



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PUAPOLFC002B Maintain a safe forensic working environment

Revision Number: 3

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Modification History

Release	TP version	Comments
3	PUA12 V1.1	Unit Descriptor revised.
2	PUA12 V1	Layout adjusted.
1	PUA00 V8.1	First release in TGA.

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the competency required to maintain a safe working environment while working in a forensic role.

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

Application of the Unit

This unit applies to forensic investigators required to create a safe working environment within the context of forensics.

This unit may be applied in the field at crime/incident scenes, in a laboratory and/or at mortuary facilities and clandestine laboratories.

Forensic investigators will use this unit to identify and establish safety zones for particular functions under identified conditions. The unit will also contribute to the implementation of communication strategies by forensic investigators and will enable them to safely use laboratory equipment.

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. Identify and monitor potential health/safety risks	1.1 Potential physical, chemical and biological hazards are identified and risk management strategies are employed. 1.2 Relevant occupational health and safety (OH&S) guidelines are applied to contain/control exposure levels. 1.3 Personnel and members of the public at risk of exposure are immediately identified and notified of potential hazard. 1.4 Hazards are immediately cordoned off and clearly identified.
2. Identify specialist/external agency requirements	2.1 Need for specialist and/or external agency assistance is assessed and requested where necessary. 2.2 Access pathways are identified to both specialist/external agencies and other relevant personnel.
3. Use and maintain protective clothing and safety equipment	3.1 Protective clothing and safety equipment is maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and kept is readily available. 3.2 Protective clothing and safety equipment is replaced in accordance with documented replacement programs.
4. Apply collection/packaging procedures safely	4.1 Safe collection and packaging procedures are identified and employed to contain health and safety risks and to maintain integrity of exhibits. 4.2 Relevance of packaging procedures to the type and scope of hazard and potential periods of storage is ensured. 4.3 Disposal of hazardous material including protective clothing and packaging is in accordance with documented procedures and relevant OH&S legislation, laboratory safety and environmental protection guidelines.
5. Use and maintain equipment and substances, and dispose of safely	5.1 Manufacturer's instructions, documented procedures and best practice are employed during the operation of equipment and the use of substances and consumables. 5.2 Potential hazards identified during the use/operation of equipment are documented. 5.3 Where faulty the use/operation of that equipment is ceased pending inspection/repair. 5.4 Operational equipment, consumables and substances

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA****6. Follow accident/Injury reporting procedures**

- are secured to ensure only restricted/*authorised* access at all times.
- 5.5 Potential hazards relating to equipment, disposables and substances are identified and requisite warning labels/notices along with relevant HAZCHEM/safety symbols are made clearly visible.
- 5.6 Documented training programs relating to the function, use and operation of relevant laboratory and *field equipment* are undertaken.
- 5.7 Material safety data information is located, read and followed as appropriate to tasks undertaken.
- 6.1 Documented procedures relating to OH&S incidents are adhered to.
- 6.2 Relevant forms are completed and submitted according to documented procedures.

Required Skills and Knowledge

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

Required Skills

- effectively communicate safety issues/concerns to colleagues, supervisors and when necessary other emergency service workers and the public
- minimise workplace risks to self, colleagues and the public
- plan, implement and where necessary adapt workplace safety responses to situational contexts
- recognise and accurately assess situational risks/hazards
- safely operate and use general issue and emergency operational equipment and safety clothing

Required Knowledge

- established strategies to optimise safety under a range of field and laboratory scenarios
- general duty of care responsibilities
- organisational OH&S legislation as it applies to forensic investigation
- organisational policies and procedures (such as relevant legislation; operational, corporate and strategic plans; operational performance standards; operational policies and procedures; organisational personnel and occupational health and safety practices and guidelines; organisational quality standards; organisation's approach to environmental management and sustainability)
- organisational policy and procedures covering safety issues/practices
- potential risks associated with a range of field and laboratory activities
- relevant OH&S/hazard management specialists and external agencies

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:

- apply safe work practices at all times

Consistency in performance

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

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Context of assessment

Competency should be assessed on-the-job or in a simulated work environment.

Specific resources for assessment

There are no specific resource requirements for this unit.

Method of assessment

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.

Occupational health and safety guidelines include:

- CCH Safety in Laboratory Guidelines
- Commonwealth and state/territory OH&S legislation
- documented internal OH&S procedures manuals
- national Code of Practice for the labelling of workplace substances [NOHSC: 2012 (1994)]
- relevant Australian Standards

Personnel may include:

- forensic operatives
- members of the emergency services including ambulance, fire and state/territory emergency services
- members of the policing community including investigators
- service providers and government instrumentalities such as electricity and water providers

External agencies may include:

- biologists
- chemists
- industry specific advisers
- other government and community based departments and organisations as fire services, ambulance service, health departments, insurance investigators, and other public safety organisations

Protective clothing may include:

- aprons and specialist HAZCHEM and biological apparel
- boots
- disposable overalls
- gloves
- smocks

Safety equipment may include:

- breathing apparatus
- first aid kits and equipment
- fuming hoods
- helmets
- safety shower and eyewash equipment
- sharps containers and biohazard packaging and containers
- spill kits
- visors

Collection means:

- retrieval or acquisition of any item by any means which is related to a forensic investigation

- Packaging procedures** may include:
- type, physical properties and methodology employed during the packaging of any item/exhibit relevant to a forensic investigation
- Hazardous material** may include:
- materials with inherent or introduced biological, chemical, radioactive or physical hazards of any type or severity including teratogenic
 - mutagenic and corrosive substances and explosives
- Substances** may include:
- field and laboratory chemistry
 - other substance that may be found in either the field or laboratory during a forensic investigation
- Authorised** may include:
- access
 - acquire and use any substance
 - apparatus
 - equipment or thing in relation to a forensic investigation
- Field equipment** may include:
- camera equipment of various types
 - crime scene/fingerprint examination kits
 - fuming equipment
 - hand tools of various types
 - ladders
 - light sources
 - vehicles

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.