



Incident / Hazard Reporting and Investigation

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Purpose

This procedure outlines the requirements for the reporting of incidents that occur or hazards that are identified at the University or in the course of university business and investigating their circumstances to assist with:

- preventing injury and/or a recurrence of a similar incident
- providing prompt medical assistance where an injury has occurred
- capturing data to monitor corrective action
- analyzing trends to determine the most appropriate use of resources and need for the development of specific preventative programs to eliminate/control risk on a priority basis
- informing the Council, Enterprise Leadership Team (ELT), Audit and Risk Management Committee and the University Safety & Wellbeing Committee of identified trends and recommended action as appropriate.

This procedure also outlines the requirements for statutory reporting of:

- serious notifiable incidents including fatalities, serious injury or illness and dangerous incidents, a mandatory requirement under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
- radiation emergencies and accidents, a mandatory requirement as defined under the Radiation Protection and Control (Ionising Radiation) Regulations 2000
- incidents involving electric shock or electrical burns, a mandatory requirement under the Electricity (General) Regulations 2012.

Definitions

Corrective action – is an action taken to control the risk and reduce the likelihood of injury following an incident occurring or a hazard present.

Critical incident - for University Purposes - a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which has the potential to harm life or well-being and causes extreme stress, fear or injury to the person experiencing or witnessing the event.

Event – for the purposes of this procedure and the online Hazard/Incident Reporting & Investigation System, an event is a significant incident involving multiple people where injury/illness has not occurred or is not known at the time of reporting.

Hazard – an object or situation that has the potential to harm a person, the environment or cause damage to property.

HSR (Health and Safety Representative) – is an employee formally elected to represent a designated workgroup and who has the authority under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA) to raise and investigate health and safety issues with management on behalf of their workgroup.

Incident – is any unplanned occurrence or event that results in or could have resulted in harm (fatality, injury, illness or damage) to persons, plant, material or the environment.



Investigation – a process to identify all possible causes of an incident or reasons why a hazard is present and corrective action required to eliminate or control a hazard.

Lost-time injury/illness – incidents that resulted in injury, disease, permanent disability, or time lost from work of one or more days/shifts.

Near miss – is any incident that could have resulted in (but did not) result in injury or illness to people, danger to health and/or damage to property or the environment.

Risk – is the probability and consequences of occurrence of injury/illness or harm.

Statutory reporting – a legal obligation to:

- immediately notify SafeWork SA of a death of a person, a serious injury/illness, or a dangerous incident
- immediately notify the Environmental Protection Authority of any radiation incidents and accidents
- immediately notify the Office of the Technical Regulator of any incidents involving an electric shock

Notifiable Incident – an incident resulting in:

- The death of a person- employee, contractor, member of the public
- A serious injury or illness- amputation, fracture, critical care burns, degloving, spinal injury, loss of bodily function, deep lacerations
- A dangerous occurrence - whereby a person is exposed to a serious risk from an uncontrolled spillage of a substance, an uncontrolled implosion, explosion of fire, an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam, an uncontrolled escape of a pressurized substance, or electric shock
- Any infection where work is a significant contributing factor- contact with micro-organisms, treatment, or care for a person, contact with human blood or body substances, animal products or work with animals.

Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Deans, Directors and General Managers are responsible to ensure that:

- this procedure is implemented in their area of responsibility and necessary resources are provided to support implementation
- supervisors are aware of the requirements relating to statutory reporting, reporting timelines and receive sufficient information, instruction, or training to enable incidents and hazards to be thoroughly investigated and findings recorded
- incidents that occur at the University or in the course of university business (involving employees, students, contractors, volunteers, members of the public) are promptly reported and investigated in accordance with this procedure and within the designated timelines
- identified hazards that cannot be fixed immediately are promptly reported to the responsible person for appropriate action and logged in the online reporting system
- prompt and appropriate management of injured/ill employees is facilitated
- appropriate information and instruction on reporting requirements is communicated to employees to ensure their health and safety and that of others.

Project Managers and/or Contract Supervisors shall ensure:

- any notifiable incident (as defined by SafeWork SA) that occurs on a construction project managed by a principal contractor, is immediately reported to the University
- service contractors are informed of the requirement to report all incidents to the Contract Supervisor, Campus Facilities Coordinator or Security, immediately they become aware of an incident.

Employees are responsible to ensure:

- they comply with the requirements of this procedure to eliminate and/or reduce risk of injury/illness, harm to property or the environment.

Health and Safety Representatives are encouraged to report hazards identified and participate in investigations to assist with the development, implementation, and evaluation of measures to prevent injury/illness.

Procedure for Reporting Incidents

In the event an incident occurs at the University or in the course of undertaking university business, the following steps shall be followed by the person or persons involved, the person nominated to investigate (responsible supervisor or other delegated person) and others rendering assistance.

1. Immediate Incident Response

- a) If no danger to yourself, render immediate action to ensure own safety and that of others
- b) Where there is a foreseeable risk to yourself and others in rendering immediate action, seek assistance from FM Assist (dial **5555** from an internal phone or **1800 500 911** from an outside phone/mobile phone)
- c) Provide or seek first aid treatment and where necessary, emergency assistance where medical assessment is identified for any injuries sustained
- d) Isolate the site where there remains risk of further injury
- e) Where an incident is immediately notifiable to SafeWork SA (results in serious injury or a dangerous occurrence) and notification has been made by the Safety & Wellbeing team, so far as is reasonably practicable, the site where the incident occurred must not be disturbed until an inspector arrives at the site or directs otherwise (whichever is earlier).

2. Notifiable Incidents and Reporting to the Regulators

- a) Immediately notify your supervisor/manager of the incident that has occurred
- b) Even near-misses must be reported, and if you are unsure if the incident is notifiable, contact the Safety and Wellbeing Team.
- c) The responsible supervisor/manager or delegated person shall:
 - i) **immediately notify Safety and Wellbeing on 0411 073 055 or 8302 2459** of any serious incidents that meet the criteria for 'notifiable incidents' outlined above
 - ii) immediately advise the responsible senior manager of the Research Institute, Academic or Central Unit and Campus Senior WHS Consultant where a serious injury/illness or death has occurred or where there is potential for serious harm to a person or persons, significant damage to property or serious impact on the environment (dangerous occurrence)
 - iii) assist in facilitating prompt injury management processes for the injured/ill employee.
Note: Injury/Illness reports submitted to the online system will inform the University Injury Management team and initiate the Injury Management Early Intervention Program
 - iv) arrange for debriefing where an incident has resulted in serious injury/illness, death to a person or persons and/or has impacted on other people or caused concern within an area. Employee counselling should be offered to any personnel affected by the incident using the University's Employee Assistance Program provider by calling: **1300 277 924**.
For critical incidents such as a fire, bomb threat or flood, refer to the University Emergency Management and Response Procedures.
- d) The person involved or a person on their behalf shall:
 - i) log details of the incident using the online Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System as soon as practicable after the incident and within 48 hours
Note: An employee or other authorized person shall log details of an incident in the online reporting system on behalf of a student, contractor, volunteer or others (i.e. member of public, visitor)
 - ii) nominate the supervisor/manager responsible for the person injured or involved to investigate the circumstances of the incident. For example:
 - supervisor/manager directly responsible for an injured/involved employee
 - contract supervisor responsible for a project where an external contractor is injured/involved
 - program services manager responsible for an injured/involved student**Note:** For incidents that occur in remote localities (e.g. on fieldtrips, placements etc), where computer facilities are limited and/or non-existent, details must be communicated to a nominated contact person who shall report the occurrence on their behalf.

3. Incident Investigation

The responsible supervisor/manager or other delegated person nominated to investigate an incident shall:

- a) ensure an investigation commences as soon as possible after an incident occurs and in consultation with:
 - the injured/involved person (where practical)
 - the HSR (where applicable)
 - the campus WHS Consultant
 - any other personnel relevant to the matter
- b) establish that the incident site is safe prior to investigating to prevent further injury. Refer to 1(e) above to ensure an incident site is not entered into where a serious notifiable incident has occurred.
- c) gather factual information to describe the circumstances, for example what happened, what occurred leading up to the incident, other contributing factors, who else was involved etc.

- d) analyze the factual information gathered to identify contributing factors and underlying causes relating to potential deficiencies in the following:
- o **System** – a method, a set of independent and interrelated elements that function as a whole i.e. workplace procedures or processes that specify the way in which something is implemented
 - o **Design** – design of plant/machinery/equipment, design of work task/processes
 - o **Environment** – the surroundings in which work is performed i.e. work environment / work conditions / naturally occurring environmental conditions
 - o **Behaviour** – human factors including inexperience / complacency / work pressure / fatigue, medical illness etc.
- Note:** the investigation should identify causes other than just ‘human error’ or ‘complacency’ where factual information relates to potential deficiencies in any of the four categories mentioned above.
- e) make conclusions about why the incident occurred based on the investigation findings
- f) recommend appropriate corrective action/s in consultation with all personnel involved in the investigation to prevent a recurrence
- g) ensure identified corrective action is implemented prior to work re-commencing i.e. building development/refurbishment projects, building services infrastructure, laboratory/workshop processes
- h) complete the online investigation form, corresponding with the online logged report (same occurrence number) within the online Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System, including details of corrective action taken or expected to be taken and submit as soon as practicable following investigation.
- Corrective actions recorded on the online incident investigation form shall be followed up by the Safety & Wellbeing Team where necessary to ensure appropriate action is implemented and completed to prevent a recurrence
- i) include any planned corrective action in the WHS Local Action Plan following the outcome of the investigation to ensure action is implemented, particularly where an ongoing scheduled activity is required
- j) monitor and evaluate corrective action/s implemented to ensure the controls selected have been effective to mitigate risk and have not presented any new hazards.

4. Reporting Identified Hazards

- a) Fix the hazard immediately and safely if competent to do so and there is no danger to yourself or others
- b) Where the hazard cannot be fixed immediately, promptly notify your supervisor/ manager, the local HSR (where applicable) and isolate the site where there is immediate risk of injury
- c) Immediately notify FM Assist of any campus related matters (i.e. hazards relating to building / infrastructure) and raise a Customer Service Request (CSR) for assistance where corrective action is required
- d) Log details of the hazard (attach photos where possible) using the online hazard report within the Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System to ensure appropriate action is taken to eliminate the hazard or mitigate the risk

Note: Nominate the supervisor/manager responsible for the area where the hazard was identified, to investigate the reasons for the hazard being present. For example:

- supervisor/manager responsible for a hazard present within the context of work performed within an Academic or Central Unit, or Research Institute.
 - contract supervisor responsible for a project involving work undertaken by an external contractor
 - program services manager responsible for a hazard relating to a course undertaken by a student
- e) Supervisors/managers are required to proactively identify reasonably foreseeable hazards within the context of work being performed in a local area (i.e. hazards associated with working with chemical substances, plant and equipment, fieldtrips, working remotely, workloads etc.) and advise employees and students of the requirement to report such a hazard to them immediately when identified.

For example, a laboratory manager shall instruct people working in their laboratory to report any malfunction of a fume cupboard. Alternatively, a person observed performing an unsafe task, activity and/or in unsafe conditions should also be reported. Hazards identified through periodic workplace inspections that cannot be fixed immediately and require specialist advice/assistance, should be reported using the online system to ensure appropriate corrective action is implemented to prevent injury.

5. Hazard Investigation

The responsible supervisor/manager or other delegated person nominated on the online hazard report to investigate an identified hazard shall ensure:

- a) an investigation/assessment is conducted in consultation with:
- the reporter of the hazard
 - the HSR (where applicable)

- other personnel (performing the activity / with knowledge of the hazard)
- Campus WHS Consultant

to identify the reason/s for the hazard being present and the hazard category type i.e. physical, mechanical/electrical, chemical, biological or psychological

to assess the probability (likelihood) and consequence of the hazard causing harm to any person, damage to property or impact to the environment. (Refer to the WHS Procedure – Managing Health and Safety Risks for instructions on risk assessment and forms to use when assessing the potential risk/s associated with an identified hazard)

to control the risk using the predetermined hierarchy of controls with the primary aim to eliminate the hazard wherever possible. Where this is not possible, select one or more control measures (from the highest possible option within the hierarchy to the lowest option) to minimize the risk as reasonably practicable

to monitor implemented controls and/or re-evaluate existing controls to determine if the most appropriate control measure is in place.

- b) corrective action/s recommended are implemented to either eliminate the hazard or manage the risk associated with it so that it no longer poses a threat
- c) the hazard investigation form, corresponding with the hazard report within the online Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System, is completed including details of corrective action taken or expected to be taken and submitted as soon as practicable following investigation
- d) any planned action is included in the WHS Local Action Plan to ensure corrective actions are implemented, particularly where an ongoing scheduled activity is required
- e) control measures selected are monitored and evaluated to ensure the action taken has been effective to mitigate risk.

6. Data Analysis

Safety and Wellbeing Team monitor compliance with the required reporting timeframes and implementation of outstanding corrective action through the BI reporting system.

University-wide incident data is analyzed by the Safety and Wellbeing Team to identify trends and determine the need for preventative intervention and appropriate use of resources on a priority basis. Recommendations are made to the Enterprise Leadership Team, Audit & Risk Management Committee and the University Safety & Wellbeing Committee as appropriate.

The University Business Intelligence (BI) Reporting System is the process used to generate management reports from data maintained in the online hazard/incident reporting system. Names of individuals must be excluded from general/group discussions to protect confidentiality and privacy.

Academic Units, Central Units, Research Institutes local health and safety working/network groups or local management forums shall analyze incident/hazard data to assist in identifying trends and the need for preventative intervention to control risk where indicated.

7. Records

All records should be maintained in accordance with the University WHS Document Control and Record Management Procedure. Electronic incident/hazard records are maintained in the University data warehouse.

Performance Measures

- 75% of university incidents and hazards have been reported and logged in the online reporting system within 48 hours of the incident occurring or hazard being identified
- 75% of recommended corrective actions have been implemented by the expected completion date.

Documents / Forms

Further advice on managing risks in university workplaces, including supporting documents and training courses are available on the Safety & Wellbeing website.

- [Online Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System User Guide](#)
- [Hazard & Incident Reporting Guide](#)
- [WHS Procedure for Managing Health and Safety Risks](#)
- [WHS Procedure Document Control and Record Management](#)
- [University Emergency Management Response](#)
- [Customer Service Request \(CSR\)](#)



References

- Safe Work Australia Incident Notification Information
- Employee Assistance Program
- SafeWork SA
- Environmental Protection Authority
- Office of the Technical Regulator
- Work Health and Safety Act & Regulations 2012
- Radiation Protection and Control Act 1982
- Electricity (General) Regulations 2012
- AS 1885.1 Workplace Injuries and Disease Recording Standard