

CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY

Chairman's Report

Date – 12TH & 13TH October 2007

Venue – Auckland City Hospital.

8 candidates presented; 6 of these candidates were re-sits from the previous COP.

Machine Checks (4 candidates)

The performances for the machine check were good and generally at a higher level than previous examinations with one candidate carrying out an outstanding check.

Only one candidate failed due to a failure to complete the check in the given time.

Candidates do need to be aware of the time constraint in the machine check and pace themselves accordingly. It was pleasing to see candidates perform a machine check in an order which suited them rather than the rote pattern that we usually see.

For future machine check examinations candidates should remember to recycle the ventilator once between the high pressure alarm and the test for the low pressure alarm. This confirms that the bellows have not been unseated during the application of the high pressure. Although this is not a Pass/Fail criteria such a precaution does demonstrate knowledge and care of the ventilator

MCQs

7 candidates: 2 Fails

As in previous COPs the range of knowledge shown by candidates is broad extending from a very high standard to well below average results.

Candidates must read widely to gain the knowledge required.

Clinical Scenarios

7 candidates; 3 Fails

The examiners found it very disappointing that all 3 Fails involved failing to meet the criteria of the Level 3 check and, in particular, checking the resuscitation and emergency drugs (including suxamethonium). This is a basic part of the level 3 machine check.

The outline of the Level 3 Check is posted on the NZATS web-site.

Training Hospitals' Support

The candidates were scheduled times on Friday to access the machines, the MCQ venue and also time to view the ORs where the clinical scenarios & equipment vivas were carried out.

The examining team were concerned to note that one trainee arrived at the hospital on Saturday morning late for the commencement of the examination and therefore had no opportunity to have familiarisation time.

While we would expect a trainee to be pro active in organising free time for study and ensuring that they are released from duty to have appropriate down time plus familiarisation time before the exams, many trainees are stressed and often need support and guidance at this time from their charge anaesthetic technician, educator and supervisor of training.

One trainee was rostered 'On call' during the week of their examination and found the down time no more than a rest break rather than time for fruitful study.

Charge Technicians and supervisors of training need to ensure rostering of trainees is beneficial to their preparation for the examination and that every benefit is given to them to help them in the examination process. Help for trainees at this point may mean a further qualified technician on the staff.

I do acknowledge that the great majority of the training hospitals are hugely supportive of their trainees and their requirements for coaching, administration, fees and releasing them from duties to ensure they can have fair access and familiarisation time for examinations.

Final COP

The October 2007 COP was the final examination in this format.

The NZ Anaesthetic Technicians' Registration examination will commence on 2nd February 2008 – Part I (MCQs) and Part II – (OSCEs and Machine Checks) on 15th March 2008. Please refer to the web-site for further information – www.nzats.co.nz

Dr Andrew Warmington
Chairman
Certificate of Proficiency examination
October 2007