Changes to Regulations for Screening Cremation Containers

- As of July 26, 2013, Transport Canada (TC) is introducing regulatory changes that will require CATSA (Canadian Air Transport Security Authority) to follow new procedures for screening cremation containers.
- These procedures are similar to what has been in effect and practised by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for several years now.
- This is the bottom line:
 - Cremation and/or death certificates will no longer enable a passenger to carry a crematory container through security and onto a plane without screening.
 - CATSA officials must now screen every cremation container transported as carry-on baggage using the x-ray machine to ensure there are no prohibited items inside. If it cannot be cleared by the x-ray machine, it will not be permitted past the security checkpoint and onto the flight.
 - Out of respect for the deceased, screening officers will not be allowed to open cremation containers at any time, even if requested to do so by the passenger, nor will they inspect the contents if the container is opened by the passenger.
 - If x-ray screening of a cremation container results in an alarm but the passenger states
 the container is empty, the screening officer can ask the passenger to open it so that he
 or she can look inside and verify there are no prohibited items.

Key points:

- Ensure members are aware of the new regulations so that they can prepare to offer appropriate advice.
- Members should provide options to those who expect to travel by air with a cremation container, as outlined below.
- Ask members to agree to transfer cremated remains from temporary to permanent containers in such cases as a complimentary customer service (= status quo in the United States)
- Encourage members to include information in any documentation handed out to families (including the attached CATSA info sheet) and provide information on their respective websites.
- To ensure consistent messaging during the next few weeks, CATSA could supply other products (such as short newsletter articles) to be used by your members, upon request.

Key messages for funeral professionals to convey to families flying with cremated remains:

- If you are planning to travel by air with cremated remains—whether as carry-on or in checked baggage—you should use a container that airport security screening officers can scan clearly using an x-ray machine.
- Plastic, cardboard and cloth containers are most likely to pass the x-ray inspection and be permitted past the checkpoint.
- Metal, granite and ceramic containers are least likely to pass the x-ray inspection and be permitted past the checkpoint.
- We strongly recommend you transport remains in a temporary or permanent container made of a light-weight material—such as plastic, cardboard or cloth—that is more easily scanned when going through airport security.
- Temporary containers are available from funeral homes and offer a security-friendly means to travel by air with a crematory container.
- o If you wish to travel with a permanent container made of a heavier material, you should pack it, open and empty, in your checked baggage.
- When you arrive at your final destination, ask a local funeral home to transfer the remains from the temporary to the permanent container.
- (If possible, please offer families contacts of a local funeral home, clergy person or consumer group that provides this service.)
- To facilitate the security screening process, do not place any additional items—such as a kirpan—inside the container until after you reach your destination. If the x-ray machine identifies an object inside the urn and the screening officer cannot clear that item, the cremation container will not be allowed through the security checkpoint.
- o If security cannot clear your container, you will have three options at the airport:
 - leave the container with a friend or family member who is not travelling and still at the airport;
 - ask your airline representative to re-book you on a later flight, allowing you time to make other arrangements; or
 - ship the container via mail, cargo or courier. Please keep in mind that shipping options vary at airports.
- Not all airlines allow cremated remains in checked baggage, so please consult your airline before attempting to transport these in checked baggage. Similar to carry-on items, urns in checked bags are also screened using x-ray technology and must pass a security inspection.