



Australian Government

PUAFIR608A Investigate fatal fires

Release 3

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Modification History

| Release | TP Version | Comments |
|---------|------------|--|
| 3 | PUA12 V2.1 | Editorial changes. |
| 2 | PUA12 V2 | Layout adjusted. No changes to content |
| 1 | PUA00 V8.1 | Primary release on TGA |

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the competency required to undertake an investigation of a fire involving a fatality/ies.

No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Application of the Unit

Application of this unit is relevant to specialist fire investigators who are required to apply a systematic approach to the investigation of a fatality/ies at a fire scene.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

PUAFIR605A Determine origin and cause of mobile property fire (Fire sector specific)

PUAFIR609A Collect, record and coordinate the analysis of physical evidence (Fire sector specific)

And either

PUAFIR603A Determine origin and cause of wildfire (Fire sector specific)

OR

PUAFIR604A Determine origin and cause of structure fire (Fire sector specific)

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a Unit of Competency.

Performance Criteria describe the required performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where ***bold italicised*** text is used, further information is detailed in the Required Skills and Knowledge and/or the Range Statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the Evidence Guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

| ELEMENT | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. Assess impact of fire on human remains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1 Presence of human remains is identified and confirmed at the scene and processed in accordance with coronial/agency requirements • 1.2 Appropriate notifications (to coronial services, police etc.) are made in accordance with statutory and agency procedures • 1.3 <i>Effect of heat range fire on human remains</i> is assessed • 1.4 Visible burn patterns and injuries on human remains are identified, assessed and documented • 1.5 <i>Origin and cause determination</i> options are assessed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2. Examine factors impacting on origin and cause of death | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.1 Human factors that may have prevented occupant/s escaping from the fire and products of combustion are examined • 2.2 Structural factors that may have impeded occupant egress from the structure are analysed • 2.3 Effectiveness and operation of early warning detection and suppression systems are assessed • 2.4 Observations regarding deceased's clothing are made and <i>recorded</i> • 2.5 Observations of human behaviour before, during and after the fire are recorded |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3. Implement procedures for recovery of human remains and report findings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.1 <i>Occupational health and safety (OHS) procedures</i> for removal of human remains are implemented • 3.2 Disaster victim identification procedures are implemented as required • 3.3 Methods of protecting human remains prior to removal from a fire scene are implemented • 3.4 Methods to ensure all human remains are collected from a fire scene are implemented • 3.5 Consequential damage to human remains is recorded and reported to the appropriate authority • 3.6 Human remains collected from a fire scene are recorded according to agency procedures • 3.7 Appropriate techniques to minimise evidence deterioration are followed • 3.8 Appropriate techniques and equipment are used for scene analysis, reconstruction and testing of hypothesis • 3.9 Investigation report is completed and forwarded to appropriate authorities/stakeholders |

Required Skills and Knowledge

Required Skills

- accurately record information
- interview potential witnesses (members of the public, emergency services personnel, members of statutory agencies, property owners/occupants)
- prepare reports
- take notes to support research and court preparation

Required Knowledge

- agency and legal requirements for writing and presenting reports
- common causes of fire (accidental, chemical, deliberate, electrical, incendiary, natural, negligence)
- effects of fire on the human body
- evidence collection (admissibility, body bags, collection, continuity, identification, packaging, sampling techniques)
- functional responsibilities and authorities
- memorandums of understanding
- note taking procedures and processes
- OHS regulations
- other regulators
- processes and outcomes of post mortems and coronial inquests
- relevant legislation such as the Fire Service Act, Coroner's Act, and Criminal Code and Evidence Act
- relevant Australian Standards and international standards such as those that relate to clothing design, fabric, flammability
- rules of evidence including identification, collection and continuity, and admissibility
- safe work practices involving biological hazards
- standard disaster victim identification procedures
- standard operating procedures for conducting investigations

Evidence Guide

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

Assessment must confirm the ability to:

- apply a systematic approach to the investigation of fatal fires based on scientific method
- apply relevant laws, legislation, codes of practice and standards in fire investigation and court procedures
- interpret findings of forensic data and physical evidence analyses
- conduct interviews and accurately record information.

Consistency in performance

Competency should be demonstrated over time and across a range of workplace and/or simulated situations.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Context of assessment

Competency should be assessed in the workplace and in a simulated workplace environment.

Specific resources for assessment

Access is required to:

- legislation, policy, procedures and protocols relating to gathering and managing evidence
- case studies and workplace scenarios to capture the range of fire fatalities likely to occur for which evidence needs to be gathered and managed.

Guidance information for assessment

Assessment methods suitable for valid and reliable assessment of this unit may include a combination of:

- case studies
- demonstration
- observation
- questioning
- scenarios
- authenticated evidence from the workplace.

Range Statement

The Range Statement relates to the Unit of Competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. ***Bold italicised*** wording in the Performance Criteria is detailed below.

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Effect of heat range fire on human remains</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carboxyhemoglobin • Common injuries (pre and post fire) • Degrees of burns • Effects of products of combustion |
| <i>Origin and cause determination</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of ignition sources • Scene interpretation • Scene processing |
| <i>Recording observations</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio • Computers • Notes • Photography (digital, multimedia, CCTV [closed circuit television], other media images) • Sketches and plans • Video |
| <i>Occupational health and safety procedures</i> include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological hazards • Safe work practices and procedures • Safety equipment and clothing |

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.