



Australian Government

MSS027003 Provide environmental advice to clients

Release: 1

MSS027003 Provide environmental advice to clients

Modification History

Release 1. Supersedes and is equivalent to MSS027003A Provide environmental advice to clients

Application

This unit of competency covers the ability to provide verbal or written advice to clients about environmental issues, problems or aspects of environmental management plans, policies and procedures that are relevant to a specific site, project or program. Personnel are required to identify and analyse the issue or problem, source relevant information, formulate advice from a range of options and communicate the authorised advice clearly to the client. They work under the supervision of an environmental scientist or engineer, site manager or workplace environmental manager.

Note that the term ‘manager’ is used to refer to management of a function, project and /or program and does not necessarily imply line management.

This unit of competency is applicable to environmental site coordinators, environmental managers and senior environmental officers working in all industry sectors.

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

Pre-requisite Unit

Nil

Competency Field

Management

Unit Sector

Environmental

Elements and Performance Criteria

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

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

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| 1 | Develop and maintain specialist | 1.1 | Build a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of relevant environmental issues through networking and researching examples of environmental management |
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	environmental knowledge		best practice.
		1.2	Collate and store information in accordance with workplace requirements.
		1.3	Apply acquired information to improve the quality of work outputs.
2	Define and analyse the request for advice	2.1	Confirm and record the source, nature and priority of the client request.
		2.2	Clarify the issue/problem/requested information and analyse the risks involved with providing advice.
		2.3	Clarify workplace communication protocols and redirect the request to a more relevant person, if appropriate.
		2.4	Seek guidance from relevant personnel, as necessary.
3	Gather and analyse relevant information	3.1	Identify the information required to formulate useful advice.
		3.2	Identify available sources of information that are relevant and reliable.
		3.3	Obtain external expert opinion and advice in accordance with workplace procedures, if required.
		3.4	Analyse available information to identify issues, principles, legal requirements, patterns and/or trends in data that are of interest to the client.
4	Formulate advice	4.1	Develop advice options that are based on clear legislative requirements and/or sound environmental management practices.
		4.2	Clearly distinguish between fact and opinion.
		4.3	Justify any assumptions made and support conclusions with reasoned arguments and appropriate evidence.
		4.4	If necessary, discuss options with client and/or relevant personnel, incorporate their feedback and finalise advice.

		4.5	Ensure that advice is accurate and meets the client's needs.
		4.6	Obtain authorisation to release advice to client in accordance with workplace communication protocols.
5	Communicate advice to client	5.1	Provide timely, authorised advice in accordance with workplace policies/procedures and in a format/manner that suits the client.
		5.2	Check and confirm client's understanding of the advice provided.
		5.3	Use feedback from clients to improve the way advice is developed and provided.
6	Record details of the request and advice	6.1	Record accurate details of request, client contact and advice in accordance with workplace procedures.
		6.2	File records in accordance with workplace procedures.

Foundation Skills

This section describes those required skills (language, literacy and numeracy) 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.

Legislation, regulations, standards, codes, workplace procedures and requirements include the latest	- federal legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, Australian Heritage Council Act, Native Title Act and National Environmental Protection Measures - state/territory government legislation and local government by-laws, policies, regulations and plans dealing with land use, acquisition, planning and protection; environmental protection; cultural/heritage sites; vegetation management; nature
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version of one or more of:

conservation and wildlife/plant protection; water and water management; soil conservation; pollution and contaminated sites; fisheries, forestry and mining operations

- national strategies dealing with water quality management, ecologically sustainable development, greenhouse and energy reporting
- legislation, standards and codes of practice for work health and safety (WHS), and handling of dangerous goods
- Australian and international standards covering environmental management, such as AS/NZS ISO 14000 Basic Set:2007 Environmental Management Basic Set
- registration/licensing and/or accreditation requirements
- information for specific sites and/or activities (e.g. sampling, monitoring, construction and mining), such as applicable legislative requirements and approval requirements, workplace environmental and emergency management plans and procedures, site processes and work schedules, monitoring/inspection procedures and environmental management actions, sampling and in-situ measurement procedures
- procedures covering receipt of requests for information and release of information data and results, confidentiality and security of workplace information, records and reporting
- workplace documents, such as work schedules; standard operating procedures (SOPs); equipment manuals and warranties; job hazard analyses; work method statements; safety data sheets (SDS) and safe work procedures; waste minimisation, containment, processing and safe disposal procedures.

Environmental issues and problems include one or more of:

- identifying and addressing cultural heritage issues
- managing site amenity and access issues
- designing/conducting environmental monitoring baseline studies and social risk/impact assessments
- managing expectations and addressing community concerns about impacts, community development and local employment opportunities
- responding to community or stakeholder complaints
- responding to environmental exceedances (e.g. noise, dust and water quality) and adverse audit findings
- investigating/responding to environmental non-conformance, non-compliance and incidents
- informing interested parties about changes to site/project/program operations
- involving interested parties in site/project/program closure planning
- developing and coordinating a site rehabilitation program

- developing environmental management strategies (e.g. for water use, wastewater, energy, waste and sustainability).

Information includes one or more of:

- legislation, regulations, guidelines, standards, codes of practice, licence conditions and approval processes
- environmental management case studies, research findings and models of good practice
- workplace environmental management plans, policies, strategies and procedures
- site/project initial advice statements and risk/impact assessments
- records of site consultations with interested parties
- site/project environmental reports (e.g. weekly and monthly monitoring)
- environmental data sets, such as:
 - satellite imagery and remote sensing data
 - geophysical, geochemical, geological, hydrological and meteorological data
 - ecological data, such as distribution of vegetation, fauna and pests
 - social science data, such as demographic and census information
- land use data, zoning and property classifications
- historical records and photographs
- community surveys
- maps (road and topographical) and aerial photos
- site utilities/services (e.g. water, sewer, electricity and gas)
- government reports
- articles (e.g. online, academic, newspaper and journal).

Sources of information include one or more of:

- government departments and agencies (e.g. environment, climate change, agriculture and mining)
- regulatory authorities
- universities, cooperative research centres
- utility authorities/companies (e.g. water, gas and electricity)
- Land Title Office and Valuer General
- local government records
- Geoscience Australia
- Australian Social Science Data Archive
- companies providing environmental services
- internet, library/archive collections, annual reports and community newsletters.

External expert opinion includes one or more of:

- government regulators
- environmental consultants
- contractors
- solicitors
- environmental scientists, engineers and planners
- professional groups and organisations
- community leaders and tribal elders.

WHS and environmental management requirements include:

- compliance with relevant federal/state/territory WHS legislation at all times
- assuming that samples are potentially hazardous and applying standard precautions
- accessing and applying current industry understanding of infection control issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and state/territory Departments of Health, where relevant.

Unit Mapping Information

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Links

Companion Volume implementation guides are found in VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=5b04f318-804f-4dc0-9463-c3fb9a3fe998>

Assessment Requirements for MSS027003 Provide environmental advice to clients

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Performance Evidence

Evidence of competence in this unit must satisfy all of the requirements of the elements and performance criteria, and include demonstration of:

- providing reliable environmental advice (about environmental issues, problems or aspects of environmental management plans, policies and procedures that are relevant to a specific site, project or program) for at least two (2) different clients
- describing actions taken to develop and maintain specialist environmental knowledge relevant to their job role
- clarifying and prioritising client requests for environmental advice and analysing the risks involved
- locating, analysing and synthesising sufficient information to address the environmental issues, principles, legal requirements and patterns/trends in data of interest to the client
- clearly explaining complex environmental management concepts, principles and procedures and legislative/regulatory requirements
- summarising and organising environmental information in a logical sequence for clients
- providing environmental advice that meets the client's needs and is based on clear legislative requirements and/or sound environmental management practices
- listening actively, asking questions and using feedback to clarify options and improve the quality of environmental advice provided to clients
- releasing authorised advice to clients in accordance with workplace procedures
- presenting accurate information using language, style and format that is readily understood
- communicating advice to clients within the expected timeframe and confirming their understanding
- seeking advice when issues/problems are beyond scope of competence/responsibility
- maintaining records and the security/confidentiality of information in accordance with workplace procedures.

Knowledge Evidence

- Must provide evidence that demonstrates knowledge of:
- common environmental protection/management terminology, concepts and principles relevant to job role
- common sources of environmental information relevant to job role

- environmental legislative/regulatory requirements and responsibilities relevant to site/project/program
- workplace environmental management plans, workplace procedures for identifying and assessing environmental risks and impacts, providing advice and responding to environmental incidents
- specific site/project/program characteristics, nature of activities conducted at site, environmental management values, environmental issues, risks and impacts; recommended control measures and management actions

workplace procedures for managing security and confidentiality of information, managing client relations, responding to complaints, release of authorised advice, records management and reporting.

Assessment Conditions

- Judgement of competence must be based on holistic assessment of the evidence. Assessment methods must confirm consistency of performance over time, rather than a single assessment event.
- This unit of competency is to be assessed in the workplace, or a simulated workplace environment. A simulated workplace environment must reflect realistic operational workplace conditions that cover all aspects of workplace performance, including the environment, task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job role environment skills.
- Foundation skills are integral to competent performance of the unit and should not be assessed separately.
- Assessment processes and techniques must be appropriate to the language, literacy and numeracy requirements of the work being performed and the needs of the candidate.
- Knowledge evidence may be collected concurrently with performance evidence or through an independent process such as workbooks, written assessments or interviews (provided a record is kept in each case).
- Holistic assessment methods include:
 - review of environmental advice and supporting documentation prepared by the candidate for at least two (2) different clients
 - feedback from a manager that the candidate provides reliable and timely environmental advice that meets clients' needs
 - oral and/or written questions to assess the candidate's knowledge of environmental management terms and principles, legislative/regulatory requirements for site/project/program, workplace environmental management plans, workplace policies and procedures governing provision of advice to clients
 - analysis of case studies requiring advice about environmental issues/problems within the candidate's scope of responsibility
 - observation of the candidate presenting advice to clients.
- Access is required to workplace documentation, procedures and specifications associated with this unit including, but not limited to:
 - site/project/program history
 - reports, published case studies and research findings relevant to site/project/program

- relevant legislation, codes, standards, workplace environmental management policies, plans, procedures and checklists
- access to a computer, internet, data sets, workplace information management system and reports.
- Assessors must satisfy the assessor competency requirements that are in place at the time of the assessment as set by the VET regulator.
- The assessor must demonstrate both technical competency and currency.
- Technical competence can be demonstrated through:
 - relevant VET or other qualification/Statement of Attainment AND/OR
 - relevant workplace experience
- Currency can be demonstrated through:
 - performing the competency being assessed as part of current employment OR
 - having consulted with an organisation providing environmental monitoring, management or technology related services about performing the competency being assessed within the last twelve months.

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