



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PSPPA602A Provide public affairs advisory service

Revision Number: 3

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Modification History

Release	TP Version	Comments
3	PSP12V1	Unit descriptor edited.
2	PSP04V4.2.	Layout adjusted. No changes to content.
1	PSP04V4.1	Primary release.

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the provision of a public affairs advisory service to management that provides a direct unfiltered link to trends, public opinion and perspectives. It includes advising on sensitive situations, advising on reactions to organisational action and advising on organisational materials.

In practice, provision of a public affairs advisory service may overlap with other generalist or specialist public sector work activities such as acting ethically, complying with legislation, applying government systems, managing change, managing diversity, persuading and influencing opinion, using strategic networks.

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

Application of the Unit

Not applicable.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements are the essential outcomes of the unit of competency. Together, performance criteria specify the requirements for competent performance. Text in ***bold italics*** is explained in the Range Statement following.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Advise on sensitive situations

- 1.1 Close communication is maintained with national, regional and local **media** to identify and anticipate issues of significance to the organisation.
- 1.2 Trends, public opinion and perspectives are identified and assessed for their impact on the organisation.
- 1.3 Advice is provided on sensitive issues as they arise and on emerging issues that may be politically sensitive for the organisation.
- 1.4 Advice is based on well-researched background information, is objective and meets the organisation's needs.
- 1.5 Advice is structured to include strategies for dealing with **sensitive situations** while maintaining confidentiality, and handling consequences if confidentiality is breached.

2. Advise on reactions to organisational action

- 2.1 Proposed organisational policies, programs and actions are analysed for their impact on clients and/or the public.
- 2.2 Advice is provided on anticipated or actual public and media reaction to proposed organisational changes.
- 2.3 Strategies for ensuring full understanding of the benefits of change, minimising damage to the organisation's image and reputation, and recommendations to counter negative publicity are included in advice given.
- 2.4 Candid, objective and confidential advice is provided in accordance with **legislation, policy and procedures**.

3. Advise on organisational materials

- 3.1 Draft materials produced by the organisation are analysed for political, social or economic issues relevant to the government as a whole, the intended audience and/or the public.
- 3.2 Cultural context of the information is identified in terms of its relevance or otherwise to the target audience and the general population.
- 3.3 Stereotypes, bias, prejudice and motive are identified and highlighted for amendment.
- 3.4 Key issues are identified, fact is separated from opinion and underlying values and beliefs explored.
- 3.5 Information is synthesised and advice/feedback is prepared to ensure publications meet organisational standards and contribute to public affairs outcomes.

Required Skills and Knowledge

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

Skill requirements

Look for evidence that confirms skills in:

- applying legislation, regulations and policies relating to public affairs
- analysing organisational policy, core business, client group etc to identify potential for sensitive issues
- using discretion and judgment with sensitive issues
- providing candid confidential advice
- analysing and interpreting organisational materials to advise on changes to address sensitive issues
- responding to diversity, including gender and disability
- applying procedures relating to occupational health and safety and the environment in the context of public affairs

Knowledge requirements

Look for evidence that confirms knowledge and understanding of:

- legislation, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines relating to public affairs
- maintaining relationships with key media contacts
- journalistic and interpretive writing
- strategies to deal with sensitive situations to defend the organisation's position in the face of criticism
- equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- public sector legislation such as occupational health and safety and the environment in the context of public affairs

Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide specifies the evidence required to demonstrate achievement in the unit of competency as a whole. It must be read in conjunction with the Unit descriptor, Performance Criteria, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Public Sector Training Package.

Units to be assessed together

- *Pre-requisite* units that must be achieved prior to this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-requisite* units that must be assessed with this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-assessed units* that may be assessed with this unit to increase the efficiency and realism of the assessment process include, but are not limited to:
 - PSPETHC601B Maintain and enhance confidence in public service
 - PSPGOV601B Apply government systems
 - PSPGOV605A Persuade and influence opinion
 - PSPGOV606A Prepare high-level/sensitive written materials
 - PSPMNGT605B Manage diversity
 - PSPMNGT608B Manage risk
 - PSPMNGT609B Formulate business strategies
 - PSPLEGN601B Manage compliance with legislation in the public sector
 - PSPOHS602A Manage workplace safety

Overview of evidence requirements

In addition to integrated demonstration of the elements and their related performance criteria, look for evidence that confirms:

- the knowledge requirements of this unit
- the skill requirements of this unit
- application of the Employability Skills as they relate to this unit (see Employability Summaries in Qualifications Framework)
- provision of a public affairs advisory service in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time)

Resources required to carry out assessment

These resources include:

- legislation, policy, procedures and protocols relating to public affairs
- case studies and workplace scenarios to capture the range of situations likely to be encountered when providing a public affairs advisory service

Where and how to assess evidence

Valid assessment of this unit requires:

- a workplace environment or one that closely resembles

normal work practice and replicates the range of conditions likely to be encountered when providing a public affairs advisory service, including coping with difficulties, irregularities and breakdowns in routine

- provision of a public affairs advisory service in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time)

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands, such as literacy, and the needs of particular groups, such as:

- people with disabilities
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- women
- young people
- older people
- people in rural and remote locations

Assessment methods suitable for valid and reliable assessment of this competency may include, but are not limited to, a combination of 2 or more of:

- case studies
- demonstration
- observation
- portfolios
- projects
- questioning
- scenarios
- simulation or role plays
- authenticated evidence from the workplace and/or training courses

For consistency of assessment

Evidence must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure the person can achieve the unit outcome and apply the competency in different situations or environments

Range Statement

The Range Statement provides information about the context in which the unit of competency is carried out. The variables cater for differences between States and Territories and the Commonwealth, and between organisations and workplaces. They allow for different work requirements, work practices and knowledge. The Range Statement also provides a focus for assessment. It relates to the unit as a whole. Text in ***bold italics*** in the Performance Criteria is explained here.

Media may include:

- press
- radio
- television
- film
- magazines
- print
- graphic
- electronic
- computer
- telecommunications

Sensitive situations may include:

- complaints
- incidents
- poor client service
- inappropriate actions
- criminal activity
- emergencies
- industrial issues
- safety issues
- strict application of policy and procedures in circumstances that might warrant alternative action
- release of confidential information
- politically unpopular decisions

Legislation, policies and procedures may include:

- State/Territory and Commonwealth legislation, regulations, policies, guidelines and standards relating to public affairs, such as:
 - ethics and accountability guidelines/codes of practice
 - information security standards
 - principles of equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity
 - confidentiality
 - freedom of information
 - privacy
 - intellectual property

- copyright
- risk management
- fraud control

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.

Competency field

Public Affairs.