
Overview

This unit is for you if you organise, plan or supervise operational activities on the distribution network and need to gather information, collect, collate and analyse the data and provide the details to others to help in decision making. You may be dealing with information from the network such as monitoring existing system status; information about proposed works and potential effectiveness and cost-benefits; information about existing, new and innovative techniques, fittings and materials and how they can be used on the network without disrupting supply or compromising water quality.

The unit contains four elements of competence:

1. Obtain information for decision making
2. Record and store information
3. Analyse information to support decision making
4. Advise and inform others

In element 1 you need to find reliable and appropriate sources of information, and select efficient and effective ways of gathering it. You need to obtain accurate information, and find ways of dealing with insufficient, contradictory or ambiguous information.

In element 2 you need to select appropriate and efficient methods to record and store information in line with your organisation's policies. You need to give colleagues within your team the opportunity to suggest improvements to the way information is recorded and stored, and to recommend improvements yourself.

In element 3 you need to be sure why you are analysing information, and what you expect to get from it. You will need to select and use effective analytical methods, to identify any patterns or trends which emerge, and draw conclusions which are supported by evidence. You will need to present your analysis and conclusions in a balanced way.

In element 4 you need to identify the information that others need regarding operational activities and present it appropriately and effectively. You must support the advice you give with sound evidence. You will need to make sure those receiving information from you understand what it is saying, and you must be sure to observe the rules on confidentiality.

You are not permitted to use simulated activities as evidence for this unit.

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Provide information to support decision making

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

Obtain information for decision making

- P1 you identify the information you need to make the required decisions
- P2 the sources of information which you use are reliable and sufficiently wide-ranging to meet current and likely future information requirements
- P3 your methods of obtaining information are reliable, effective and make efficient use of resources
- P4 your methods of obtaining information are consistent with organisational values, policies and legal
- P5 the information you obtain is accurate, relevant and sufficient to support decision making
- P6 where information is inadequate, contradictory or ambiguous you take prompt and effective action to deal with this

You must be able to:

Record and store information

- P7 your systems and procedures for recording and storing information are suitable for the purpose and make efficient use of resources
- P8 the way you record and store information complies with organisational policies and legal requirements
- P9 the information you record and store is readily accessible in the required format to authorised people only
- P10 you provide opportunities for team members to make suggestions for improvements to systems and procedures
- P11 you make recommendations for improvements to systems and procedures to the relevant people
- P12 your recommendations take account of organisational constraints

You must be able to:

Analyse information to support decision making

- P13 you identify objectives for your analysis which are clear and consistent with the decisions which need to be made
- P14 you select information which is accurate, relevant to the objectives, and sufficient to arrive at reliable decisions
- P15 you use methods of analysis which are suitable to achieve the objectives
- P16 your analysis of the information correctly identifies relevant patterns and trends
- P17 you support your conclusions with reasoned argument and appropriate evidence
- P18 in presenting the results of your analysis you differentiate clearly between fact and opinion
- P19 your records of the analysis are sufficient to show the assumptions and decisions made at each stage

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You must be able to:

Advise and inform others

- P20 you research the advice and information needs of your recipients in ways which are appropriate and sufficient and take account of your organisational constraints
- P21 you provide advice and information at a time and place and in a form and manner appropriate to the needs of your recipients
- P22 the information you provide is accurate, current, relevant and sufficient
- P23 your advice is consistent with organisational policy, procedures and constraints
- P24 your advice is supported by reasoned argument and appropriate evidence
- P25 you confirm your recipients' understanding of the advice and information you have given
- P26 you maintain confidentiality according to organisational and legal requirements
- P27 you use feedback from recipients to improve the way you provide advice and information

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Obtain information for decision making

- K1 information handling - the types of qualitative and quantitative information which are essential to your role and responsibilities, and how to identify these
- K2 information handling - the range of sources of information which are available to you and how to ensure that these are capable of meeting current and likely future information requirements
- K3 information handling - how to identify new sources of information which may be required
- K4 information handling - the range of methods of gathering and checking the validity of such information and their advantages and disadvantages
- K5 information handling - the importance of information management to the team and organisational effectiveness and your role and responsibilities in relation to this
- K6 organisational context - the organisational values and policies and the legal requirements which have a bearing on the collection of information and how to interpret these
- K7 analytical techniques - how to judge the accuracy, relevance and sufficiency of information required to support decision making in different contexts
- K8 analytical techniques - how to identify information which may be contradictory, ambiguous or inadequate and how to deal with these problems

You need to know and understand:

Record and store information

- K9 information handling - different methods of recording and storing information and their advantages and disadvantages
- K10 organisational context - the organisational policies and legal requirements which have a bearing on the recording and storage of information and how to interpret these
- K11 communication - different formats which may be required for presenting qualitative and quantitative information
- K12 communication - how to select a format appropriate to different purposes and recipients of information
- K13 information handling - how to ensure that information is organised in a way that makes it readily accessible
- K14 information handling - principles of confidentiality, what information should be made available to which people
- K15 involvement and motivation - the importance of providing opportunities for team members to make recommendations on improvements to systems and procedures

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K16 involvement and motivation - how to encourage and enable team members to make recommendations

K17 continuous improvement - how to assess the effectiveness of current methods of collecting and storing information and the procedures to follow in order to make recommendations on improvements

You need to know and understand:

Analyse information to support decision making

K18 analytical techniques - different approaches to, and methods of, analysing information and how to select methods appropriate to decisions which you have to make

K19 information handling - types of information, both qualitative and quantitative, which you need to be able to analyse

K20 information handling - how to select information relevant to the decisions you need to make and ensure such information is accurate and relevant

K21 information handling - the importance of the effective analysis of information: your role and responsibility in relation to this

K22 analytical techniques - how to analyse information to identify patterns and trends

K23 analytical techniques - how to draw conclusions on the basis of analysing information

K24 communication - how to develop and present a reasoned case based on the outcomes of an analysis

K25 analytical techniques - the differences between fact and opinion, how to identify these and present them accordingly

K26 information handling - the importance of record-keeping to the analysis of information and how such records should be kept and used

You need to know and understand:

Advise and inform others

K27 communication - how to identify information needs

K28 communication - the types of advice and information which people may require

K29 communication - how to communicate advice and information effectively both through speaking and in writing

K30 information handling - the importance of checking the validity of advice and information provided to others

K31 information handling - how to ensure accuracy, currency, sufficiency and relevance of advice and information

K32 organisational context - organisational policies, procedures and resource constraints which may affect advice given to others

K33 communication - situations in which it is appropriate to act on one's own initiative in giving information and advice

K34 communication - the importance of providing advice and information and your role and responsibilities in relation to this

K35 communication - how to develop and present a reasoned case when providing advice to others

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- K36 communication - the importance of confirming the recipient's understanding of information and advice provided and how to do this
- K37 information handling - the principles of confidentiality when handling information and advice - what types of information and advice may be provided to what people
- K38 communication - the importance of seeking feedback on the quality and relevance of the advice and information you provide and how to encourage such feedback

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Additional Information

Scope/range related to performance criteria

Obtain information for decision making

You will need to show that you use at least three of the following types of sources of information:

1. from internal customers
2. from external customers
3. internal information systems
4. published media
5. specially commissioned research

You must convince your assessor that you have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to perform competently in respect of all types of sources of information listed above.

You will need to show that you obtain both of the following types of information:

1. quantitative
2. qualitative

You will need to show that you use four of the following types of methods of obtaining information:

1. listening and watching
2. reading
3. spoken questioning
4. written questioning
5. formal research conducted personally
6. formal research conducted by third parties

You must convince your assessor that you have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to perform competently in respect of all types of methods of obtaining information listed above.

Record and store information

You will need to show that you use one of the following types of systems and procedures:

1. organisation wide
2. specific to yourself and your team

You must convince your assessor that you have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to perform competently in respect of both types of systems and procedures listed above.

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Provide information to support decision making

You will need to show that you record and store both of the following types of information:

1. quantitative
2. qualitative

You will need to show that you take account of all the following types of organisational constraints:

1. organisational objectives
2. organisational policies
3. resources

Analyse information to support decision making

You will need to show that you carry out both of the following types of analysis:

1. formal and planned
2. informal and ad hoc

You will need to show that your analysis supports decisions concerning both of the following:

1. day to day operations
2. changes in organisational policy which affect operations

You will need to show that you use both of the following types of information:

1. qualitative
2. quantitative

Advise and inform others

You will need to show that you provide both of the following types of advice and information:

1. spoken
2. written

You will need to show that you provide advice and information in both of the following circumstances:

1. in response to a request
2. on your own initiative

You will need to show that you provide information and advice to at least two of the following recipients:

1. team members
2. colleagues working at the same level
3. higher-level managers and sponsors

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4. people outside your organisation

You must convince your assessor that you have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to perform competently in respect of all types of recipients listed above.

You will need to show that you take account of all the following types of organisational constraints:

1. organisational objectives
2. organisational policies
3. resources

Links to other NOS

This is an existing unit, developed by the Management and Enterprise NTO, and is Unit D4 in the Management Standards

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Suite Maintain Water Supply (Network)

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