



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PUAPOLFC003B Detect, record and collect physical evidence

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 process activities involved in recording and collecting physical evidence during ***incident/crime scenes*** and ***laboratory examinations***. No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Application of the Unit

Detecting, recording and collecting physical evidence is of the utmost importance and can be applied in various contexts within incident/crime scenes and laboratory examinations. This unit is relevant for all aspects of handling physical evidence.

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. Detect and record physical evidence	1.1 <i>Physical evidence</i> is <i>detected</i> using observation techniques and appropriate technological methods. 1.2 Physical evidence is collected to prevent contamination or loss. 1.3 Samples collected are sufficient in quantity, where possible, to allow all potential examinations/analysis to be carried out. 1.4 Samples collected are sufficient to represent the <i>natural variation</i> that occurs in the physical evidence. 1.5 <i>Control reference samples</i> are collected, where available and appropriate. 1.6 Documented record of the physical evidence is produced in line with agreed agency procedures.
2. Collect physical evidence	2.1 Physical evidence is recorded prior to examination to ensure continuity and accuracy. 2.2 <i>Recording methods</i> are identified to document the physical evidence in accordance with quality system requirements and within resource limitations. 2.3 Latent evidence is <i>collected</i>/detected by physical or chemical means.
3. Package physical evidence	3.1 Items are <i>packaged and stored</i> to maintain continuity and prevent degradation or contamination. 3.2 Physical evidence is packaged in accordance with occupational health and safety (OH&S) guidelines. 3.3 Details of evidence collected are entered in case notes and where appropriate in the exhibit register to maintain continuity.

Required Skills and Knowledge

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

Required Skills

- analyse, make decisions and solve problems in responding to a range of physical evidence contexts including the systematic examination of items of physical evidence
- collect, package and preserve specific evidence types
- communicate in writing clearly and unambiguously
- handle exhibits and preserve continuity of evidence
- maintain operational safety
- manage resources and time effectively
- use specialised evidence recording equipment as required

Required Knowledge

- application and potential limitations of forensic investigative techniques
- legislative, policy, and quality system context in which forensic examinations are conducted
- legislative, policy, and quality system requirements for search and the seizure of physical evidence
- legislative, policy, and quality system requirements for collecting, preserving continuity and disposing of exhibits
- legislative, policy and quality system requirements for the security, protection and preservation of the evidence
- OH&S practices to be followed when recording, collecting and packaging physical evidence
- range of techniques available for the recording, collecting, packaging and preserving physical evidence
- required forensic documentation for the recording and collection of physical evidence
- role and functions of other forensic discipline specialists in the recording, collection, preservation and continuity of physical evidence

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:

- maximise the potential evidentiary value of the exhibit

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.

This unit must be assessed against the relevant discipline such as Crime Scenes, Fingerprints, Documents, Firearms, Toolmarks, Fire and Explosion, Criminalistics or Biology.

Competency in this unit in one particular discipline does not imply competence in any other forensic discipline in this same unit.

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.

Incident/crime scenes may include:

- Civil investigations
- Controlled drug deliveries
- Criminal investigations
- Disasters
- Drug substitutions
- Fire and explosions
- Industrial accidents
- Search of persons/evidence
- Searches and evidence collection
- Sudden deaths
- Special events
- Vehicle collisions
- Vehicle identification

Laboratory examinations may include:

- Document examination
- Fingerprint development/enhancement/examination
- Firearm examinations
- Motor vehicle examinations
- Shoeprint development/enhancement/examination
- Toolmark examinations
- Trace evidence examinations

Physical evidence may include:

- Any and all objects
- Liquid or gas including the relationship between all such objects
- Living or inanimate objects
- Objects gross or microscopic in size
- Solid
- Tyremarks, shoemarks, toolmarks, fingerprints, fibres, biological tissue, blood stain analysis, vehicle examinations, paint, clothing, fire debris and documents

Detection methods may include:

- Chemical
- Optical
- Physical

Natural variation refers to:

- Diversity of characteristics that occurs in all items of physical evidence

Control/reference samples refers to:

- Control samples which represent background contaminants

- Recording methods*** can be:
- Samples collected from a known source (such as elimination fingerprints, hairs from the victim and suspect)
 - Audio recording
 - Computer generated data
 - Digital imaging
 - Hand written notes
 - Global positioning system (GPS)
 - Photographic
 - Physical capture
 - Sketch plan
 - Video recording
- Evidence collection methods*** may include:
- Hand picking (including use of forceps, gloves)
 - Swabbing
 - Sweeping
 - Tape lifting
 - Vacuuming
- Packaging and storing to maintain continuity and prevent degradation or contamination*** may include consideration of:
- Drying of wet exhibits
 - Exhibit labels
 - Packaging medium
 - Physical nature of exhibit
 - Storage temperature
 - Tamper evident seals

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.