



NEAC INCIDENT REPORT AND INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

1. INCIDENT REPORTING

1.1 An incident may be:

- a) an unplanned event that causes harm to people, property or the environment; or
- b) a near miss, which is an incident that does not cause harm to people, property or the environment but which under different circumstances could result in harm (that is, where there is a clear potential to cause harm).

1.2 All incidents must be reported and investigated as soon as possible after the event to prevent re-occurrences.

1.3 If a near miss occurs or an incident occurs where someone has been hurt doing a particular task, then a hazard exists, which could hurt someone else. These incidents need to be investigated to find the hazard that could have caused, or did cause, the injury or illness.

1.4 An incident involving someone who is not an employee is also to be recorded. Such persons include site visitors, contractors, volunteers or members of the public.

1.5 Incident investigation involves the collection of factual data for analysis to identify where improvements can be made in the Work Health Safety (WHS) Management system.

2. RECORDING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

2.1 All types of incidents, including near misses (whether or not they involve damage to persons or property) must be reported immediately to [Manager].

2.2 An Incident Report must be recorded on the NEAC Incident and Investigation Report form. These forms can be located in the.

2.3 A hard copy version of the Incident and Investigation Report form will be kept and must be provided to.

2.4 There may be legal implications from the Incident including the possibility that legal action will be taken by a regulatory body. Subject to the circumstances of the Incident, the relevant Manager should consider whether there is a need to engage legal services.

2.5 Also, certain types of incidents must be notified to government authorities. Each State and Territory has different definitions and notification requirements for

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incidents. Details of these requirements may be found on the website for the relevant work health and safety regulator in each State/Territory.

3. INCIDENT RESPONSE

3.1 A notifiable incident will usually be an incident involving the death of a person, a serious injury or illness of a person, or a dangerous incident. (Please refer to the relevant work health and safety legislation for the specific definitions of these categories of notifiable incidents).

3.2 Generally, the requirement is that:

- a) A person who conducts a business or undertaking must ensure that the relevant work health and safety regulator is notified by the fastest possible means (telephone or in writing) after becoming aware that a notifiable incident has occurred;
- b) A person with management or control of a workplace at which a notifiable incident has occurred (including any plant, substance, structure or thing associated with the notifiable incident) must ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that the site where the incident occurred is not disturbed until an inspector arrives at the site or any earlier time that an inspector directs;
- c) Written records in relation to notifiable incidents must be kept for at least 5 years.

4. INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENTS

4.1 In addition to incident reporting, Managers are responsible for ensuring an investigation is completed and corrective action taken.

4.2 The level of investigation must match the seriousness of the incident. Before an investigation can proceed, consideration must be given as to whether the regulator has issued a non-disturbance notice for the site and/or whether any of the steps proposed to be taken in the investigation may have the effect of interfering with an investigation by the regulator and/or the police. Subject to these considerations and any restrictions arising, an investigation may proceed.

4.3 When conducting an investigation, the following steps should be taken:

- a) nominate the appropriate person(s) to undertake the investigation (this may involve the engagement of external consultants/experts);
- b) plan the investigation, which might include arranging to visit the relevant site, coordinating interviews, reviewing of documents and records and setting timeframes for completion;
- c) examine the relevant area where the incident or near-miss occurred;

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- d) interview people directly involved and any witnesses to get a variety of points of view on what happened;
- e) examine any relevant documents and records which might include risk or job safety assessments, maintenance records, inspection of checklists, hours of work records etc;
- f) analyse the information and determine what happened and why did it happen;
- g) write up the investigation findings and keep a record of this report.

5. CAUSES OF INCIDENTS

5.1 Incidents may be a result of multiple causes, ranging from work methods, the person involved, the work environment, the equipment being used and organisational structure. Incidents occur as a result of a deficiency in the whole workplace health and safety management system, not a fault in an individual.

5.2 The factors to consider when identifying causes of incidents include:

- a) Work organisation
Look at how the work is organised including work processes, production demands, etc.
- b) Work methods
Identify whether the job being performed at the time of the incident had been subject to a job safety analysis. If the job had previously been analysed, then the risk control measures may require modification. If the job has not been analysed, then an analysis may identify hazards associated with the job that contributed to the incident.
- c) Work environment
Identify environmental conditions and stressors that may have affected the health of employees. Examples of environmental factors can include chemicals, noise, illumination, vibration, climate, radiation and biological agents.
- d) Work equipment/plant
Identify if plant is:
 - (i) designed for the work it is intended for
 - (ii) adjustable to accommodate the user
 - (iii) adequately safeguarded
 - (iv) regularly inspected for defects and repaired where required
 - (v) routinely maintained
 - (vi) not used beyond its rated capacity

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(vii) used in accordance with manufacturer's specifications

e) Employees

Identify the skills, attitudes, habits, physical attributes, experience and training of the individual/s involved.

6. FORMULATION OF SAFETY SOLUTIONS

6.1 Recommended safety solutions will be identified from the careful analysis of the facts obtained from the incident investigation. These will include the:

- a) identification of appropriate risk control measures in consultation with employees. Refer to the hierarchy of hazard control outlined in the Risk Management Procedure;
- b) implementation of agreed risk control measures; and
- c) establishment of a system for regular review and evaluation of risk control measures.

7. REVIEW

This procedure will be reviewed annually during the WHS Audit Program, or as required due to change in legislation or regulations and/or in the event of a serious incident.

8. RECORD KEEPING

A central register of all reported incidents will be kept with [Responsible DepartmentOrPerson].

Variations

NEAC reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this procedure from time to time.

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