



11.02 Medical Monitoring - Biological and Hazardous Substances SOP

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) To ensure that appropriate medical monitoring is provided to CFA members who are potentially exposed to biological hazards or hazardous substances.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This procedure applies to all CFA members.

Section 3 - Procedure

Exposure to Biological or Hazardous Substances

The Role of the Incident Controller

(3) Where a CFA member has been exposed to or contaminated with biological or hazardous substances immediate medical assistance must be sought.

(4) The Incident Controller must advise the State Duty Officer (SDO) or District Duty Officer (DDO) of the situation.

(5) Ensure that all CFA members and members of the public who have been exposed or potentially exposed to hazardous substances that may pose an imminent or serious risk to health have their name recorded and be 'wrist tagged' in accordance with the guidelines provided in the wrist tag book.

(6) Conduct a debrief at the fire or incident with all CFA members present.

(7) Ensure a CFASafe is completed for any exposed CFA members as soon as reasonably practicable with the relevant information from the incident.

The Role of the State Duty Officer (SDO) / District Duty Officer (DDO)

(8) Seek all relevant information on the hazardous substances or biological hazards, circumstances of exposure, and the type of Protective Equipment (PE) used.

(9) Immediately contact the CFA Medical Officer if there has been an exposure to:

- a. A biological hazard (blood/bodily fluids).
- b. Or, hazardous substances.

(10) Provide the CFA Medical Officer with all of the relevant information on:

- a. The hazard (e.g. biological or hazardous substance).

- b. The circumstances of the exposure.
- c. The type of Protective Equipment (PE) used.
- d. The necessary contact details.

Note: Incident details should be sent to the CFA Medical Officer for their future reference.

(11) Notify the Wellbeing Duty Officer where appropriate for wellbeing services and requests. Contact the 24/7 phone line 1800 959 232, when requested select option 4.

Medical Monitoring

(12) Exposure to biological and hazardous substances can vary. In the event that a CFA member is exposed to a biological hazard or other hazardous substances, the CFA member should take the necessary cautions as listed below:

- a. If the exposure is on a small scale, e.g., contact with skin that is clear and does not have an open wound, or there is contaminants on Personal Protective Clothing (PPC), the CFA member should conduct the necessary decontamination process in accordance with the “Standard Precautions” in the Chief Officer’s SOP 11.01 Infection Control at Incidents.
- b. In other cases where a CFA member is exposed to biological or other contaminants and is concerned about their health, they should contact the On-call Medical Officer and Nurse - [24/7 Triage](#).

(13) The CFA Medical Officer should inform the State Duty Officer (SDO) / District Duty Officer (DDO) of:

- a. The recommended medical monitoring for exposed CFA members.
- b. Any medical tests/assessments that should be taken.
- c. A recommended clinic or hospital to attend.

Note: Where practical, the CFA Medical Officer should conduct tests or assessments.

(14) The State Duty Officer (SDO) / District Duty Officer (DDO) should inform the Incident Controller / CFA Agency Commander of:

- a. Any medical tests that should be taken.
- b. A recommended hospital or clinic to attend.
- c. Any other relevant information.

(15) The State Duty Officer (SDO) / District Duty Officer (DDO) should:

- a. Make the necessary arrangements, as determined by the CFA Medical Officer.
- b. Notify the CFA Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Duty Officer (notified on (03)9262 8668) when practical and provide:
 - i. The fire or incident and its relevant details.
 - ii. Whether medical monitoring is/was required.
 - iii. The outcome of the medical monitoring.
 - iv. An assessment of whether WorkSafe Victoria needs to be contacted. Only the CFA Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Duty Officer is to notify WorkSafe Victoria.
 - For more information on this procedure, please refer to the Chief Officer’s SOP [14.06 Notification](#)

(16) After the initial treatment, the CFA Medical Officer should:

- a. Liaise with the relevant clinic or hospital (where required) to ensure appropriate assessments/tests were undertaken.
- b. Notify and explain the results to the respective CFA member/patient undergoing assessments or tests.
- c. Provide CFA Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Duty Officer with any information (non-confidential) from a fire or incident that may assist in the provision of a safe and healthy CFA work environment.
- d. Where appropriate, and via the CFA Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Duty Officer, provide medical monitoring information to the relevant next in charge/Brigade Captain and WorkSafe Victoria.

Note: The advice of the CFA Medical Officer is not intended to replace the provision of first aid or the attendance of emergency medical personnel.

Safety Notes

(17) The Incident Controller should be aware of the potential presence of infectious materials. When in doubt, assume that such materials are present and respond according to the “Standard Precautions” described in the Chief Officer’s SOP 11.01 - Infection Control at Incidents.

Environmental Notes

(18) Nil.

Section 4 - Definitions

(19) Commonly defined terms are located in the CFA [centralised glossary](#).

Section 5 - Related Documents

On-call Medical Officer and Nurse - [24/7 Triage](#)

Status and Details

Status	Not Yet Approved
Effective Date	To Be Advised
Review Date	To Be Advised
Approval Authority	
Approval Date	To Be Advised
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Accountable Officer	Jason Heffernan Chief Officer
Responsible Officer	Garry Cook Deputy Chief Officer Operational Response & Coordination
Author	Emma Pollard
Enquiries Contact	Specialist Response

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"CFA member" - Refers to all CFA volunteers, volunteer auxiliary workers, officers, employees and secondees.

"Incident Controller" - The individual designated by the control agency to have overall management of the incident and who is responsible for all incident activities.

"Next in Charge" - Next in Charge - the supervisor or manager directly in charge of a CFA member or Labour Hire Contractor e.g. for a volunteer this would be a Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Group Officer, Group Officer or Commander; for an employee / labour hire contractor this would be their direct manager.

"Personal Protective Clothing (PPC)" - Includes clothing used to provide protection to CFA members from the risks associated with performing a specific operational task for which they are competent and endorsed

"Protective Equipment (PE)" - An object that is utilised during the execution of CFA operational activities and training, which includes breathing apparatus, gas suits, gas monitoring equipment, oxygen resuscitation equipment, safety harnesses and all technical rescue equipment.

"CFA Agency Commander" - A CFA member with overall management of CFA resources at a fire or incident for which CFA is a support agency.

"Brigade Captain" - The Captain is the highest ranking officer of a volunteer brigade. Where the position of Captain is currently vacant these responsibilities are carried out by next highest ranking officer.

"CFA Medical Officer" - This is the medical practitioner appointed by CFA to undertake medical assessments and/or provide advice in line with CFA's obligations and responsibilities.

"Biological Hazard" - Biological hazards, also known as biohazards, are organic substances that pose a threat to the health of humans and other living organisms.

"Hazardous Substances" - Hazardous substances are substances that can harm people's health. They may be solids, liquids or gases. In the workplace, they are often in the form of fumes, dusts, mists, and vapors. Hazardous substances broadly fall under chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear waste and include biological contaminants, hydrocarbons, chemicals, and asbestos.

"Wellbeing Duty Officer" - The Wellbeing Duty Officer is a 24/7 phone line staffed by members of the Organisational Wellbeing team. This phone line can be accessed for queries related to wellbeing supports or for guidance around what service to access. You can also call this number if you need to talk to someone after-hours in the case of a potentially traumatic event occurring.

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