



Standard Operating Procedure

Acronyms:

AIIMS™	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System
PIRSA	Primary Industries and Regions South Australia
SAVEM	South Australian Veterinary Emergency Management
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose

After reading these notes you will have developed knowledge about:

1. The definition of an SOP
2. How and why SOP's are developed
3. Your obligation to use SOP's
4. Where SOP's sit in the hierarchy of SAVEM documents

1. Introduction

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) detail the steps of key processes to help ensure consistent and quality processes and outcomes.

The purpose of SOPs is to provide SAVEM volunteers with clear direction and a description of SAVEM's actions. They make the SAVEM Plan into a practical reality.

They have been discussed, decided and written by SAVEM volunteers. SOPs are agreed after considering reasonable, defensible and practical actions. Actions which are unacceptable on practical, ethical or legislative grounds are rejected.

There are many hazards associated with field activities. SOPs contribute to reducing the risks caused by these hazards by restricting actions and the personnel who are permitted to undertake them. This helps to keep our volunteers, animals and the community safe.

2. What is an SOP?

An SOP is a set of instructions or our business rules. It is a document of step-by-step instructions outlining how SAVEM volunteers should carry out routine processes. It is similar to a recipe, guiding you through the process.

I. An SOP will detail:

- What we need to do - Application/Scope
- What 'stuff' we need to do it - Resources
- Risks involved - Warnings
- How we will do it - Procedure
- Additional information as References - other SOPs, policies, procedures etc. to refer to

3. Why do we need SOPs?

- To maintain **consistency** of the job
- Improve **effectiveness**
- Improve **efficiency**
- Manage **risks** and improve **safety**

Without a standard way of doing tasks we will all do them in a different way resulting in inefficiency and creating several risks to personnel and animals. There is also a legal requirement to have SOPs.

For example, if an animal is assessed as requiring euthanasia and it cannot be caught it may need to be euthanased by firearm. The risks of using firearms could result in the death of a person or the escape of the injured animal. Therefore, SAVEM has developed an SOP on the use of firearms that directs us to:

- Only use appropriately licensed and experienced individuals to perform euthanasia by firearm.
- Secure the area for the safety of animals and personnel
- Advise SAPOL and the Control Agency of the use of firearms

Another example of SAVEM SOPs which protect both personnel, animals and SAVEM (legally) is the SOP on the use of drugs. SAVEM holds its own special drug license with SA Health which requires SAVEM to implement certain procedures. The license conditions direct SAVEM to receive, dispense, use and return drugs in accordance with the special license conditions. There is also a requirement to keep a predetermined set of records. This is why the SOP stipulates the veterinarian is the only person who can access drugs in the field. The SOP determines that the logistics manager in conjunction with a veterinarian are the only personnel who can receive drugs.

4. How do SOPs fit into the hierarchy of doctrine?

Doctrine is the set of documents that guide all the work we do. The set includes legislation, manuals, policies, procedures, guidelines and standards.

The doctrine relevant to SAVEM is outlined in the table below. This shows how the SOPs are part of a set of guiding documents

Doctrine Layer	Description	Examples
Capstone	This frames the lower levels of doctrine and gives SAVEM authority and purpose.	Emergency Management Act 2004 Veterinary Services Act Controlled Substances Act
Fundamentals	This level outlines the principles and reasoning of what SAVEM does.	State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) AIIMS manual SAVEM Plan and Policy
Procedural	This provides detailed description for tasks and actions.	SOPs
Technical	This provides details on application of tasks.	Checklists Safety data sheets

5. SAVEM Expectations with SOPs

It is expected that all SAVEM volunteers will comply with SOPs in order that our actions are safe, legal, practical and protect the welfare of animals.

6. Reviewing SOPs

SAVEM SOPs are reviewed regularly and updated as required to consider best practice and lessons learned during activations. Amendments to SOPs are communicated to volunteers via operational updates.