



2020 Explosives Inspectorate – Year in Review Webinar, Questions and Answers

You asked us a number of questions during our year in review [webinar](#). Please find our answers below.

Q. Is there a list of training providers that Resources Safety & Health Queensland will publish on their website for explosives driver licence units of competency?

A. registered training organisations that provide the units of competency for explosives driver licences can be found on www.training.gov.au

Q. In the Bundamba fireworks accident, were the magazines registered with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), and if so, were both townie and Rural Fire Service (RFS) personnel provided training in what to do around these licensed facilities?

A. The location of the Bundamba fireworks storage facility was known to the local emergency services and they had visited the site. The authority holder is responsible for engaging with emergency services who may be involved in an emergency. The Explosives Inspectorate intends on engaging further with QFES at an agency level to discuss the utilisation of QFES GIS mapping systems to ensure that explosive hazard information is available to first responders.

Q. Did any injuries or infrastructure damage occur due to the fireworks storage explosion at Bundamba?

A. No, there were no injuries or damaged infrastructure outside of the magazine exclusion zone. The converted shipping container magazine and fireworks were destroyed in the fire and subsequent explosion.

Q. Regarding fireworks - can you please compare the total number of outdoor displays in 2019 and 2020?

A. The numbers of fireworks displays for the past three years are as follows:

2018	2019	2020
January 114	January 72	January 131
December 330	December 182	December 152
Total for year 1879	Total for year 1471	Total for year 618

Q. What is the processing time between submission of correct paperwork and granting of explosives driver licence?

A. If a person already holds a security clearance (issued under Explosives Act 1999), an explosives driver licence can be processed in a relatively short timeframe, e.g. in an urgent circumstance 2 to 5 days. The current customer service charter is 20 business days. Applicants who require a security card in relation to an explosives driver licence application may experience delays due to time taken to process criminal history checks as this is outside of our control.

Q. Regarding security clearances – has any thought been given when the applicant has been dismissed from work with explosives while under the influence of drugs? A points penalty noted towards the individual’s licence could be something to be implemented.

A. The Explosives Inspectorate can only take action where authority holders are charged with a criminal offence. Where the employer finds an employee under the influence of drugs or alcohol, it would be up to the site to determine the severity of the employee's actions and determine if they wish to contact police. Currently there is no provision under the Explosives Act 1999 to implement a point system against a person's authority.

Q. If I'm served with a domestic violence order (DVO) what should I do?

A. If you hold a security clearance issued under the Explosives Act 1999 and you are named as a respondent in a DVO or Protection Notice/Protection order, you are obligated under [Explosives Regulation 2017 Section 18B](#) to notify the Explosives Inspectorate by emailing QESC@rshq.qld.gov.au or phoning 07 3199 8023.

Q. Does a licensed shotfirer need to also have a security clearance and an explosives driver licence?

A. A shotfirer does not require an explosives driver licence if transporting a load authorised under the shotfirer Licence. Refer to [Section 135 of Explosives Regulations 2017](#). A shotfirer Licence requires a security clearance. [Transitional arrangements](#) may apply.

Q. Can you please confirm ongoing requirements for transportation of low risk explosives - power device cartridges?

A. No authority to possess or transport is required for power device cartridges of classes 1.4S & 1.4C. See [Explosives Information Bulletin 51](#) for more information.

Q. Will an explosives driver licence be required for drivers transporting category 1 explosives loads?

A. An explosives driver licence will be required for class 1, category 1 loads if a person is transporting under a licence to transport explosives.

Q. In regard to explosive recoveries, are commercial explosives still being found in the public arena?

A. Commercial blasting explosives now accounts for a small proportion of the recoveries managed by the Explosives Inspectorate.

Q. Is the explosives driver licence transferable? E.g. a driver moving employment between explosive transport operators.

A. The explosives driver licence is issued to an individual. The explosives driver licence allows the individual to drive a licensed explosives vehicle, no matter which employer the individual is working for. This works in the same way as any other occupational licence e.g. a forklift licence.

Q. Question to Chief Inspector please: Does the Dr Brady review of mining fatalities have relevance for the explosives sector? What would you ask the industry to focus on?

A. This is a great question. As Chief Inspector, I was interested to compare the recommendations resulting from the Brady Review with our actual and anecdotal knowledge of the risk profile of the explosives industry. We all recognise that working with explosives we are working with highly energetic materials where the time from the commencement of an incident to a serious consequence can be 2-3 milliseconds. The point is that effective hazard controls are essential. I would strongly suggest that the following recommendations be considered in the context of stakeholder's own explosives operations:

- Recommendation 1. The explosives industry also experiences a serious accident cycle. This may not be readily apparent in Australia where the incidence is infrequent but taken globally it is a different story. Being vigilant is essential to combatting complacency.*
- Recommendations 3-5. We often hear that safety and security management systems have developed over time to be almost perfect, as evidenced by the lack of serious accidents. Our incident reports, received from industry, tell a different story. High potential incidents that do not result in a serious consequence are more common than the espoused industry view suggests. These are hazards, failures of controls, training and supervision that industry already knows about - you report it! We expect to see that the risks are identified and effectively mitigated.*
- Recommendation 6. The consideration of philosophy and practice relating to HROs is strongly recommended for the explosives industry. There are many analogies with industries with a similar inherently hazardous profile.*

Q. In regard to security clearances, are stevedores etc at Ports during imports or exports of explosives or SSAN required to hold a security clearance or are MSIC still a sufficient form of security clearance?

A. A stevedore does not require a security clearance unless he has unsupervised access to explosives. The responsibility is with the authority holder to ensure a security clearance holder supervises the transition.

Q. Will the new security clearances lead to a reduction in people involved in the handling of and with access to explosives?

A. The security clearance is not intended to reduce the number of people involved in the handling and access to explosives, but will identify those persons who are not suitable to have unsupervised access to explosives.

Q. Are drones becoming an issue at fireworks displays? Leading to a similar issue to the Indonesian flyrock incident?

A. The Explosives Inspectorate has not witnessed any drones used by members of the public at fireworks displays, nor has this been reported to us as a problem by members of the fireworks industry.

Q. Is there a legislation for blast exclusion zone distances?

A. No, the legislation is non-prescriptive in this area, however the Explosives Regulation calls up the Australian Standard AS 2187-Part 2 Use which incorporates blast managements plans in which the authority holder should calculate safe distances for blasting and state minimum distances for people and equipment.