Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

SISOCVE414A Guide vertical multi pitch caving trips

Release: 2

INDUSTRY SKILLS COUNCILS

Creating Australia's Future

SISOCVE414A Guide vertical multi pitch caving trips

Modification History

Not Applicable

Unit Descriptor

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to guide participants on vertical multi pitch caving trips. This unit focuses on the application of planning skills to make suitable arrangements to safely guide groups on caving trips in caves with multi pitch vertical sections.

Application of the Unit

This unit applies to caving adventure guides who are responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating vertical multi pitch caving trips for groups of participants.

This unit also applies to outdoor recreation leaders working for outdoor education or adventure providers; volunteer groups; not-for-profit organisations or government agencies.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

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

Pre-Requisites

SISOCVE409A Rig ladders in complex situations
SISOCVE410A Rig a complex pitch using caving specific techniques
SISOCVE411A Apply vertical caving skills
SISOCVE412A Rig multi pitches in complex vertical cave systems
SISOCVE413A Navigate in untrogged caves
SISOVTR402A Perform complex vertical rescues

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.	Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the Evidence Guide
1. Plan vertical multi pitch caving trip.	1.1. Conduct relevant assessments to determine the ***condition of participants***. 1.2. Develop a trip ***plan*** according to participant's needs, ***relevant legislation*** and ***organisational policies and procedures***. 1.3. Select an appropriate cave for the trip according to participant's abilities, ***trip objectives***, relevant legislation and organisational policies and procedures. 1.4. Determine most appropriate ***belay system*** according to participant's abilities and conditions at the site. 1.5. Identify ***hazards*** associated with vertical caving and minimise ***risks*** to ensure personal safety of participants. 1.6. Access ***relevant sources*** to interpret detailed ***weather information*** to determine trip plan. 1.7. Determine ***food and water requirements*** and ***contextual issues*** of the trip. 1.8. Obtain permits or permission for access where required, and inform appropriate authorities before commencing the caving trip.
2. Select equipment for the group.	2.1. Select caving ***equipment*** according to contextual issues and organisational policies and procedures, and check serviceability. 2.2. Assess equipment for safety and suitability and adjust and fit to ensure personal comfort. 2.3. Check safety and rescue equipment to ensure suitability to the group and the cave.
3. Brief participants.	3.1. Communicate instructions and ***relevant information*** about the vertical caving trip in a manner suitable to the participants. 3.2. Outline logistical details, minimal impact and ***safety***

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
	procedures for the trip.
	3.3. Establish a suitable communication system for participants to use throughout caving trip.
	3.4. Demonstrate abseiling and or laddering and belaying techniques.
	3.5. Outline procedures for inversion and entrapment.
	3.6. Check and confirm participants are properly equipped for the trip.
4. Lead vertical multi pitch caving trip.	4.1. Evaluate caving conditions and provide direction and advice to group during the trip.
	4.2. Establish safe areas and safety lines where necessary.
	4.3. Establish anchors, abseiling ropes or caving ladders and belay ropes, if applicable, ensuring ropes or ladders are positioned correctly for the proposed descent or ascent.
	4.4. Demonstrate vertical multi pitch caving techniques, where required, to negotiate features of cave.
	4.5. Monitor individual and group progress, including abseiling or laddering and belaying techniques, and provide appropriate feedback throughout.
	4.6. Identify potential hazards and determine how they can be overcome or avoided.
	4.7. Implement appropriate modifications to trip in regard to all ***variable factors*** that are monitored.
5. Complete post-trip responsibilities.	5.1. Notify relevant authorities of trip completion.
	5.2. Retrieve, inspect, repair and store equipment according to organisational policies and procedures.
	5.3. Evaluate ***relevant aspects*** of caving trip.
	5.4. Identify potential areas of improvement for future vertical caving trips.
	5.5. Review own performance and identify potential improvements.

Required Skills and Knowledge

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.

Required skills

- communication skills to:
  - consult with participants to plan a vertical multi pitch caving trip that meets their needs
  - convey information about the safety and logistical aspects of the trip
  - interact with participants to create a safe and positive environment
- problem-solving skills to:
  - plan a suitable vertical caving trip according to participant's needs and abilities
  - determine most appropriate belay system for the situation
  - make decisions about potential hazards that may affect trip
  - modify aspects of trip according to all variable factors and non-routine situations
- planning and organising skills to:
  - source, allocate and coordinate equipment and a suitable cave site
  - organise participants into manageable groups for vertical multi pitch caving
- language and literacy skills to:
  - produce a plan for the caving trip
  - complete post-trip participant and self evaluations
- first aid, rescue and emergency response skills appropriate to the cave to enable initial response and or rescue in emergencies.

Required knowledge

- legislation and organisational policies and procedures to enable safe conduct of all activities
- site specific information to assist in the planning process and enable management of potential hazards and any special restrictions applying to the cave
- equipment, clothing and footwear types, characteristics and technology used for vertical multi pitch caving, and factors affecting appropriate selection, use, care and maintenance to enable safe conduct of all activities
- hazards and risks that may be experienced in vertical multi pitch caves and how to negotiate these
- vertical caving techniques and common communication systems used when caving, to reduce risk
- vertical multi pitch caving environments, including features, hazards, risks and possible conditions to adequately prepare group
- principles of anchor systems, including equally shared load, single component failure and effect, redundancy, and angle of separation
- principles and types of belay systems and devices, including top and bottom belays, and self and instructor or other participant belays

- advantages and disadvantages of various knots in a variety of situations
- weather information to ascertain possible conditions and their effect on the trip
- first aid, emergency and rescue procedures relevant to the cave to ensure safety of self and others.

Evidence Guide

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

Overview of assessment

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

Evidence of the following is essential:

- plans within activity constraints and guides and monitors group in a safe and professional manner
- applies contingency management techniques to deal with a range of problems or variable factors that may arise during vertical multi pitch caving trips
- encourages and responds to group feedback and evaluates and reflects on own guiding performance to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas that need improvement.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Assessment must ensure the safe guiding of groups on vertical multi pitch caving trips in locations that reflect local conditions and are of sufficient breadth and duration to demonstrate competency and consistency of performance.

Assessment must also ensure access to:

- suitable vertical multi pitch caving sites to guide participants
- participants to take part in caving trips
- caving, abseiling, belaying, safety, first aid, rescue, navigation and communication equipment
- resources and information regarding participants and cave site to plan, guide and document caving trips for a variety of participants.

Method of assessment

A range of assessment methods should be used to assess practical skills and knowledge. The following examples are appropriate for this unit:

- observation of planning and guiding processes and interacting with participants, including conveying information for safe participation
- oral or written questioning to assess knowledge and application of relevant legislation and organisational policies and procedures to enable safe conduct of all caving activities throughout trip
- observation of dealing with contingencies such as changing weather conditions and equipment failure

- review of caving trip plans
- third-party reports from a supervisor detailing performance.

Holistic assessment with other units relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role is recommended

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, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.

Condition of participants may include:

- previous experience
- physical capabilities
- age
- injuries and illnesses.

Plan may include:

- aims and objectives
- date, time and duration
- location, equipment and resources
- guide and participant ratios
- safety, minimal impact and emergency requirements.

Relevant legislation may include:

- occupational health and safety
- cave access and permit requirements
- working with children
- equal opportunity
- privacy
- environmental regulations.

Organisational policies and procedures may include:

- occupational health and safety
- use and maintenance of equipment
- communication protocols
- assessment procedures
- time and budget constraints
- confidentiality of participant information
- code of ethics
- Australian Speleological Federation Codes and Guidelines:
  - Cave Safety Guidelines
  - Code of Ethics and Conservation
  - Minimal Impact Caving Code
  - Cave Diving Code of Practice.

Trip objectives may include:

- exploration
- meeting people
- surveying
- interpretation
- team building

- fitness targets
- adventure and recreation.

Belay systems may include:

- top belay
- bottom belay
- bottom brake
- self belay.

Hazards may include:

- environmental hazards
- set-up hazards
- group management hazards
- caver hazards
- dangerous fauna and flora.

Risks may include:

- hypothermia
- injuries and illnesses
- exhaustion
- dehydration
- phobias
- stings or bites
- equipment failure.

Relevant sources may include:

- bureau of meteorology
- media
- national parks and wildlife centres
- police
- internet.

Weather information may include:

- satellite images
- daily and weekly forecasts
- maximum and minimum temperatures
- weather warnings.

Food and water requirements may include:

- menu planning and preparation
- range of foods.

Contextual issues may include:

- season and weather
- cave features
- participant characteristics
- number of staff
- length, depth and complexity of cave
- safety requirements.

Equipment may include:

- caving equipment
- safety equipment
- rescue equipment
- artificial protection - if applicable
- navigation equipment
- communication equipment.

Relevant information may include:	• safety and minimal impact procedures • logistical details • risk and hazard prevention and management • caving techniques • abseiling and belaying techniques • responsible and safe behaviour.
Safety procedures may include:	• symptoms, treatment and prevention of common caving incidents or risks • safe areas and or boundaries • contingency and risk management plan.
Variable factors may include:	• change of weather • equipment failure • cave conditions.
Relevant aspects may include:	• use of equipment • caving, abseiling and belaying skills • activity organisation and conduct • communication and feedback • demonstration of caving, abseiling and belaying techniques • safety practices.

Unit Sector(s)

Outdoor Recreation

Competency Field

Caving