



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PUASAR011C Search as a member of an aquatic search team

Revision Number: 2

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Modification History

Release	TP version	Comments
2	PUA12 V1	Layout adjusted.
1	PUA00 V8.1	Primary release on TGA.

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the competency required to search for and locate lost persons and/or items as a member of an aquatic search team including inland rivers, lakes, dams, surf zones and oceans, in a range of *search terrain*.

While normally undertaken in boats, *aquatic searches* may also include cliff searches and searches assisted by aerial support or other craft.

Search operations are normally conducted in support of police and may include searches for missing persons, objects and/or evidence.

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

Application of the Unit

Participating in an aquatic search operation, generally as a member of a team, will require the effective application of a variety of skills. Competence in this unit will include appropriate preparedness, response, direct participation in the search, and appropriate post-search recovery. Successful achievement of this unit will require practical and effective application of skills in a real or simulated search operation.

This unit is typically relevant for lifesavers, lifeguards or other personnel who are required to perform or participate in a search (regularly or occasionally) in an aquatic environment.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

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 Range Statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the Evidence Guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Prepare for aquatic search	1.1 Search operation information and <i>task information</i> is obtained and discussed with team members. 1.2 Task information is used to determine personal equipment needed for search operation. 1.3 <i>Search equipment</i> is selected and checked for serviceability, and is stored/packed for use. 1.4 Faulty equipment is reported to supervisor.
2. Participate in aquatic search	2.1 Specified team roles and functions are carried out in accordance with operational and task information. 2.2 <i>Search formation</i> or grids are used to locate missing persons or objects. 2.3 Search boundaries are marked in line with task requirements. 2.4 <i>Observation skills</i> are applied, and any clues or objects located are reported immediately in accordance with organisational procedures. 2.5 <i>Communication</i> is maintained with team members throughout the search. 2.6 Personal capabilities and limitations are recognised and referred to team leader.
3. Maintain aquatic search safety	3.1 Search safety procedures are implemented. 3.2 <i>Survival techniques</i> are applied when necessary. 3.3 Lost searcher procedures are implemented when necessary.
4. Recover person or findings	4.1 Team leader is immediately advised of located persons or findings in accordance with organisational procedures. 4.2 Persons or findings are recovered and treated using appropriate search safety procedures. 4.3 Initial preservation procedures are implemented to maintain integrity of evidence. 4.4 Initial scene preservation is conducted in line with organisational requirements.
5. Complete recall and stand down procedures	5.1 Search equipment is recovered, cleaned and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines and organisational procedures. 5.2 Operational debriefing is participated in and <i>operational documentation</i> is completed to organisational standards. 5.3 Where identified, symptoms of <i>operational stress</i> are recognised and reported.

Required Skills and Knowledge

This describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, required for this unit.

Required Skills

- deal with clues and location of objects or causalities
- implement lost searcher procedures
- implement survival techniques
- maintain search information
- mark and space boundaries
- observe the situation/environment
- use personal protective equipment correctly
- work in a team

Required Knowledge

- composition of team, and roles and responsibilities of team members
- duty of care
- local documentation requirements
- local hazards and environmental threats
- local operational briefing and debriefing procedures
- local operating procedures
- lost searcher procedures
- map reading
- object recovery procedures
- recall procedures
- relevant state/territory search management arrangements
- relevant occupational health and safety principles and practices
- requirements to preserve a crime scene and the preservation of evidence
- search formations
- signs and symptoms of operational stress
- survival techniques
- verbal and non-verbal communication techniques including hand signals and language style

Evidence Guide

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for this Training Package.

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

Assessment must confirm the ability to:

- comply with search orders
- observe the safety of self and others at all times during the search
- search during the day and night
- correctly apply survival techniques, search safety procedures and lost searcher procedures throughout the search when required

Consistency in performance

Competency should be demonstrated over time during an extended day/night activity during which a variety of searches for persons and objects are undertaken.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Context of assessment

Competency should be assessed in an actual or simulated search environment by observing the individual carry out a number of search activities relating to various search scenarios.

Specific resources for assessment

Access is required to:

- appropriate environment to conduct the search operation
- other organisations in the operation such as police, helicopter rescue, marine search and rescue, other aquatic organisations - as required

Method of assessment

This unit may be assessed with the following unit/s:

- PUATEA001B Work in a team.

In a public safety environment assessment is usually conducted via direct observation in a training environment or in the workplace via subject matter supervision and/or mentoring, which is typically recorded in a competency workbook.

Assessment is completed using appropriately qualified assessors who select the most appropriate method of assessment.

Assessment may occur in an operational environment or in an industry-approved simulated work environment.

Forms of assessment that are typically used include:

- direct observation
- interviewing the candidate
- journals and workplace documentation
- third party reports from supervisors
- written or oral questions

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.

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|--|---|
| <i>Search terrain</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bays and rivers • Lakes and dams • Ocean • Sand • Steep rock areas • Surf |
| <i>Aquatic searches may be conducted under conditions</i> such as: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazardous environmental conditions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adverse weather • after dark operations • difficult sea and surf conditions • time pressure • dangerous marine creatures • Ocean or inland environments • Operating as part of a multi-agency response |
| <i>Task information</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency rendezvous points • Number, nature and description of persons or objects that are the focus of the search • Command, control and coordination arrangements • Ocean, surf and sea environmental information • Operating area • Potential hazards • Time constraints • Weather forecast |
| <i>Search equipment</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compass or other positioning equipment • Food • Maps and charts • Notebook and pencil • Personal first aid equipment • Personal hygiene items • Personal protective equipment, especially lifejackets, EPIRBs, wet weather gear, cold weather clothing, sun protection • Radio communications equipment • Water |
| <i>Search formations</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creeping line search pattern • Square search pattern |
| <i>Observation skills</i> may | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picking up on physical cues |

- include:
- Scanning
- Communication** may include:
- Auslan gestures
 - Calming and reassuring a casualty
 - Face-to-face
 - Facsimile
 - Feedback of information
 - Information technology systems
 - Land line telephone
 - Mobile telephone
 - Radio
 - Signalling systems
 - Written
- Survival techniques** may include:
- Conserving water, food and energy
 - Constructing temporary shelters
 - Locating other craft
 - Locating shelter
 - Obtaining water
 - Skills relevant to the local areas (such as cold, heat, sea conditions, aquatic conditions)
- Operational documentation** may include:
- Notes or sketches of findings
 - Other relevant information required for potential coronial or other legal proceedings
- Operational stress symptoms** may include:
- Fatigue
 - Headaches
 - Illness
 - Indecision
 - Intolerance
 - Lack of focus
 - Nausea

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.