



Independent Forensic Practitioners Institute
Annual Seminar Day
13 September 2025
Rydge's Hotel Federal Street

11:00 – 11:25	Arrival and registration. Tea and coffee.
11.25 – 11:30	Welcome to Seminar by Steve Alexander IFPi President
11:30 – 11:55	Linda Morrell (Handwriting specialist) Presentation TBA
11:55 – 12:00	Q&A
12:00 – 12:35	Marie Dyhrberg (Kings Counsel) In this presentation, Marie will share her insights into the role of expert witnesses in criminal cases — examining how their evidence is presented, challenged, and ultimately weighed by the courts.
12:35 – 12:45	Q&A
12.45 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 14:10	Ian Handricks (AI Specialist): ‘AI and the Global Future: Unlocking Collaborative Potential in Forensic Sciences’ In this engaging and thought-provoking session, Ian Handricks will examine the global rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and its transformative role in forensic science. The presentation begins with an accessible overview of AI technologies—such as machine learning, natural language processing, and computer vision—and how they are rapidly reshaping industries, governments, and communities around the world. Ian will address common concerns around AI replacing human roles, instead reframing it as a powerful collaborative tool that enhances human expertise, streamlines processes, and supports better

	<p>decision-making across sectors. Focusing on forensic science, he will present real-world applications of AI in areas such as digital evidence analysis, image and video enhancement, predictive modelling in criminal behaviour, and biometric technologies including fingerprint and DNA analysis.</p> <p>The session will also cover the ethical challenges of AI, including privacy and fairness, and will explore the new opportunities AI creates for collaboration among forensic experts, law enforcement, legal professionals, and technologists—ultimately leading to more accurate, timely, and effective outcomes in the pursuit of justice.</p>
14:10 – 14:20	Q&A
14:20 – 14:55	<p>Thomas Coyle MNZM (Disaster Victim Identification): ‘Identifying deceased persons at major disaster sites’</p> <p>A compelling and deeply informative presentation on <i>Identifying Deceased Persons at Major Disaster Sites</i>. Drawing on many years of hands-on experience in disaster victim identification (DVI), Tom will outline the critical forensic processes involved in recovering and identifying victims following large-scale tragedies. He will highlight the importance of international collaboration, meticulous documentation, and the use of fingerprint, dental, and DNA evidence in complex disaster scenarios. The presentation will be both technically insightful and profoundly respectful, shedding light on the human impact of disaster work while emphasising the importance of accuracy, compassion, and dignity at every stage of the identification process.</p>
14:55 – 15:00	Q&A
15:00 – 15:15	Tea Break
15:15 – 15:45	<p>Dr Nick Powell (Forensics): ‘Trace Evidence and Forensic Microscopy – Examples from Criminal and Civil Casework’.</p> <p>Trace evidence comprises small particles transferred from scene to suspect or suspect to scene. Examples commonly encountered in casework are glass, firearms discharge residues and pollen. Trace evidence can be characterised with light microscopy and electron microscopy and its probative value can be assessed using routine Bayesian methods. Trace evidence is encountered in criminal, civil and Admiralty casework.</p>
15:45 – 15:50	Q&A

15:50 – 16:20	Dr Leo Schep (Toxicology): ‘Drug-facilitated sexual assault’ Drug-facilitated sexual assault (DFSA) occurs when a person is subjected to non-consensual sexual acts while incapacitated or unconscious due to the effect(s) of an intoxicating substance and are therefore prevented from resisting and/or unable to consent. This talk will cover the three categories of drugs that are commonly used in DFSA: GHB, ketamine and the benzodiazepines.
16:20 – 16:25	Q&A
16:25 – 16:50	University of Auckland Faculty of Forensic Science 3 students of forensic science will provide a brief outline of their studies.
16:50 – 16:55	Q&A
16:55 – 17:00	Closing Seminar by current IFPi president
17:00 onwards	Drinks at the bar in preparation of All Blacks versus South Africa rugby match

Bookings are now open:

Members \$140

Non-members \$200

The venue is Rydge’s Hotel and Conference Centre, Federal Street.
Registration includes lunch, tea and coffee and all speakers.

Please register your interest by **28 AUGUST** by visiting the IFPi website and following the online booking system.

For all further information regarding this event please contact Thomas Coyle at:

info@forensicsinsight.co.nz

Please book early to allow catering numbers to be confirmed.

Speakers Bio's

Linda Morrell – is New Zealand's only independent, court-recognised forensic document examiner and handwriting expert. She holds a B.Sc. (Hons) in Biological Chemistry and an M.Sc. in Forensic Science and trained with the Laboratory of the Government Chemist in London. With over 34 years of experience, she established her Wellington-based private practice after emigrating in 1996 and has since provided expert analysis across New Zealand and internationally, including cases in Australia, Fiji, Samoa, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the UK. Linda has given expert evidence in thousands of legal proceedings—from civil and criminal courts to tribunals—and has testified at prestigious venues like the Old Bailey. Her expertise spans handwriting and signature identification, forgery detection, ink and paper analysis, erasure and alteration recovery, and document comparison. She regularly delivers training seminars and workshops and is an active member of the Australasian Society of Forensic Document Examiners and New Zealand's Independent Forensic Practitioners Institute.

Marie Dyhrberg KC – is a distinguished New Zealand barrister specialising in criminal law, with a practice spanning District Court, High Court, Court of Appeal, and Parole Board hearings. She was admitted as a barrister and solicitor in October 1982 and was appointed Queen's Counsel (now King's Counsel) in June 2014 in recognition of her extensive expertise. In 2020, she was elected President of the Auckland District Law Society, underscoring her leadership within the legal profession. Marie was also the first woman to chair the International Bar Association's Criminal Law Committee and to lead New Zealand's Criminal Bar Association. Based in Auckland, she is widely respected for her advocacy in high-profile criminal cases and her contributions to the legal community.

Ian Handrick – Ian Handricks is a seasoned technology innovator, educator, and public speaker with a career spanning over five decades across multiple industries. A pioneer in introducing artificial intelligence tools to businesses and professional sectors, Ian is especially passionate about making complex technologies accessible and useful to people of all backgrounds. With deep expertise in AI applications, Ian has worked with enterprises ranging from healthcare and optometry to education, financial services, and forensic sciences. He is co-founder of Brain Solutionz, an AI consultancy specializing in helping organizations adopt AI for growth, efficiency, and ethical innovation. Ian is renowned for his engaging, down-to-earth presentation style, blending sharp insights with humour, practical examples, and a deep commitment to lifelong learning. He regularly presents to professional associations, Rotary clubs, universities, and industry conferences, helping audiences understand not just **what** AI is, but **how** it can be integrated meaningfully and responsibly into their work and lives. When not on stage, Ian mentors' business leaders, contributes to community education initiatives, and is an honorary life member of the New Zealand Corneal and Contact Lens Society. His mission: to ensure people and organizations are empowered—not overwhelmed—by the AI revolution.

Thomas Coyle MNZM is a highly respected forensic expert and Director of Forensic Insight Ltd, based in Auckland. A former Senior Fingerprint Expert, Crime Scene Examiner, and Borough Forensic Manager with both the London Metropolitan Police based at New Scotland Yard (1988–2006) and the New Zealand Police (2006–2019), Tom has over 35 years of global experience. He is internationally certified in fingerprint analysis, crime scene examination and disaster victim identification (DVI), having applied his expertise in major events such as the Boxing Day tsunami in Thailand and the Christchurch earthquake. In 2019, Tom semi-retired from police service to co-found Forensic Insight Ltd alongside his wife, Allie, offering educational forensic workshops, certified-fingerprint services, and independent forensic consultancy. In recognition of his outstanding contributions to forensic science and DVI, he was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2024 King's Birthday Honours. Tom remains active teaching forensic science in schools and serving as an impartial expert witness in both civil and criminal courts both nationally and internationally.

Dr Nick Powell is a New Zealand-based forensic scientist and the founding director of Forensic & Industrial Science Ltd, established in Auckland in 1999. He holds a PhD in Geology and a Postgraduate Diploma in Forensic Science from the University of Otago and is a Professional Member of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Dr. Powell leads a specialist team focusing on environmental contamination and clandestine methamphetamine laboratories, having overseen analysis of over 300 sites since 2004 and personally inspected more than 100. He is a licensed operator of irradiating apparatus for X-ray analysis, regularly appears in court as an expert witness in both criminal and civil matters, and serves as Secretary of the Independent Forensic Practitioners Institute.

Highlighting his practical impact, he once described a Napier meth lab as “the most contaminated of 150 drug production houses he had seen” during a landmark 2008 court case. Dr. Powell combines scientific rigor with courtroom experience, contributing significantly to New Zealand’s forensic landscape.

Dr Leo Schep was employed by the University of Otago for 32 years, 19 of which were with the National Poisons Centre. There he provided poison information concerning all aspects of human acute and chronic poisoning, lectured on Forensic Toxicology, and publishing over 50 papers and 6 book chapters. He has also provided advice, and presented seminars, to the New Zealand Police, New Zealand Defence Force, Emergency Departments, and other health care providers. He has also provided teaching seminars throughout the country, to various community organisations, Maraes, and secondary schools. He established his consultancy firm, ToxInform Ltd, in 2008, where he continues to provide expert opinions in various court cases, both in Australia and New Zealand.