross-jurisdictional capability through protocols, products and enhanced implementation support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Operational Capability Program > Operational Effectiveness Program
2	<p>INNOVATION: contributes to a creative and innovative forensic science body of knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > R & I Strategy Program > Capability Development Program > Engagement & Recognition Program
3	<p>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: promotes and facilitates information-sharing and cross-jurisdictional dialogue and events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Specialist Advice Program
4	<p>EDUCATION AND TRAINING: maximises opportunities for forensic science skills and knowledge development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Education and Training Program
5	<p>QUALITY: delivers quality assurance programs, develops standards and manages practitioner certification program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certification Program > Proficiency Testing Program > Standards Program



CO-ORDINATION

1.1 Operational Capability Program

Supporting and strengthening current forensic science services

OBJECTIVES

- The interests of all jurisdictions are represented in all projects and activities and those interests are represented internationally. This will ensure outcomes meet the needs of our forensic science stakeholders
- Development of consistent processes, enhanced capabilities and interoperability between jurisdictions in regards to Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)
- Research will be undertaken to support scientific data for opinions expressed in court and an understanding of the limitations and error rates of the science. This will promote interoperability and create community confidence in forensic science services
- Forensic science agencies are aware of emerging risks and issues to current forensic science services and an Australia New Zealand facilitated response is conducted to maintain community confidence in forensic science services

1.2 Operational Effectiveness Program

Improving the way forensic science services are delivered

OBJECTIVES

- Projects undertaken on behalf of jurisdictions will ensure that their combined purchasing power will result in significant financial savings to government forensic science agencies
- Facilitation of centralised access to drug reference standards reduces duplication of effort and ensures significant cost savings to forensic science agencies
- Development of jurisdictionally consistent and informed forensic science policy will be made available to decision-makers
- Standardised practices between jurisdictions will enhance end-user and public confidence in the forensic science system
- Leadership and co-ordination will leverage off available (and limited) resources and will reduce duplication of effort for projects with cross-jurisdictional implications

INNOVATION

2.1 Research and Innovation Strategy Program

Driving strategic research and innovation forward planning

OBJECTIVES

- Facilitation of the co-ordinated response to assess the potential of new technologies reduces duplication of effort and leverages human and financial current resources
- Australia and New Zealand prioritised and agreed pathways for research and innovation activities and investment
- Provision of a central location for accessing information regarding current research and an awareness of the forensic science discipline landscape where significant areas of research is undertaken

2.2 Capability Development Program

Enhancing the way we assess, adopt and implement new forensic science tools

OBJECTIVES

- A co-ordinated approach to information sharing for the creation or assessment of new technology reduces duplication of effort and provides a common position on new technology and engagement with manufacturers to drive a timely realisation of new technology benefits
- A co-ordinated approach to the use of technology from other sectors into forensic science will assist in the development of awareness and use of forensic intelligence processes
- Implementation of well-categorised technology and research leads to exchange of information to all jurisdictions on project outcomes and learnings

2.3 Engagement and Recognition Program

Encouraging and recognising forensic science excellence

OBJECTIVES

- Promotes collaboration between academia and industry to engage in research that benefits forensic science agencies and encourages forensic practitioners to participate in research and stay informed in emerging research
- Promotes and recognises excellence in forensic science





INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

3.1 Specialist Advice Program

Maximising the exchange of forensic science information and enhancing communication

OBJECTIVES

- Drives continuous improvement, harmonisation of process and interoperability of methods and experts at the specialist level
- Ability to leverage specialist knowledge between agencies and provide opportunities for collaboration and sharing of resources
- Exchange and sharing of resources, learnings and information between agencies promotes consistency between jurisdictions
- Increased public awareness and access to required forensic resources for police and the judiciary



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

4.1 Education and Training Program

Identifying and delivering national forensic training needs

OBJECTIVES

- Leveraging off resources reduces costs to forensic science agencies for specialised training needs and increased training opportunities for experts
- Establishment of agreed training standards will result in the portability of forensic science personnel between jurisdictions thereby increasing visibility on required/priority training and education needs

QUALITY

5.1 Certification Program

Promoting and delivering certification of forensic science experts

OBJECTIVES

- Ongoing assessment of forensic science practitioner competencies strengthens stakeholder confidence in forensic science services

5.2 Proficiency Testing Program

Ensuring the production and delivery of the proficiency test programs

OBJECTIVES

- The ability to regularly test the proficiency of forensic crime scene examiners leads to increased stakeholder confidence in forensic services
- The ability to regularly test the proficiency of forensic experts results in increased stakeholder confidence in forensic services

5.3 Standards Program

Leading the development and supporting the application of forensic science standards

OBJECTIVES

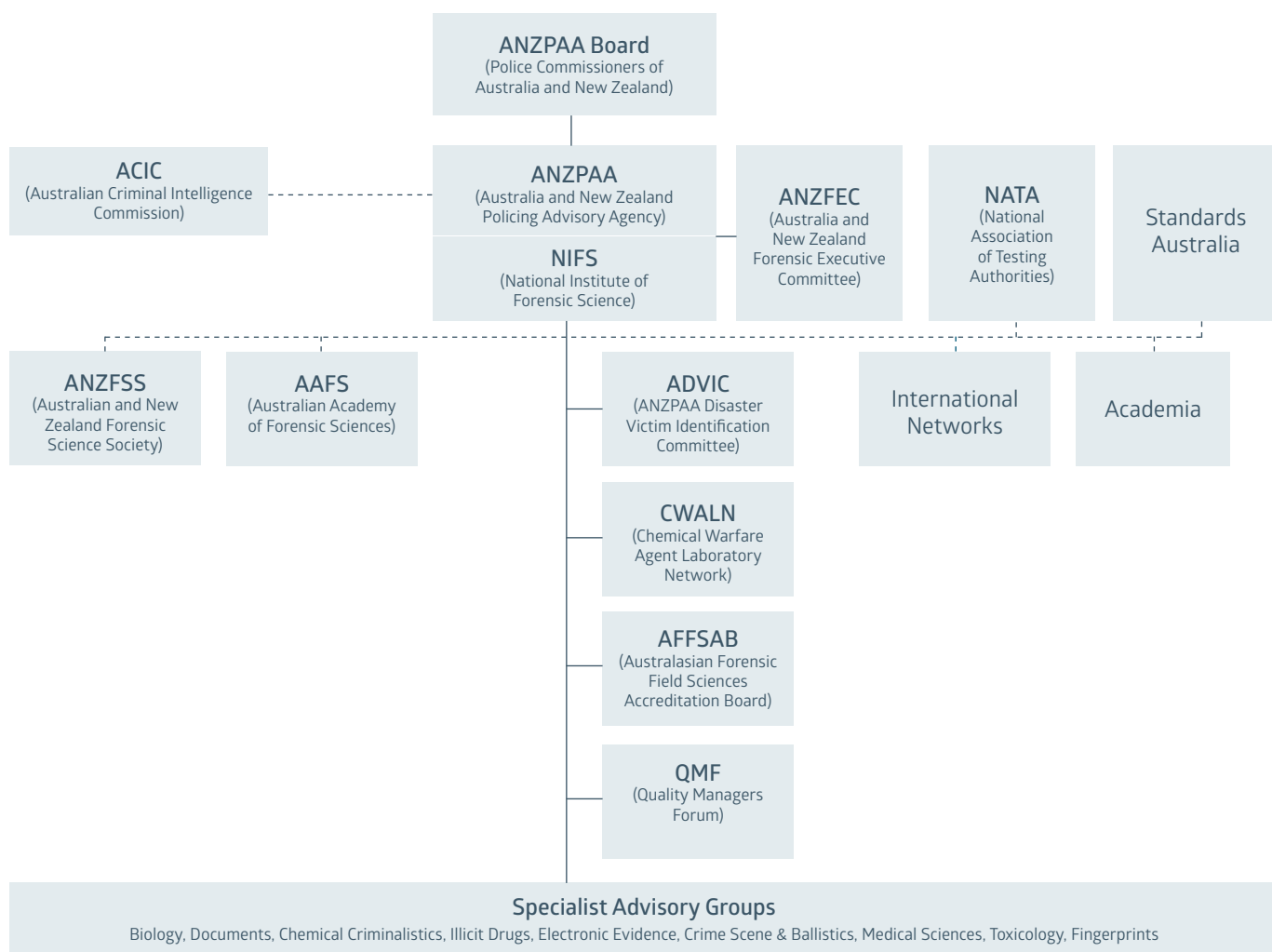
- Establishment of agreed benchmarks for quality forensic science products and services, leading to increased stakeholder confidence



AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND FORENSIC SCIENCE STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

We are committed to providing the best possible support to our forensic science stakeholders in order to advance forensic science across Australia and New Zealand. This is achieved by working closely with key stakeholders and partners to deliver our work program.

Our key stakeholder groups include the Australia New Zealand Forensic Executive Committee (ANZFEC), Specialist Advisory Groups (SAGs) and Scientific Working Groups (SWGs). Our key partners include the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC), National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA), Standards Australia and a network of forensic academic and education institutions. Our key international partners include members of International Forensic Strategic Alliance (IFSA) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).





Photos courtesy of:

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