HS620	
Explosives and Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate	

UNSW THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

1. It is illegal to be in possession of explosives without a licence.
2. It is also illegal to possess Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate (SSAN), an explosive precursor, without a licence.[1]
3. Only "Authorised" Explosives can be handled: if an explosive is not on the Authorised List, it is deemed to be prohibited. *You can apply to have an explosive added to this list.*
4. Licences are valid for 5 years. *Annual notification of storage of either explosives or SSAN is required (if storing).*

The application process for obtaining Licences is lengthy and includes:

- Submitting evidence of competency/training;
- Police checks (probity assessment);
- Having a Security Plan (heavy emphasis on ensuring that the explosives and precursors are stored safely and securely);
- Applications for licences to use explosives or SSAN have to be accompanied by an application for an **Unsupervised Handling** licence;

Of the myriad of Licences available (e.g. manufacture explosives/import/supply etc.) the most applicable to UNSW are:

- Blasting Explosives Users Licence (form FE05);
- Licence to **Use** Security Sensitive Dangerous Substance (which include SSAN) (form FE02c);
- Unsupervised Handling Licence (form FE01);

Applications have to be made at a Post Office and require a 100 points identification check.

All licences have detailed conditions attached regarding preventing unauthorised use; storing explosives in a specially constructed store (magazine); if storing, keeping records of movements of explosives and precursors in and out of a store (for 5yrs); reporting any theft of explosives; requirements for licensee related to ceasing employment.

Anyone who has access to an area where explosives or precursors are used/stored must have an Unsupervised Handling licence.

Other precursor chemicals of security concern

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has listed 11 priority chemicals (from a broader list of 96) as being 'precursor chemicals of a security concern'. These include various concentrations of the following chemicals: Ammonium Perchlorate; Hydrogen Peroxide; Nitric Acid; Nitromethane; Potassium Chlorate; Potassium Nitrate; Potassium Perchlorate; Sodium Azide; Sodium Chlorate; Sodium Perchlorate and Sodium Nitrate. Extra vigilance is required for these chemicals in terms of maintaining control over the purchasing of such chemicals, maintaining their security during storage and rigorous stocktaking to ensure that such chemicals are not being removed from site for unauthorized activity. Further detail can be obtained from the Chemical Security website. In addition this website contains a full listing of all 96 'chemicals of a security concern'. The National Code of Practice for the Chemicals of Security Concern is available on this website; adherence to this is currently voluntary but highly recommended. In summary it requires vigilance for the acquisition and storage of all 96 chemicals to ensure their use is authorised and their storage is secure.

References

Explosives Act 2003 and Regulation 2005
The National Code of Practice for the Chemicals of Security Concern

[1] Applies to quantities of SSAN in excess of 3kg and the SSAN is in an emulsion, gel, suspension or mixture at greater than 45% concentration. It does not apply to solutions of SSAN.