

## 8. TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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Depending on their assigned roles and responsibilities, the different people involved with your RHP will require different forms of training. It is assumed that members of the PIT would generally have some environmental management experience and knowledge, but may benefit from attending a course on the theoretical aspects of biomonitoring and the objectives of the RHP. It is recommended that PIT members become familiar with the RHP indices (particularly SASS and IHAS) as well.

Members of the PMT obviously require more “hands-on” practical training to perform their biomonitoring tasks effectively. It is advised that training begin with SASS and IHAS. Biomonitoring (particularly SASS) requires a fair amount of training for staff to become familiar with the wide array of aquatic invertebrates and to identify them accurately and consistently. On-site training is preferred, so that staff gain experience with sampling techniques and protocols.

In addition, PMT staff require training in the use of water quality instruments, such as pH meters, dissolved oxygen and conductivity meters and taking water samples. Because the RHP demands spatial and navigational skills of monitoring staff, competency in the use of a Global Positioning System (GPS) and the ability to read and interpret maps is essential. If digital cameras are to be used for the recording of the site, then a basic course in how to use the camera and fundamentals of photography is also required. Skills in using these instruments will become honed with time and experience in the field.

The PMT staff should attend a course in basic First Aid before going out into the field. These courses are offered by a variety of organisations such as the St Johns Ambulance Association.

It is also beneficial for PMT to become familiar with the theoretical aspects of the RHP, especially criteria for site selection, advantages and limitations of the different indices etc. Information sharing and capacity building is the name of the game!

**NOTE:**

For a list of expertise and organisations offering training in the Indices of Ecosystem Health, see the section on “Organisations offering support for the RHP”.



