



# Surf Life Saving Australia

August 2009

## Pain Management – Methoxyflurane Implementation

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<b>Department</b> Lifesaving / Operations	
<b>Summary</b> SLSA has finalised preparations to introduce the use of the analgesic gas methoxyflurane to be used on the frontline for patient pain management. The 'Pain Management (Methoxyflurane)' resources will be rolled out according to each state and territory implementation plan as restricted by government permits. Each state centre will be providing details of these plans shortly. The SLSA policy and educational resources are now available online.	
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### Introduction

Pain management is a role of first responders and Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) has extended its capability to include the use of analgesic gases, specifically methoxyflurane. This circular will outline what the drug is, why it is being introduced, how this will be done and what the timeline for implementation is.

### Methoxyflurane – What is it?

Methoxyflurane, also known as Penthrane, is an analgesic gas that is used in low concentrations to provide pain relief in conscious patients. It is most commonly administered using a green inhaler known as the Pentrox® Inhaler as shown below. This application of methoxyflurane is believed to be the best suited to our needs and purpose.





The cost of the Methoxyflurane and Pentrox® inhaler, including the charcoal accessory is approximately \$34 per unit and has a shelf life of approximately 2 years. Placebos are available for training at approximately \$10 per unit, (*Note: All prices are valid as at 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009 and are subject to change.*)

All purchasing and supply will be per state/territory guidelines. Due to government permit restrictions, it is likely that the purchase of the drug will be done and controlled by each state/territory centre and will be stipulated by their standard operating procedure.

## Use of Analgesic Gases – Why?

The use of Methoxyflurane will allow SLSA to deliver advanced pain relief to the public and its members through the application of pain management measures including methoxyflurane through frontline services. The drug is simple to administer and will allow patients to have pain relief whilst awaiting emergency services.

The priority of implementation will be determined by the following factors:

- Service location, e.g. Metro vs. regional,
- Remoteness of areas and proximity to immediate medical services,
- High incident locations and frequency of need.

The implementation will ultimately be determined by the state/territory due to legislative and operational restrictions.

## How will Methoxyflurane be implemented?

SLSA has developed a national policy and resources for education training. State and territory centres will be providing further details of an implementation plan for 'Pain Management (Methoxyflurane)' in preparation for the 2009/10 season but only in states where permits have been granted.

### Policy

A national policy has been developed and it includes:

- Purpose
- Drug Information
- Basic Protocol
- Governance
- Accreditation
- Penalties for misuse and loss

Note: Due to the legislative and permit allowance differences between states, the policy is a national minimum requirement and the implementation maybe subject to additional requirements and more extensive protocols for use through individual state standard operating procedures.

The national policy is available on the SLSA website in the 'admin and resources library' under 'SLSA policies'.

### Legislation

Methoxyflurane distribution, storage, disposal and administration are regulated by a drug and poisons act of each state parliament and requires strict drug and poison control plans.

Each State Centre will be the permit holder for obtaining and distributing the drug. Purchase and supply of the drug will be via a state centre and will comply with the relevant state drug and poison acts, regulation and control measures. An audit trail for purchase, supply and use is a critical aspect for compliance. The specific process will be outlined in the relevant standard operating procedure for each state.



Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia have valid permits and can immediately facilitate the implementation of Methoxyflurane. Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory are currently involved in the application process.

### Education & Training

The SLSA Pain Management Certificate (Methoxyflurane) is the award required by current members or employees of SLSA or its affiliated bodies to be permitted to carry and administer methoxyflurane. The pre-requisite for this award include:

- SLSA Senior First Aid Certificate (currently proficient) **OR**,  
HLTCPR 2011A Perform CPR. HLTF201A Perform Basic Emergency Life Support, HLTF201A Apply First Aid, PUAEME001B Provide Emergency Care and PUAEME002C Manage Injuries.
- SLSA Advanced Resuscitation Certificate (currently proficient) **OR**,  
PUAEME001B Provide Emergency Care and PUAEME003C Administer Oxygen in an Emergency Situation.
- Minimum of eighteen (18) years of age on the date of final assessment.

Note: due to differences in state legislation this is a minimum requirement only and the award may be subject to additional pre-requisites. Refer to your relevant state centre for further information.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be available to those qualified through employment or those involved in initial Surf Life Saving trials. Refer to your relevant state centre for further information.

### Resources

The following training resources exist for delivery of the Pain management Certificate (Methoxyflurane)

- Learner Guide
- Delivery and Assessment Guide
- PowerPoint Presentation

The resources for 'Pain Management (Methoxyflurane)' are on the SLSA Secure Web.

### Delivery

Personnel authorised to deliver and assess the Pain Management Certificate (Methoxyflurane) are outlined below:

Qualification	Deliver	Assess
Training Officer's Certificate – Pain Management Certificate (Methoxyflurane)	Yes	
Assessor's Certificate (Methoxyflurane)		Yes
Facilitator's Certificate (Methoxyflurane)	Yes	Yes

The expected duration of this course is approximately 4.5 hours including assessment.

For the initial implementation, states will be allowed to nominate their own industry experts to train facilitators, assessors and trainers for methoxyflurane. These nominees will be set up in SurfGuard as having the awards so that Pain Management Certificate (Methoxyflurane) can awarded.

### Proficiency

Proficiencies for this award will be required at a minimum every two years and in some states annually depending on state permit requirements. Independent of the frequency, items included in the proficiency will include:

- demonstration of set up and simulated use
- knowledge of local security and state documentation requirements.



## Logs and data collection

A national form has been created called 'the first responder' form. It is intended to supplement the patrol log and incident report log when methoxyflurane is used as a treatment to collect specific data. This form will be distributed by state centres to meet relevant state requirements.

## IT Implications

Surfguard has been updated to include the Pain Management Certificate (methoxyflurane). These awards will be issued at a state level.

The patrol log on Surfguard has been updated to include methoxyflurane as a treatment measure under 'first aid analysis/treatment'. Further, methoxyflurane has been added to the 'initial treatment' field in the Incident Report Log as a treatment option. This will allow high level data to be collected for use and supply of the drug.

## **When will Methoxyflurane be implemented?**

The SLSA Pain Management Certificate (Methoxyflurane) will be implemented from the beginning of the 2009/2010 season by state and territory centres as legislative and operational restrictions allow. Resources will be finalised and packaged at a national level, but distributed by state to ensure state based compliance requirements are met.

Your state centre will be in contact with your club or branch when implementation is to commence. Approximate dates are:

New South Wales	Beginning 2009/2010
Queensland	Beginning 2009/2010
Victoria	Beginning 2009/2010
South Australia	During 2009/2010
Western Australia	During 2009/2010
Tasmania	Beginning 2010/2011
Northern Territory	Beginning 2010

## **Questions**

If you have any questions regarding your state/territory implementation plan, contact the state/territory lifesaving department.

Please direct any questions regarding the national policy or training and resources to the National Lifesaving Coordinator or Resource Development Coordinator respectively on (02) 9300 4000.