The 2012 ANU Fieldwork Policy

Introduction

In August 2012, the new ANU fieldwork policy was announced, although there has been some discussion about this since early in the year. The new policy attempts to deal with every situation possible and therefore, while it is comprehensive there are some difficulties with it. It is important however to note that this policy is important because it protects staff, students and visitors who undertake work for ANU.

The new policy deals with fieldwork undertaken by staff and students in large and small groups undertaking remote or urban fieldwork. In dealing with such a diverse spread of options the policy generalizes to the point where some aspects become difficult to comprehend or indeed impractical to administer! The Senior School Administrators Group, various other groups are looking at the policy with a view to resolving many of the issues. This is a work in progress. Having said this, we still need to comply as best as we can with the fieldwork policy because it protects all of us collectively and ensures that the University looks after the health and safety of its staff.

This document attempts to summarize the fieldwork policy and provides staff with some guidelines about preparing for fieldwork within the context of the policy.

Who is covered under this Policy

- All staff and students of the ANU
- Any person funded by the ANU to participate in fieldwork

Basis of the Policy

The policy covers all fieldwork and work off campus. There may be instances where you are working at a site/location of another organisation where their procedures, such as occupational, health and safety procedures, may take precedence. If in doubt, check further to ensure that you are in compliance with ANU policy. The policy does not apply when you are working from home. Working from home is covered by the policy that can be found at the following web address:

http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/home_based_work/procedure

Approval for the fieldwork plan

The Head of School is the responsible officer for approving all travel and fieldwork. However, it is the fieldwork supervisor who is responsible for ensuring that the fieldwork/trip has been properly planned and all relevant paperwork has been completed. This includes ensuring that all risks have been assessed and that all participants, whether they are affiliated with the university or another organisation, are fully aware of their role and responsibilities during the trip.

Responsibility of Fieldwork Supervisors

When referring to a fieldwork supervisor, this may not necessarily be the person supervising the overall course but rather the person who is in charge of the fieldwork group. Fieldwork supervisors
are required to ensure that all fieldwork participants are in compliance of the fieldwork policy. Refer to the below section on ‘Fieldwork participants’ to understand what is required of each participant.

Furthermore, fieldwork supervisors are required to prepare a written risk assessment in preparation of a fieldtrip and have every participant complete a document stating that they have read the risk assessment and intend participating. For further information about this process, please read the guidelines at http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure

Fieldwork participants

Each participant must:

- Comply with all reasonable directions of the Fieldwork Supervisor;
- Familiarize themselves with the hazards pertaining to the fieldwork or off-campus work and the practices that minimise the associated risks;
- Participate in the development of fieldwork or work off-campus plans and arrangements;
- Participate in any induction, information or training program as instructed by the Fieldwork Supervisor;
- Exhibit a duty of care for themselves and others;
- Wear personal protective equipment and use safety equipment as required;
- Ensure they have access to adequate provisions, e.g. food and water, as well as appropriate accommodation;
- Express the values of the Australian National University;
- Minimise impact on the environment;
- Bring to the attention of the Fieldwork Supervisor any incident, or a situation contrary to University procedures.
- Report any accident, injury, illness or dangerous occurrence in the agreed manner; and
- Discuss any pre-existing injury/illness of relevance with the Fieldwork Supervisor, and, if deemed necessary, obtain a medical management plan from the doctor. The medical management plan will assist with;
  - appropriate treatment in the field, and
  - maintaining the field party member’s safety.

Working Alone in the Field

Where the participant is working alone in the field, the supervisor (on campus or located elsewhere) must ensure that they are in regular contact with the participant. It is important that reasonable plans are made to maintain contact if the researcher is working remotely. For those working very remotely a Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) with GPS and if appropriate a satellite telephone should be supplied. The participant should ensure that their supervisor and the SOAA administrative officer know their mobile telephone number and in general where they expect to be on any given date.

Working alone or as a group – What is expected of you?

Participants should be aware that the “field” is a workplace and appropriate standards of workplace behaviour must be maintained. These include:

- Smoking is prohibited in all vehicles and in shared places during fieldwork;
• Alcohol is not to be consumed in work time and if consumed after work it should be done so in a responsible manner, and
• Firearms are not permitted to be taken on fieldwork unless approval of the Head of School is obtained.

Participants should be aware of the environment and expected conditions they will be working in. This includes:

• Obtaining current weather reports;
• Being aware of current fire regulations and fire management requirements;
• Being aware of hazards from flora and fauna as well as requirements relating to protected species, and
• Being aware of cultural and other requirements.

Even if you are traveling on your own for fieldwork, you must comply with all items related to the fieldwork policy – the only difference is that you provide information about yourself and you ensure that you comply with all processes.

**Vehicles and drivers**

Drivers using a 4wd and are likely to be driving in situations where they will utilise the 4wd capability, must have undertaken a 4wd drive course before undertaking their field trip.

As a guideline it is recommended that:

• Drivers should not exceed two hours continuous driving without a break away from the vehicle;
• When the driving is shared, drivers should change over every two hours;
• Cumulative driving time for any one driver should not exceed 8 hours in any 24-hour period;
• The total time spent by any one person in fieldwork or in fieldwork plus driving should not exceed 12 hours in any 24-hour period;
• Field Party members drive according to their natural wake-sleep patterns. They should avoid driving when they would normally be asleep, and
• Drivers should be aware that fatigue is increased by excessive vibrations, e.g. through poor suspension or poor roads. In these circumstances consider additional rest stops.
• Drivers should be aware that the risk of encountering native wildlife on the roads increases in early mornings and dusk. Additional care is required at these times.

**Medical**

A person working alone in a remote location **must be certified in remote area first aid**. A first aid kit is to be provided to any person travelling to a remote location where a kit is unlikely to be regularly available.

If medical support is required in the field, ensure that you follow the measures you have listed within your `risk assessment`.
International trips

Staff should be aware that the procedure has a number of additional elements that pertain to international travel. If a staff member is likely to be travelling overseas they should consult the policy and procedures to ensure that they are aware of the procedure in this regard.

What about forms?

*Complying with fieldwork requirements and seeking approval to travel are two different things although related.* In other words if you are undertaking fieldwork off campus you must have complete a travel form so that your travel is approved. You are not required to have a travel form in place if you are traveling within the ACT however, if there is fieldwork involved and it is off campus you must check to ensure that you are complying with all requirements.

Therefore, when undertaking a travel plan for the purpose of fieldwork, you are still required to complete a Travel Form otherwise you risk not having approval for travel (and your fieldwork)!

Add to the travel form (or forms for all persons in the fieldwork group), a risk assessment and any other documentation that is required.

If you are traveling internationally you need to check on the Australian Government Smart Traveler website whether you are traveling to a high risk destination; if so, you complete the high risk destination form. You are also required to register on the Smart Traveler website [http://www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au).

You must follow the guidelines listed on the CASS Travel Portal which is at: [http://cass.anu.edu.au/intranet/travel](http://cass.anu.edu.au/intranet/travel)

Remember to travel you require:

- A CASS Travel Checklist
- Approval to Travel Form
- Travel Diary (yes, we require this in advance and not after the trip)
- Travel Declaration form
- MAY BE REQUIRED: Travel to High Risk Destination Assessment Plan. There is information at the various links on the CASS Travel Portal which tells you about the risk assessment process. Please read it. You can also look up [http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/risk_assessment_for_travel_to_high_risk_destinations_procedures_for/procedure#Travel_Risk_Assessment](http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/risk_assessment_for_travel_to_high_risk_destinations_procedures_for/procedure#Travel_Risk_Assessment)
- MAY BE REQUIRED: Travel to High Risk Destination Approval Form
- MAY BE REQUIRED: FBT Private Travel Calculator – this is required if you are undertaking personal travel in addition to work travel
- You are also required to request per diems, advances etc – forms are on the CASS Travel Portal.

If you are traveling and also undertaking fieldwork (alone or as a group), you are required to submit a risk assessment document which includes all the information referred to at [http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure](http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure)

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Check list for *Remote Australian and International Fieldwork*

Please read the Fieldwork health and off-campus work safety procedure [http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure](http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure) and the guide Appendix 1:

Use this check list as an aid to assist you to understand the risks involved and to establish a plan for your remote area fieldwork. It is meant as an aid only and should be used in conjunction with current ANU policy.

- Ensure that you have read the Fieldwork health and off-campus work safety procedure ([http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure](http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure)) and the guide Appendix 1 available online.

- Undertake a risk assessment for your fieldwork (this includes group fieldwork arrangements where you are the supervisor.)

- Ensure that Travel forms are completed and signed for staff and students and anyone who is being asked to travel on ANU business. If travel tickets are involved, do not purchase until you have sought approval for the travel.

- Ensure that you provide a detailed Itinerary which includes destinations, dates and times of travel, contact names and phone numbers at destination (where possible).

- Prepare a List of Contact details for all team members, including emergency contacts, and check with team members for any relevant medical conditions (including allergies).

- Ensure that Permits and Licenses are current (e.g. Permissions to enter land, vehicles and equipment)

- Note that Travel Insurance covers ANU staff and students on authorized business travel. This includes anyone else that is engaged by the ANU where travel is paid by the ANU. You can request and carry a copy of ANU traveller emergency assistance information (e.g. ACE card).

- Provide a Communication Plan – a means of contact (i.e. mobile phone, satellite phone, two-way radio, EPIRB - emergency position-indicating radio beacons) and contact procedure is in place.

- First Aid Kit and Officer - Occupational first aid kit for remote areas must be carried. If you are in the field alone then you must be certified in Remote Area First Aid. If you are in a group then at least one of group must be certified in Remote Area First Aid, and one in First Aid. If you require a remote first aid course, discuss with your Head of School and/or Senior School Administrator.

- All volunteers participating in fieldwork or off-campus work must complete the Volunteer Declaration Form and gain the approval of the Director or nominated representative. The form can be found here [http://policies.anu.edu.au/forms/insurance_volunteer_declaration/form](http://policies.anu.edu.au/forms/insurance_volunteer_declaration/form) (It is your responsibility to ensure that you do not take anyone in the field who is not authorized to be there either as a staff, student, paid visitor and/or a volunteer.)

- Establish a local ANU contact and ensure that copies of all necessary documents are lodged with this person and that the contact details are circulated to the fieldwork party.

*Understanding the definition of remote* – a Remote location is separated from an appropriately resourced urban centre by distance, terrain, access, time and/or available communication links. A remote area may be on land or water. A remote area is not necessarily related to the distance from an urban centre. In the event of an emergency, assistance would be delayed, with the possibility of adverse outcomes. (The description of 'remote' is taken from [http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure 25/7/12](http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/fieldwork_health_and_safety/procedure 25/7/12))