



ACT
Government

Transport Canberra and
City Services

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COVERSHEET

The following information is provided pursuant to section 28 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*.

FOI reference: TCCS FOI 20-098

Information to be published	Status
1. Access application	Published
2. Decision notice and schedule	Published
3. Documents	Published
4. Additional information identified	n/a
5. Fees	n/a
6. Processing time (in working days)	13
7. Decision made by Ombudsman	n/a
8. Additional information identified by Ombudsman	n/a
9. Decision made by ACAT	n/a
10. Additional information identified by ACAT	n/a

UNCLASSIFIED



ACT
Government

Transport Canberra
and City Services

REQUEST UNDER *Freedom of Information Act 1989*

Privacy Notice

This form is to be used for requesting information from the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate (TCCS) under the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*. The personal information you supply on this form will only be used for the purpose of processing your request. If all or some of this information is not collected, TCCS may not be in a position to process your request. Your personal information will not be disclosed to a third party without your consent unless statutory obligations require otherwise.

The TCCS Information Privacy Policy contains information on how you can access or seek to correct any of your personal information that is held by the Directorate, as well as the process for lodging a complaint about an alleged breach of the *Information Privacy Act 2014*. The TCCS Information Privacy Policy is available on the TCCS website, www.tccs.act.gov.au.

Online Freedom of Information Policy

Please be aware that under the ACT Government's Online FOI Publication Policy, information released to you under this FOI application may be publicly released on the internet.

PART 1: YOUR DETAILS

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone contact:	
Email contact:	

PART 2: DETAILS OF FOI REQUEST

Please provide as much information as you can about the specific documents that you are seeking to access.

I would like to access the following document(s):

COPIES OF ALL REDUNDANT CURRENT REGULATIONS, POLICY DOCUMENTS, STANDARD
OPERATING PROCEDURES DOCUMENTS, INSTRUMENTS AND ANY OTHER RECORDS THAT
PERTAIN TO THE GRANTING, EXERCISING AND REVOKING OF SOLE RIGHTS
TO GRAVE SITES IN THE A.C.T.

PART 3: REMISSION OF FEES

There is no application fee. Processing charges may still be levied for work in excess of 10 hours processing time and/or 200 A4 photocopies. Applicants may wish to bear this in mind when formulating their request. You will be notified if charges apply to your request.

In relation to this request, I seek remission of any processing charges pursuant to section 29 of the *Freedom of Information Act*, on the grounds of:

Public Interest <input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Hardship <input type="checkbox"/>	Personal Affairs <input type="checkbox"/>
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Post to:
FOI Coordinator
Transport Canberra and City
Services Directorate
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Deliver to:
Attention: FOI Coordinator
Transport Canberra and City Services
Directorate
490 Northbourne Avenue
DICKSON ACT 2602

Email to:
tccs.foi@act.gov.au
Phone:
(02) 6205 5408

UNCLASSIFIED



[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Request - Reference 20-098

I refer to your application for access to government information received by Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) on 27 December 2020 under the *Freedom of Information Act 2016* (FOI Act). It is my understanding you are seeking to access the following government information:

“Copies of all relevant current regulations, policy documents, standard operating procedures documents, instructions and any other records that pertain to the granting, exercising and revoking of sole rights to grave sites in the ACT.”

I am an Information Officer appointed by the Director-General under section 18 of the Act to deal with access applications made under Part 5 of the FOI Act.

A decision on access to government information is due to you on 27 January 2021.

Decision on access

A search of records held by TCCS has been completed and four records have been identified as relevant to your request.

One of these documents is currently available to the public and a link to the document has been provided to you in the schedule enclosed with this notice. I have refused access to this document under the FOI Act, as the information is currently available to you on the Canberra Cemeteries website.

In accordance with section 17 of the Act, I have considered the public interest in relation to information within the other three documents. I have not identified any factors favouring non-disclosure, and therefore have decided to release the information to you in full. My decision is detailed further in the following statement of reasons.

Statement of Reasons

In making my decision on disclosing government information, I must identify all relevant factors in schedule 2 of the FOI Act and determine, on balance, where the public interest lies. In reaching my access decision, I have taken the following into account:

TCCS.FOI@act.gov.au | phone: (02) 620 72987 | www.act.gov.au

Factors favouring disclosure in the public interest (Schedule 2.1)

- Schedule 2.1(a)(iii) - inform the community of the government's operations, including the policies, guidelines and codes of conduct followed by the government in its dealings with members of the community; and
- Schedule 2.1(a)(viii) - reveal the reason for a government decision and any background or contextual information that informed the decision.

Factors favouring non-disclosure (Schedule 2.2)

- No factors favouring non-disclosure were identified as relevant to this application.

I have considered the public interest in relation to information about the ACT Government's operations pertaining to the granting, exercising and revoking of sole rights to grave sites in the ACT and find that the disclosure of the information enclosed with this notice is in the public interest to disclose in full.

Charges

No fee is applicable to your application as the number of pages being provided are within the fee free threshold.

Disclosure Log

In accordance with section 28 of the Act, TCCS maintains an online record of access applications called a disclosure log, which is accessible at https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/about-us/freedom_of_information/disclosure-log.

Your access application, this notice of decision and records released to you will be published on the disclosure log within 3 – 10 business days. Your personal information will be removed from these documents prior to publication.

Ombudsman review

My decision on your access application is a reviewable decision as identified in Schedule 3 of the Act. You have the right to seek an Ombudsman review my decision under section 73 of the Act within 20 working days from the day that my decision is made or a longer period if allowed by the Ombudsman.

If you wish to request a review of my decision, you may write to the Ombudsman at:

The ACT Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Via email: actfoi@ombudsman.gov.au

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) review

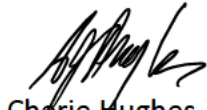
Under section 84 of the Act, if a decision is made under section 82(1) on an Ombudsman review, you may apply to the ACAT for review of the Ombudsman decision.

Further information may be obtained from ACAT at:

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal
Level 4, 1 Moore Street
GPO Box 370
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
Telephone: (02) 6207 1740
www.acat.act.gov.au

If you have any queries about the directorate's processing of your request, or would like further information, please contact the TCCS FOI team on (02) 6207 2987 or email tccs.foi@act.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Cherie Hughes
Information Officer

15 January 2021

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST SCHEDULE

Please be aware that under the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*, some of the information provided to you will be released to the public through the ACT Government's Open Access Scheme. The Open Access release status column of the table below indicates what documents are intended for release online through open access.

Personal information or business affairs information will not be made available under this policy. If you think the content of your request would contain such information, please inform the contact officer immediately.

Information about what is published on open access is available online at www.tccs.act.gov.au/about-us/freedom_of_information

File No			WHAT ARE THE PARAMETERS OF THE REQUEST			
20-098			Documents relating to sole rights to ACT grave sites			
Record Number	Page Number	Description	Date	Status	Reason for non-release or deferral	Open Access release status
1	1 - 11	Burial Process Administration Procedure	8 January 2021	Full access	N/A	Documents will be published on the TCCS Disclosure Log
2	12 - 13	Right to Burial Certificate Template	Undated	Full access	N/A	
3	14	Transfer of Allotment Form	Undated	Full access	N/A	
4	N/A	Application for Exclusive Right of Allotment and Burial	Undated	N/A	N/A	Publicly available at http://canberracemeteries.com.au/canberracemeteries-home-page/forms-downloads
Total No of Records: 4 (14 Pages)						

Burial Process Administration

1. GENERAL

1.1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to manage the oversight and organisation of the burial(interment) process.

1.2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to administration and grounds staff from first contact with customer until the completion of the burial process. Note that grave digging procedures are covered separately by specific Grave Digging Procedures.

1.3. RESPONSIBILITY

Senior Staff	Oversight the process and provide guidance to front of house staff and field staff as required
Customer Service Officer	Organise all details of the burial process and ensure that customer requirements are met
Grounds Staff	Prepare the allotment for interment ensuring that all requirements are met and fully documented

1.4. DEFINITIONS

ACTGS	ACT Government Service
CEO	Chief Executive Officer Cemeteries
CSO	Customer Service Officer – first point of contact for funeral directors and the public (can be any staff member but is usually a member of the “front-of-house” team)

Procedure title: Burial Process Administration	Revision 4
Authorised by: Hamish Horne CEO	Date: 08-Jan-2021
	Page 1 of 11

ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURE MANUAL – Canberra Cemeteries

SOS	Stone Orchard Software
BOS	Burial Oversight Form
INTERMENT	Earth burial, interment of coffin in a crypt/vault or interment of cremated remains

2. PROCEDURE

2.1. *Initial contact with customer*

- The Canberra Cemeteries administration will receive calls from the Funeral Directors for burials at Gungahlin, Woden and Hall cemeteries.
- Initial contact is usually made by the Funeral Director by telephone to the Administration office at the Gungahlin Cemetery. At this time the Funeral Director will advise the details of the deceased and request a specific date and time for a burial.
- At this stage a Burial Process Checklist shall be initiated to ensure that the minimum requirements for each interment are met.

2.2. *Preliminary processes*

- The Customer Service Officer will check the requested date/time/location against the calendar and details in SOS.
- Extreme care must be taken whilst making the booking. Key requirements are as follows:
 - Bookings for a burial on the same site must have a 30-minute gap, both before and after another scheduled burial.
 - Consideration must also be given to the actual location of the new gravesite, with care taken to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to keep close burials (both in time and location) as separate as possible. These issues must be clearly communicated to funeral directors and/or family when confirming a booking.
 - Confirm that staff levels and equipment required to prepare and backfill the grave is available. Communication with grounds staff is critical to ensure that this requirement is met. When in doubt confirm before a booking is completed. This is particularly important for weekend burials.
 - When all the necessary checks have been completed and it is appropriate to confirm the date and time with Funeral Director, the Customer Service officer will do so and make the necessary entry in the SOS Calendar. At this stage a “verbal” confirmation is given.

- The Funeral Director is then required to provide to Canberra Cemeteries a “booking confirmation” on the appropriate form, this is usually accompanied by a copy of the Death Certificate or a Coroners Certificate. The CSO will check the entry in SOS against the written information received, and ensure all details entered are correct. This confirmation will also detail further information such as the coffin size and specific requirements.
- **Note:** The originals of these documents, in particular the Death Certificate, must be sighted by Cemetery administration staff before a burial can proceed. The Funeral Director will bring the documents to the office upon arrival at the cemetery at the time of the burial.

Note: It is critical that the following which are referred to above are verified as correct:

- **Location of Grave** is determined by one or more of the following:
 - The grave is pre-purchased by the deceased or deceased’s family.
 - The deceased’s family has attended the cemetery and chosen the gravesite with a CSO.
 - The family or the Funeral Director has requested that the gravesite is allocated by the CSO

2.3. *Ledger Removals/Removal of Pebbles and Concrete and Other Additional Works*

If the burial is taking place in an existing grave with monument (re-open) then a **Ledger Removal** must be performed by a **Stonemason**. Some monuments may, instead of a ledger, have a surface of pebbles on top of a layer of concrete. A stonemason must be contacted to remove the pebbles and concrete.

- The Funeral Director must complete the Authority to Remove Ledger form with the family and forward to cemetery staff as soon as possible. Cemetery staff are not to arrange a ledger removal with a stonemason until they have received this form.
- Cemetery staff will then contact a stonemason and arrange the ledger removal by sending details of the date, time and location of the burial.

A stonemason may need to perform additional works in order to provide clearance for burial i.e removal of the headstone or other parts of the monument.

- The stonemason will provide a written or verbal quote for all additional works not covered by a standard Ledger Removal fee.

ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURE MANUAL – Canberra Cemeteries

- Cemetery staff will inform the Funeral Director of additional fees and add these fees to their invoice.

A stonemason will replace the ledger shortly after the burial. If additional works were required then further costs may be payable before the stonemason will reconstruct the monument. In these instances, cemetery staff will contact the family to provide further information before works are commenced.

2.4. *Shallow Burials*

Families may request a burial in a grave that was originally only dug to single depth. Generally burials that occurred thirty years ago at single depth are likely to have appropriate space for a second burial. Before a burial booking in one of these graves can be confirmed, a **Site Assessment** must be performed.

- CSO will send grave location and details to grounds staff.
- Grounds staff will report back to CSO and advise whether a shallow burial can go ahead.

At the time of burial, a concrete slab may need to be laid to provide adequate sealing of the grave for a shallow burial. This process is performed as part of the backfill.

The Funeral Director is to be invoiced for the Site Assessment and, if applicable, a Concrete Slab for Shallow Burial fee.

2.5. *Burial Oversight Form (BOS)*

Note: Graves are dug and backfilled subject to the **Grave Digging** procedures managed by the Grounds Manager.

- Customer Service officer shall print out BOS (from templates) and pass to supervisor to review and sign-off that Burial Details are correct:
 - | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Verified Correct (Initials): | Issued: (Date and Time). |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
- This document is the key document in the physical burial process and forms a part of the **permanent grave record**. At the end of the burial process it is scanned and captured into SOS.
- The BOS is divided into **7 sections**. The sections are completed by both CSOs and grounds staff.

SECTION 1 BURIAL DETAILS

- The first section of the form, Burial Details, is completed by the CSO. Its details are the following:

ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURE MANUAL – Canberra Cemeteries

- Name of deceased
- Location of Grave
- Depth of grave
- Coffin size
- Funeral Director and contact details
- Special requirements
- Advice if a stonemason is required for Ledger removal
- This section is completed, and the document is placed in a tray for the Grounds Manager. This gives the Grounds Manager the required information for staff and equipment allocation on the required date.
- The CSO will also issue a “Grave Marker” that details the name, date of burial and the allotment details. This is also placed with the paperwork and is taken by the Grounds Staff to the site and placed on the grave after the burial.

SECTION 2 LOCATION PRE-DIGGING

- The Grounds Staff will go to grave location and verify the site. This section of the form details the following:
 - Grave location – Portion, section, block and allotment
 - Cross reference with local information
 - Detail measurements if require
 - Ground Truthing. This involves matching maps with the actual site and checking adjacent graves
 - Checking for water pipes that may not be on the current maps
- Once verified by GS, the Grounds Manager will:
 - check that the location is correct
 - place the grave marker on the grave
 - mark the grave with paint outlining where the grave is to be dug and mark A B or X, to advise the backhoe operator what size bucket to use for the dig.
 - Finally, sign off on this section of the form, verifying that the correct site has been dug for the correct burial and return the paperwork to the GS Team Leader on-site

SECTION 3 MONUMENT

- If the burial is to be in the Headstone/Monument as opposed to the “Beam” area of the cemetery, ground staff are required to perform an onsite inspection and complete this section of the paperwork. Monument Inspection is carried out and the following information recorded:
 - Monument Condition
 - Headstone/Ledger removal required
 - Adjacent headstone/s require removal
 - Adjacent headstones require covering
 - Stone mason recommended
 - Safety concerns
 - To identify and issues or requirement for the process
- The CSO will, by following the **Removal & Replacement of Ledgers** procedure, organise with the appropriate stonemason to have the ledger removed in the timeframe required.

SECTION 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- As general and day to day hazards have been identified in Grave Digging Procedures, the day prior to the burial the grounds staff will carry out the risk assessment in the document. The assessment details the following:
 - Manual Handling
 - Slips Trips and Falls
 - Excavations
 - Unsafe Monuments
 - Hand Digging
 - Crowd Control
 - Any obvious safety concerns with the site
- If identified, the grounds staff will detail the risk on the form, suggest controls for the risk and rate the risk. This information and is then recorded on the document and passed on to the Grounds Manager for action if required.

SECTION 5

DIGGING

- Ideally, the actual digging of the grave is generally carried out on the morning of the burial. This is done so that gravesites are not left unattended during periods when staffs are not in attendance and reduces the incidence of accident and injury to the public. However, due to operational requirements graves may be dug in the day(s) prior to the burial subject to strict controls around shoring and covering the grave.
- The backhoe operator is responsible for executing the dig and ensuring all safety measures are met. Using the information provided the operator will dig the grave to the specifications provided.
- Once the gravesite is prepared it will be covered with an approved cover ready for the burial. The cover will be removed by the Funeral Director at the time of burial.
- The Funeral Director is responsible and oversees for all aspects of the actual burial. The Funeral Director operates the lowering device or other lowering methodology at the time of interment.

SECTION 6 GRAVE PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

- The ground staff performs a Grave Presentation checklist which details the following:
 - Final measurement checks
 - Straw in bottom of the grave
 - Planks are stable
 - Mats suitable for location
 - Lowering device and straps are clean
 - Bucket with Clean sand and trowel
 - Flower board placed and clean
 - Chairs clean
 - Canopy in place
 - Surrounds are clean
- The ground staff member will sign off on this final check.
- **Any issues** but in particular those relating to safety of visitors or staff **shall be immediately** communicated to the CSO who will pass these to the Funeral Director on arrival.

Note: The funeral Director is required to come into the Cemetery reception/office upon arrival:

- At this time the Funeral Director will present the original documentation including the Death Certificate. Also, at this time the Funeral Director will be given a map and advised, if any, of any safety concerns around the gravesite.
 - For example, if the ground staff advised that the area was unstable, the Funeral Director would be cautioned to keep the mourners further back from the grave side.

SECTION 7 BACKFILL

- The ground staff will begin the process of filling in the grave as soon as possible after the interment.
- The process involves the following:
 - The fill removed from the grave at the time of digging, is returned to the site
 - The compactor on the rear of the backhoe is used if required to compact the surface
 - The grave is dressed
 - The surface is reseeded or turfed (if applicable)
 - Any flowers that were not lowered into the grave are respectfully placed back on the top of the grave
- The grounds staff will sign off on the document to confirm completion, and noting and issues if required, and return the document to the customer service staff.

Note: It is critical that should staff need to approach mourners then this shall be done in a careful and respectful manner. As a standard, mourners shall be given enough time to leave the site under their own recognisance and should only be asked to move away from the grave for safety or serious time pressures such as the end of the working day or lack of daylight.

2.6. *Post Burial*

2.6.1. General

The CSO will address any issues arising from the process including safety concerns. If any concerns have been noted, this information will be acted on if required and added to the data base for future reference about that particular gravesite;

e.g. collapsing of the grave walls may indicate the future need for the shoring box, should the grave have to be reopened for a second burial.

2.6.2. Specific Tasks for CSO

- All associated documents are scanned to computer and attached to the appropriate SOS grave record
- Hard copies of the documents are filed for future archiving offsite
- Post Burial paperwork is prepared and posted to the Exclusive Right Holder, including:
 - Covering Letter outlining the Terms and Conditions
 - Memorial Permit Application Process
 - Certificate of Exclusive Rights of Allotment
 - Plaque application form or memorial Permit application
 - Invitation to complete a satisfaction survey

2.6.3. Invoice Funeral Director

The final invoice is generated from SOS and forwarded to the appropriate Funeral Director.

3. VERIFICATION

- Completed Burial Oversight Form
- Death/Cremation Certificates
- Completed Authority to remove ledger / monument Form
- Completed Application for Exclusive Right of Allotment
- SOS records

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Grave Digging Procedure
- Burial Oversight Form
- Booking Confirmation Form
- Application for Exclusive Right of Allotment
- Removal & Replacement of Ledgers Procedure
- Authority to remove ledger / monument Form

Right to Burial Certificate

Facility Number: CC001
 Certificate Number: <<Rights Transfer
 Certificate Number>>
 Date of Issue: <<Rights Transfer Effective
 Date>>

This is to certify that the Cemeteries and Crematoria Authority has granted:

Name: <<Rights Holder>><<Rights Holder Organization Name>><<Rights Holder First
 Name>> <<Rights Holder Middle Name>> <<Rights Holder Last Name>>

Address: <<Rights Holder Default Address1>>, <<Rights Holder Default Address2>>
 <<Rights Holder Default City>> <<Rights Holder Default Province/State>> <<Rights
 Holder Default Postal/Zip Code>><</Rights Holder>>

The **Right to Burial*** in Allotment Number: <<Site>><<Interment Site Name>><</Site>>

Located at: Gungahlin Cemetery, Sandford Street, Mitchell ACT 2911

Area:

Allotment Type:

Denomination:

Name of Deceased _____
 Transfer (if required)

Signed _____
 for and on behalf of the Authority

If a Right is not exercised within 60 years after the day the right is given, the right will end.

I/We, _____ hereby transfer

to _____

of _____ Postcode _____

email _____ Phone _____

all my legal right to the above allotment.

Signed _____ Date of transfer _____ / _____ / _____

Signature of Transferee _____
 Witnessed _____ Name _____
 (Justice of the Peace or other approved witness)

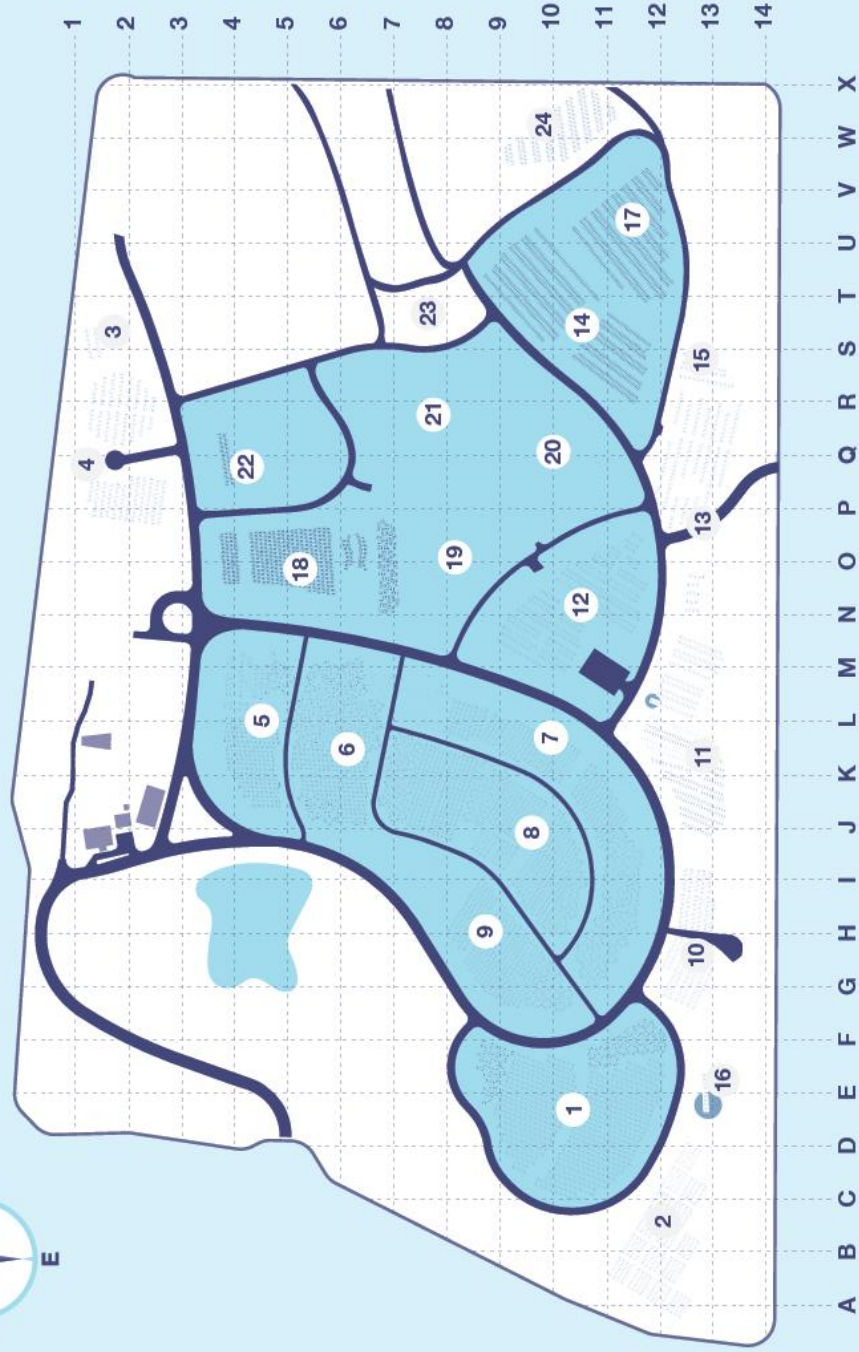
Address _____ Postcode _____

email _____ Phone _____

Please note: a transfer fee is applicable - Transfer is not complete until fee is paid and this completed form is provided to Canberra Cemeteries to ensure that records are updated and complete.

The grantee/transferee may be requested to produce this certificate in proof of their interest and is advised to keep it in a safe place.

Gungahlin Cemetery



TRANSFER OF ALLOTMENT

I, _____
(full name)

of, _____
(address)

(email)

do sincerely declare that the original Certificate of Exclusive Right has been lost for:

Allotment _____ at _____ Cemetery

I hereby transfer all my right, title and interest in the above allotment to:

(full name of transferee)

of, _____
(address)

(email)

Signature _____

Signature of Transferee _____

Witness Name _____

Witness Signature _____

Date _____

Please note: a transfer fee is applicable – Transfer is not complete until fee is paid and this completed form is provided to Canberra Cemeteries to ensure that records are updated and complete.

Office

Gungahlin Cemetery
Sandford Street
Mitchell ACT 2911

Postal Address

PO Box 37
Mitchell ACT 2911

Contact

T 02 6204 0200 **F** 02 6207 1624
E cemeteries@act.gov.au
W canberracemeteries.com.au