



**Australian Government**

# **MSL975024 Locate, record and collect forensic samples**

**Release: 1**

## **MSL975024 Locate, record and collect forensic samples**

### **Modification History**

Release 1. Supersedes and is equivalent to MSL975024A Locate record and collect forensic samples

### **Application**

This unit of competency covers the ability to locate, record and collect evidence or samples that will be used for forensic examination or testing. Competency includes the ability to locate, collect, package, transport and store forensic samples.

This unit of competency is applicable to technical officers working in all industry sectors and government agencies, such as food, forensic, medical and environmental laboratories. The term forensic is used to describe the collection of samples that may have legal implications, such as those collected to verify insurance claims or prove paternity for payment of maintenance.

All operations must comply with relevant standards, appropriate procedures and/or workplace requirements. Although a supervisor may not always be present, the technical officer will follow standard operating procedures (SOPs) that clearly describe the scope of permitted practice, including varying workplace/test procedures and communicating results to people outside the laboratory.

While no specific licensing or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication, laboratory operations are governed by relevant legislation, regulations and/or external accreditation requirements. Local requirements should be checked.

### **Pre-requisite Unit**

Nil

### **Competency Field**

Testing

## Unit Sector

### Elements and Performance Criteria

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

1	<b>Prepare for evidence/sample collection</b>	<p>1.1 Locate evidence/sample using observation and appropriate detection methods</p> <p>1.2 Identify appropriate sample collection methods</p> <p>1.3 Prioritise the evaluation of items of evidence to ensure maintenance of sample integrity</p>
2	<b>Record locations and details of evidence/samples</b>	<p>2.1 Identify appropriate methods to record the evidence/samples in accordance with quality systems and within resource constraints</p> <p>2.2 Record position of located evidence using a variety of appropriate techniques</p> <p>2.3 Produce documented records of evidential material according to judicial and/or workplace guidelines</p>
3	<b>Collect evidence/samples</b>	<p>3.1 Collect sufficient number and quantity of evidence/samples (where possible) to allow complete examination or analysis and to represent the mass of the physical evidence</p> <p>3.2 Collect controls and reference samples where possible and appropriate</p> <p>3.3 Collect latent evidence using physical or chemical methods</p>
4	<b>Package evidence/samples</b>	<p>4.1 Package, transport and store evidence/samples to ensure continuity and maintain integrity of forensic samples</p> <p>4.2 Collect and document details of evidential material in case notes and/or in the evidence register to maintain chain of custody</p>

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|---|---|-----|---|
| 5 | <b>Maintain a safe work environment</b> | 5.1 | Identify risks, hazards, safety equipment and procedures associated with evidence/sample collection |
|   |   | 5.2 | Use personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety procedures specified                             |
|   |   | 5.3 | Minimise the generation of waste and environmental impacts  |
|   |   | 5.4 | Ensure the safe disposal of waste   |
|   |   | 5.5 | Clean, care for and store equipment and consumables in accordance with workplace procedures         |

## Foundation Skills

This section describes those language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

## Range of Conditions

This field allows for different work environments and conditions that may affect performance. Essential operating conditions that may be present (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) are included.

### **Standards, codes, procedures and/or workplace requirements**

Standards, codes, procedures and/or workplace requirements include the latest version of one or more of:

- Australian and international standards covering the requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories; laboratory safety; quality and environmental management; sampling of materials; and labelling, storage, handling and transport of hazardous materials
- national work health and safety (WHS) standards and codes of practice, national environmental protection measures, and national measurement regulations and guidelines
- specific codes, guidelines and procedures, such as National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accreditation requirements, principles of good laboratory practice (GLP), Australian Dangerous Goods Code, Australia Post Guides, and International Air Transport Association (IATA) regulations
- workplace documents, such as judicial protocols, SOPs, quality manuals, equipment and procedures manuals, material safety data sheets (MSDS) and safety procedures, workplace recording and reporting procedures, maps and site plans

### **Location of evidence/samples**

Evidence and sample locations include, but are not limited to, one or more of:

- industrial accidents, fire and explosion, and disasters
- criminal investigations
- searches and evidence collection
- contaminated sites
- vehicle collisions and motor vehicles

### **Sample collection methods**

Sample collection methods include, but are not limited to, one or more of:

- hand picking (including use of forceps and gloves)
- tape lifting
- sweeping and vacuuming
- swabbing
- liquid and solid sampling procedures

**Methods for recording location of evidence** Methods for recording the position of located evidence include, but are not limited to, one or more of:

- photographs
- video
- diagrams and sketches, hand written notes/documentation
- computer data
- global positioning system (GPS)

**Evidence and samples** Evidence and samples include, but are not limited to, one or more of:

- any and all objects:
  - gross or microscopic
  - living or inanimate
  - solid, liquid or gas
  - relationships between all such objects
- development/enhancement/examination (e.g. use of poly light)
- trace evidence examinations
- biological samples, such as organs, hair, blood, semen and saliva
- blood splatter patterns
- clothing
- documents
- drugs
- explosives
- fibres
- fingerprint development/enhancement/examination
- fire debris
- firearm and ammunition examinations
- impressions
- paint
- petroleum products
- powder residues
- serial numbers
- shoeprint and tyre marks
- soils and minerals
- toolmark examination

**Packaging samples** Packaging samples takes into account, but is not limited to, one or more of:

- physical nature of the evidence/sample
- packaging medium

- tamper evident seals
- exhibit labels
- drying of wet exhibits
- storage temperature

**Maintaining integrity of samples** Maintaining the integrity of samples includes, but is not limited to, one or more of:

- use of appropriate sample containers (glass, plastic and opaque)
- use of appropriate preservatives
- wrapping container in foil to exclude light
- temperature control, which may involve prevention of direct contact between the sample and coolant
- use of appropriate equipment boxes (insulated, shockproof and waterproof)
- restraint of containers to prevent movement
- checking sample viability during transport while avoiding unnecessary handling

**Safety equipment and procedures**

Safety procedures include, but are not limited to, one or more of:

- use of equipment to address dangers at sites (e.g. propping up unstable walls or climbing gear to go down cliffs)
- ensuring access to service shut-off points
- recognising and observing hazard warnings and safety signs
- using biohazard containers
- labelling of samples and hazardous materials
- handling and storage of hazardous materials and equipment in accordance with labelling, MSDS and manufacturer instructions
- identifying and reporting operating problems or equipment malfunctions
- cleaning equipment and work areas regularly using workplace procedures
- using PPE, such as gloves, safety glasses, coveralls and safety boots
- following established manual handling procedures
- reporting abnormal emissions, discharges and airborne contaminants, such as noise, light, solids, liquids, water/wastewater, gases, smoke, vapour, fumes, odour and particulates, to appropriate personnel

**WHS and environmental**

WHS and environmental management requirements include:

**management requirements**

- complying with WHS and environmental management requirements at all times, which may be imposed through state/territory or federal legislation. These requirements must not be compromised at any time
- applying standard precautions relating to the potentially hazardous nature of samples
- accessing and applying current industry understanding of infection control issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and State and Territory Departments of Health, where relevant

**Unit Mapping Information**

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**Links**

MSA Training Package Implementation Guides - <http://mskills.org.au/training-packages/info/>