

RIENV201E

Identify and Assess Environmental

Learner Guide Instructions

Who is this document for?

The learner.

What is in this document?

- Course information that matches the PowerPoint presentation.
- Review questions.
- Practical assessment instructions for learners.

What do you need to do before you use it for the first time?

1. Rebrand the document.
2. Review the document as part of your validation process.
3. Set the reading and test time limits that are highlighted in pink at the end of the document.

See the 'Read Me First' document for a complete set of instructions on how to use these resources.



LEARNER GUIDE

RIIENV201E Identify and Assess Environmental and Heritage Concerns

Learner Name:	
Learner ID:	
Learner Contact Number:	
Learner Email Address:	
Date Training Commenced:	

This Book Contains:

- Course Information.
- Review Questions.
- Practical Assessment overview and Instructions.

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1.1 Introduction

This course is based on the unit of competency **RIIENV201E Identify and Assess Environmental and Heritage Concerns**.

You will learn about:

- ◆ Identifying site specific environmental and heritage protection procedures.
- ◆ Assessing and responding to environmental and heritage concerns.
- ◆ Complying with environmental and heritage protection requirements while you work.



1.1.1 Environmental and Heritage Concerns



When you carry out your work you need to be aware of environmental issues such as:

- ◆ Drainage.
- ◆ Dust.
- ◆ Emissions.
- ◆ Flora and fauna.
- ◆ Hazardous chemicals.
- ◆ Noise.
- ◆ Runoff.
- ◆ Spills and spill management.
- ◆ Water quality.



You also need to think about heritage issues such as:

- ◆ Identification and protection of ancient fossils.
- ◆ Protecting culturally sensitive sites and artefacts.
- ◆ Heritage legislation.
- ◆ Avoiding historical sites or homesteads.
- ◆ Avoiding possible indigenous sites.



Review Questions

1.	List 3 examples of environmental issues that may exist on a work site.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.		
2.		
3.		

2.	List 3 examples of heritage issues that may exist on a work site.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.		
2.		
3.		

1.2 Environmental and Heritage Documentation

Environmental protection and management is vital for industry of all types.

The Australian Government takes steps to protect and manage important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places. It also monitors the sustainable development of national resources and legislates to protect the environment and heritage areas in Acts such as:

- ◆ The Environment Protection Act and Biodiversity Conservation Act.
- ◆ The Australian Heritage Council Act.
- ◆ The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act.
- ◆ Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act.
- ◆ National Water Commission Act.
- ◆ Natural Heritage Trust of Australia Act.
- ◆ National Environment Protection Measures (Implementation) Act.



Relevant work plans, instructions and documentation on worksites are written to follow the guidelines for environmental and heritage protection and management provided by various groups or bodies including:

Protection Group or Body	Explanation of Role
Environment Protection Authority (EPA)	Responsible for licencing and regulating air emissions, contaminated sites, hazardous materials (including dangerous goods), noise, pesticides, forestry activities, waste, water quality and state of environment reporting.
Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC)	Has environment protection and heritage (natural, historic and indigenous heritage) responsibilities. It includes National Environment Protection Measures (NEPMs) for air, national pollution inventory, movement of controlled waste, used packaging materials and assessment of site contamination.
National Environment Protection Council (NEPC)	Provides goals, strategies, guidelines and protocols for managing human activities that may affect the environment and for achieving desired environmental outcomes.



Environmental and heritage compliance documentation explains the legislative, organisational and site requirements, obligations and procedures for identifying, assessing and protecting environmental and heritage concerns.

These documents specifically outline both the organisations and your personal obligations to protect the environment and any heritage items that may be found in areas of your worksite.

1.2.1 Organising Work to Comply with Environmental and Heritage Procedures

Any work that you carry out must follow and comply with environmental and heritage procedures. This helps to protect the environment and heritage sites.

Before carrying out any work at a new site you will need to:

1. Plan your work to follow environmental and heritage protection procedures.
2. Identify any environmental or heritage issues relating to the site, task or project.
3. Record all of the details about the environmental or heritage issue.
4. Take appropriate action to protect the area such as:
 - a) Carrying out emergency plans.
 - b) Carrying out isolation procedures.
 - c) Removal or control of contaminants.
5. Inspect the site after clearances have been received and check that work can start.
6. Sign off and complete the relevant paperwork and documentation.



Once you start work you must always:

- ◆ Follow environmental and heritage protection procedures.
- ◆ Immediately contact authorities if you find an environmental or heritage issue while working.

1.2.2 Clearances

Some areas may require clearances before you can enter them. Clearances are permissions to carry out work in an area under specific conditions or following specific requirements. This is to protect the area and prevent the spread of materials, weeds or other substances, or to provide you with the details of how to operate safely if there has been an environmental incident in the area.

In some cases you need to make sure you are not carrying seeds when moving plant and equipment. This can help to prevent the spread of weeds.

'Weed-and-seed' cleaning or decontamination may be required before moving vehicles, equipment or other plant from site to site. Don't forget to check your clothing and footwear as well. The same preventative measures may also be required in areas where there is diseased vegetation or fungus that must be contained.



If there has been a chemical spill in the area you could need clearance to enter. Clearances will indicate the types of protective equipment you need to wear or other precautions that must be taken while working in the affected area. There will also be precautions that need to be taken to prevent further spread of the chemicals or materials into other areas as you leave.

Make sure you have the appropriate clearances to enter protected areas before you start work. Speak with your supervisor to discuss any special action that you need to take when moving into or from the area.

1.2.3 Work Health and Safety

Every workplace has to follow laws and rules to keep everyone safe. There are 4 main types:

Law or Rule	Explanation
Acts	These are laws that you have to follow.
Regulations	These explain what the law means.
Codes of Practice	These are instructions on how to follow the law, based on industry standards.
Australian Standards	These tell you what the minimum requirement is for a job, product or hazard.

Some states use OHS laws, and other states use WHS laws. They both talk about the same thing, but use different words or names for people. If you have any questions about safety rules you should talk to your boss or supervisor.



1.2.4 How to Keep Everyone Safe

WHS law says that all companies and workers need to keep themselves and other people safe while they work. This is called a duty of care.



To keep yourself and other workers safe you need to:

- ◆ Follow your instructions.
- ◆ Follow all workplace rules.
- ◆ Make sure all equipment is safe to use.
- ◆ Carry out your work safely.
- ◆ Report any problems.

If you think something is dangerous tell your boss or supervisor as soon as possible.

Your worksite will also have instructions for working safely including:

- ◆ Emergency procedures, including using fire fighting equipment, first aid and evacuation.
- ◆ Handling hazardous materials.
- ◆ Safe operating procedures.
- ◆ Personal protective clothing and equipment.
- ◆ Safe use of tools and equipment.



1.2.5 Receive and Clarify Work Instructions



Your work instructions will tell you the safest way to do the job, and the equipment that you will need to use. It is a good idea to check your work instructions with your boss or supervisor to make sure you know exactly what you need to do.

If you don't know where to get your work instructions or you can't understand them, you can ask your boss or supervisor. They will tell you where to find them and explain what they mean.

Once you have been given your instructions you must:



- 1. Make sure you understand exactly what you need to do** – ask questions and explain the job as you understand it back to your supervisor.
- 2. Find out who else is working with you** – make sure they have received the same instructions and are clear about what needs to be done.
- 3. Identify the equipment and materials you will be working with** – and double check with your supervisor that this equipment is appropriate and available for you to use.
- 4. Confirm the timeline of the job** – identify whether other tasks need to be completed first, or when your task needs to be completed.

Completing these steps will ensure that you will understand what you need to do. If the situation changes while you are carrying out the work (e.g. an unexpected hazard, or other issue is identified) you will need to speak with your supervisor for guidance on how to proceed and finish the job.

Review Questions

3.	What information can you get from environmental and heritage compliance documentation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	List 2 examples of action that you might plan to take to protect heritage areas and the environment while you work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.		
2.		

5.

What are clearances?

6.

What are the 4 main types of laws and rules to keep everyone safe?

1.

2.

3.

4.

7.

List 3 ways you can keep yourself and other workers safe and meet your duty of care obligations.

1.

2.

4

8.

What steps should you take to confirm your work requirements with your supervisor?



1.3 Identify and Report Environmental and Heritage Issues or Concerns

Environmental or heritage issues or concerns may include actual identified situations or the potential for damage caused by activities or work on site. Each of these issues or concerns need to be accurately identified before the right action can be taken to address them.



1.3.1 Identifying Environmental and Heritage Issues or Concerns



Environmental issues or concerns could include such things as:

- ◆ Possible harm to the environment.
- ◆ Inadequate cleaning up of waste or materials.
- ◆ Poor or non-existent restoration of the area to original conditions.
- ◆ Pollution of various kinds.
- ◆ Impact of works to both the surrounding environment and to people and wildlife close to the works.
- ◆ Endangered flora or fauna habitats.
- ◆ Protected areas, species or wildlife.

There may be heritage concerns about damage or harm to significant natural, cultural or historical places or items. Heritage issues also concern the Aboriginal people and their rights and usage of land being used for construction, mining and access to worksites.

Environmental or heritage concerns may be identified through:

- ◆ Site information and documentation.
- ◆ Site inspections.
- ◆ Concerns and issues raised during the planning process.
- ◆ Soil testing.
- ◆ Water testing.
- ◆ Compaction testing.



A visual inspection of the area will normally help you to identify any heritage concerns, and these should also be identified during the planning stages of a project when permits are being organised.



Indications of heritage issues could include:

- ◆ Marks on trees.
- ◆ Local knowledge.
- ◆ Discovery of archaeological objects such as:
 - ◆ Fossils.
 - ◆ Culturally relevant items.
 - ◆ Historical artefacts.
 - ◆ Paintings or markings.
 - ◆ Rock mounds.
 - ◆ Graves and burial grounds.
 - ◆ Ceremonial areas.

Aboriginal or indigenous areas must be treated with respect. No aboriginal area should be entered without proper consideration, information and permission. These areas may be culturally significant and 'off limits' to other people.

Any environmental or heritage issues or concerns need to be reported and documented properly.

1.3.2 Record and Report Environmental or Heritage Issues

All issues or concerns need to be recorded and reported to your supervisor using appropriate forms or procedures. Include as much detail as possible when reporting the issue including:

- ◆ Nature of the issue or concern.
- ◆ Severity of the issue or concern (categories or rating are often used to identify how bad the issue is).
- ◆ Location of the issue or concern.
- ◆ Action that will contribute to the issue or concern taking place.
- ◆ Persons, equipment or materials relevant to the issue or concern.

Failure to report an environmental or heritage issue or concern could lead to unwanted damage to the area and fines for the company for non-compliance or breaches of legislation.



Review Questions

9.	List 3 ways environmental and heritage concerns can be identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.		
2.		
3.		

10.	What are 3 examples of archaeological artefacts that could indicate that you are in a heritage area?	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.		
2.		
3.		

11.

What details should you include when you are reporting an environmental or heritage issue?



1.4 Environmental Emergency Plans and Isolation Procedures

Environmental emergency procedures outline the steps that must be taken in the event of an environmentally damaging or harmful event.

This could include incidents such as:

- ◆ Oil or chemical spills.
- ◆ Unintended release of pollutants.
- ◆ Unauthorised release of contaminated water.
- ◆ Water or soil contamination.
- ◆ Fire or spontaneous combustion.
- ◆ Mine instability or collapse.
- ◆ Release of toxic gasses or vapours.



Environmental incidents are often divided into categories depending on how bad they are. The table below outlines the different category events:

Category Level	Consequences
Minor Event	<p>Environmental impact is minimal and limited to the work site. Clean up or changes to work practices will contain and prevent future re-occurrence of the incident.</p> <p>Examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Minor spills (less than 200 ltrs). ◆ Failure to adequately suppress dust.
Significant Event	<p>Environmental impact extends to off-site locations and requires significant resources to address.</p> <p>Examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Clearing outside of an approved area (less than 100m²). ◆ Excessive use of chemicals affecting off site vegetation. ◆ Unauthorised clearing of rare vegetation. ◆ Chemical spills (more than 200 ltrs).
Major Event	<p>Environmental impact is either on or off-site and results in significant long term environmental harm.</p> <p>Examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Unauthorised clearing of a large area (more than 100m²). ◆ Pollution of waterways. ◆ Land disturbance that results in damage to services that affect a community or specific group of people.

1.4.1 Implementing the Environmental Emergency Plan

The emergency plan for your worksite aims to ensure the safety of all people on the worksite and minimising further damage or harm when responding to an environmental incident.

In the event of an environmental emergency follow the instructions of your supervisor or the members of the emergency response team (wardens). Generally this will include:

1. Evaluating the situation.
2. Containing the situation if possible.
3. Minimising the damage caused by the emergency.
4. Getting in contact with the emergency response team (if you are the first person to see the incident).
5. Reporting the incident in accordance with procedures.

