Analysis and Interpretation of Skeletal Trauma

**Monday 2nd - Thursday 5th September 2019**

**Course Description**
In conjunction with the Department of Forensic Medicine, Monash University, this intensive short course is delivered by The Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM), Australia’s largest multi-disciplinary centre for forensic medical and scientific services. The primary focus of this course is the principles and practice of the analysis and interpretation of skeletal trauma. Course content includes detailed lectures and interactive sessions on trauma biomechanics, blunt force trauma, low and high velocity projectile trauma, sharp force trauma and taphonomic processes. This unique course is the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere and will enable participants to apply principles and learnings to real case scenarios. It is relevant to professionals and students involved in the analysis of human skeletal remains including forensic anthropologists, forensic pathologists (and registrars), doctors, biological archaeologists and heritage officers. A basic knowledge of human osteology is required to participate. Lectures will be delivered by medico-legal and forensic science experts from the VIFM and external organisations.

**Course Objectives**
At the end of the course participants will have:

- an understanding of the role of different experts in the analysis and interpretation of skeletal trauma
- a basic understanding of the biomechanics of skeletal trauma
- knowledge of different types of trauma including blunt force, sharp force and high and low velocity projectile trauma
- an understanding of the complexity of interpreting the timing of skeletal trauma
- knowledge about the importance of taphonomy in the context of interpreting skeletal defects
- an understanding of the role of post-mortem computed tomography (PMCT) in the context of analysing and interpreting skeletal trauma
- awareness of the limitations when giving evidence in court related to skeletal trauma

**Senior Course Convenor - Associate Professor Soren Blau**
Associate Professor Soren Blau is the senior course convenor and has extensive international experience in the recovery and analysis of human remains in archaeological and forensic contexts. Soren is the Senior Forensic Anthropologist at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine. She is an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Forensic Medicine at Monash University and Founding Fellow Faculty of Science, The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, and has delivered training to forensic practitioners and related stakeholders in Australia and overseas. Soren undertakes domestic forensic anthropology casework as well as consultancies for the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

**Dr Samantha Rowbotham**
Dr Samantha Rowbotham is a Forensic Anthropologist with the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine; an Adjunct Research Fellow with the Department of Forensic Medicine, Monash University, and a Forensic Anthropology Trainee (Faculty of Science) with the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia. Her research interests focus on strengthening the evidence base for the analysis and interpretation of skeletal trauma in medico-legal contexts. From 2009 to 2014 she was involved with archaeological excavations, osteology research and bioarchaeology teaching projects in Asia, Europe, Central America and Australia. Since 2018 she has undertaken domestic forensic anthropology casework.

**How to Register**
To register your interest, or request more information, please contact: short.courses@vifm.org
Cost
Registration fees are:
- $2,400* for professionals
- $2,000* for students.

This includes course manual, morning and afternoon tea, lunch, and certificate of completion.
* GST inclusive

Location
The course will be delivered at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine in Melbourne

65 Kavanagh Street, Southbank VIC 3006.

There is no on-site parking available. Please visit our website to find nearby parking and accommodation: [https://www.vifm.org/contact](https://www.vifm.org/contact)

Monday 2nd September

**Introduction to skeletal trauma**

- Terminology and timing of skeletal trauma
- Biomechanics of skeletal trauma
- Skeletal blunt force trauma (BFT): overview and case studies
  - BFT: forensic pathology perspective

Tuesday 3rd September

**Projectile weapon characteristics**

- High velocity projectile skeletal trauma: overview and case studies
- Effects of blast injuries (explosions, bombings) on bone
- Low velocity projectile skeletal trauma: overview and case studies
- Projectile trauma: forensic pathology perspective

Wednesday 4th September

**Skeletal sharp force trauma (SFT): overview**

- SFT: forensic pathology perspective
- SFT case studies
- Interpretation of taphonomic processes: overview and case studies
- Provision of expert evidence on skeletal trauma

Thursday 5th September

**Practical 1: skeletal trauma documentation for complex cases**

**Practical 2: presentations and discussion of cases**

**Summary and conclusion of course**

Note: Sessions will run from 9.00am to 5.00pm each day

A minimum of 15 people are required to run the course and registrations will close on Friday 2nd August 2019

Successful completion of this short course meets the RCPA Category A (Group Activities/Meetings) annual minimum hours requirement for Continuing Professional Development (CPD).