
Report To:
Blake Dawson
HEALTH AND SAFETY REVIEW – CFA WANGARATTA TRAINING GROUND
Report Number: 12-0260 Final
17 February 2012

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mr Robert Jamieson of Blake Dawson, representing the CFA to provide legal advice, engaged HAZCON Pty Ltd to conduct a health and safety review of the CFA training ground located at Wangaratta, Victoria.

A site visit to the CFA Wangaratta Training Ground was conducted to identify any risks to the health and safety of personnel visiting or working at Wangaratta.

Based on observations, review of records and procedures as well as discussions with on-site personnel there are no significant risks to the health and safety of people working at the site and those attending the site either as trainees or visitors detected or observed during the site visit.

The areas where health and safety at the site can be enhanced include but not limited to:

1. Update MSDS folder to ensure MSDSs are no older than five years.
2. Considered undertaking risk assessments for hazards and risks that are not included in PAD briefs and SOPs.
3. Review content of the Plant Register to ensure it is current.
4. Consider formalising/recording some of the tasks the Training Ground Manager undertakes to capture and retain this knowledge.
5. Consider formalising processes such as the use of checklists to demonstrate that each hazard and associated control for individual training sessions has been considered and applied.
6. LPG gas is at notification quantities

HAZCON Pty Ltd

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2. INTRODUCTION

Mr Robert Jamieson of Blake Dawson has requested on behalf of the CFA for HAZCON to undertake a Health and Safety Review at the CFA's Wangaratta Training Ground to identify any potential health and safety risks to individuals utilising or visiting the site. The review is to be conducted as **confidential and subject to legal professional privilege**.

The CFA Wangaratta Training Ground is a small and compact site.

There is one full time employee (Wangaratta Training Ground Manager) supported by up to eight casual staff on an 'as needed' basis who work at the site.

3. SCOPE

The following scope of work will be addressed as part of the project:

- A site visit to review the potential for health and safety risks posed by the current systems and practices involving the use and handling of chemicals and will encompass
 - Storage and handling of fuels and foams
 - Maintenance practices of critical equipment
 - Appropriateness of risk assessments for the chemicals used and the tasks undertaken utilising them
 - The potential for known disposal sites to present uncontrolled hazards
 - The rigour and relevance of training and documentation with respect to managing chemicals
- Interviews with various staff members to assess the level of chemical storage and handling knowledge and the degree to which the relevant policies and procedures have been implemented on site;
 - Photographic evidence will be taken where is it deemed to add value and clarity to the findings;
- Prepare a preliminary report, outlining recommendations where appropriate due Monday 9th January.

4. OBSERVATIONS

The review was conducted on February 17 2012. During the site visit there were no training sessions or programs scheduled. The observations could only be made on a static site and from interviews with site operational personnel. Mr Jeff Green, OHS Manager, CFA and Mr Richard Gardner, Wangaratta Training Ground Manager were available and Mr Richard Gardner acted as the site guide for the review.

The CFA Wangaratta Training Ground is a small and compact site. There is one full time employee (Wangaratta Training Ground Manager) supported by up to eight casual staff on 'as needed' basis.

The training grounds were well maintained and clear of any obstacles.

Documents Reviewed:

- Field Training Ground Management Manual: comprehensive document used across all training grounds
- PAD Folder and Report Sheet (used for every individual training session)
- Training Attendance Register

- Plant Register: not all plant registered; out of date but improvement plan is underway and is a work in progress
- Incident Report Forms: paper-based
- MSDS Folder: MSDSs for all chemicals on site are contained in the folder but MSDSs are over five years old
- Working Alone procedure/guideline
- Falls prevention
- Safe Operating Procedures
- Confined Space

Known Hazards and Risks

Discussions with the Training Ground Manager at site highlighted the following known hazards and risks:

- Physical environment
 - Snakes, insects, spiders etc
- Training environment
 - Heat, smoke, flame
- Falls from height
- Traffic
- Manual handling
- Heat stress/stroke
- Inherent risk associated with training exercises

Controls

Risk assessments have been completed for most hazards and risks identified particularly those associated with training. Risk assessments do not appear to have been reviewed for over seven years.

Risk assessments inform the content of the corporate safety standards and the Safe Operating Procedures used at the site.

Training

There is a Skills Maintenance and Skills Acquisition program for CFA employees including casuals

Safety briefings are conducted for all those attending the training program.

Training programs are determined by Operations' or the Volunteer Fire Brigade itself.

Maintenance

There is a formal Maintenance Program in place that includes daily and weekly inspections. This is usually conducted by the Training Ground Manager and any faults/defects are recorded and actioned. Where required a 'tag out' procedure and process is used.

Chemical Management

There are procedures for storage and handling of chemicals and MSDSs are available in a dedicated folder. Risk assessments of hazardous substances are also included in this folder.

All MSDSs reviewed were over five years old.

Fuels used:

- Diesel, petrol
- Wood
- LPG >5000L Manifest quantities
- Straw

There is a dedicated fuel store that can be locked and it has appropriately bunding. Chemicals were appropriately stored and separated.

A chemical register is maintained at the Wangaratta site with electronic access to the CFA on-line chemical management system.

Most chemicals stored and used on site are in small/domestic quantities.

The bulk LPG tank exceeds manifest quantities as per Schedule 2 of the Dangerous Goods Regulations 2011. WorkSafe should be notified as per the relevant regulation.

Chemical containers and cylinders used in training exercises have been cleaned and clearly labelled as a 'prop'.

Communication/Induction

All attendees for training sessions undergo a formal safety induction/briefing on arrival at site.

There is also a safety briefing prior to the commencement of each training session. The training session is supervised by the Instructor and/or the PAD supervisor.

There are also formal communication processes between the training ground and other parts of the organisation, quarterly meetings of all training ground managers/PAD supervisors and formal communication from the CFA safety department.

PAD (Practical Area Drill)

There are dedicated documents (PAD Briefs) for each PAD undertaken that includes the process involved, the hazards, risks and associated controls and the required behaviour of participants. The PAD briefs are used by the instructors for each training exercise and the safety controls are linked to risk assessments. The PAD folder is comprehensive and covers all specific training sessions conducted at the site.

There are dedicated areas for each PAD and includes:

- Confined Space
- Mine
- LP Gas
- Flammable liquids
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Fire Attack
- Extinguisher
- Gas
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Pole top rescue

There are individual procedures developed for each training exercise that is carried out on the site. These are comprehensive and safety is addressed in both the briefing section and additional safety considerations and emergency response in another section of the procedure.

Checklists are available but their use is by whether the individual instructor chooses to use them.

Buildings

There are three administrative buildings and three storage sheds on site and all in reasonable condition and fit for purpose. All of these buildings can be locked and secured and were in good condition.

Entry to the site can also be secured.

Incident Data

The site uses the current CFA Incident Report form. All incidents are reviewed and investigated. However, the number of incidents recorded is very small and mainly associated with minor types of injuries such as sprains, splinters etc. However, it was stated that heat stress seemed to be increasing.

Incident reports were recorded at site in a paper-based format and then entered into the electronic recording system.

Hazards and near misses are also recorded.

Water Quality

Contaminated water from exercises drains into a triple interceptor that then drains into a nearby creek. Water quality is monitored and a formal six monthly inspection regime to determine water quality is undertaken with reports sent to the EPA.

There are above and underground storage tanks used to capture water for the training exercises.

Foam is not used at the site to help limit water contamination.

Site Management

The overall site is managed by Richard Gardner – Wangaratta Training Ground Manager who essentially undertakes all activities required to maintain the site in an operation state fit for purpose. Mr Gardner demonstrated detailed knowledge and experience to undertake these tasks effectively and efficiently.

Emergency Management

An Emergency Management Plan was available at site with appropriate signage located around the facility.

An Emergency eye wash and shower station was available.

5. INTERVIEWS WITH STAFF AND RELEVANT PERSONNEL

Interviews and discussions were conducted at CFA Wangaratta Training Ground.

Name	Position
Jeff Green	OHS Manager
Richard Gardner	PAD Supervisor - Wangaratta

6. CONCLUSIONS

The Wangaratta Training Ground does not present an unacceptable risk to people attending the site once the purpose and activities of the training college is taken into account. Many of the training scenarios have elements of risk and are intended to provide a controlled but realistic simulation to what the trainees will encounter in real life situations.

Chemical management is well managed at the site and the limited number of chemicals used ensures that there is control over what exposure employees and trainees may encounter during training exercises.

Improvement at the site mostly centres on systems issues around keeping documentation current and reflective of what occurs at the site.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Update MSDS folder to ensure MSDSs are no older than five years.
2. Considered undertaking risk assessments for hazards and risks that are not included in PAD briefs and SOPs.
3. Review content of the Plant Register to ensure it is current.
4. Consider formalising/recording some of the tasks the Training Ground Manager undertakes to capture and retain this knowledge.
5. Consider formalising processes such as the use of checklists to demonstrate that each hazard and associated control for individual training sessions has been considered and applied.
6. LPG gas is at notification quantities.

8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 LPG PAD



Photograph 2 PAD Control Booth

Photograph 3 Emergency Shower



Photograph 4 Prop Gas Cylinder

Photograph 6 Triple interceptor pit for fire water run-off

