

# **Assist with responding to incidents**

**Learner Guide**



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# 1. Assist with identifying legislative and other requirements

## 1.1 - Apply knowledge of WHS legislation to identify duty holders and legislative requirements regarding responding to incidents

There are around 250 or more deaths in Australia every year due to workplace accidents. A number of industry bodies have been set up in each State to assist with reducing the number of workplace accidents and incidents.

It has been noted that workplace incidents could be reduced and avoided if people within the workplace take due care and diligence in ensuring their own safety and that of others.

Workcover is an industry body that has implemented a number of rules and regulations to keep workers safe. There is an industry body in every State and can offer a number of different forms and types of assistance to workplaces.

Some of the websites you can access information on include;

[www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)

[www.workcoverqld.com.au](http://www.workcoverqld.com.au)

[www.workcover.com](http://www.workcover.com)

[www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

[www.workcover.wa.gov.au](http://www.workcover.wa.gov.au)

[www.worksafety.act.gov.au](http://www.worksafety.act.gov.au)

[www.workcover.tas.gov.au](http://www.workcover.tas.gov.au)



Please note that these websites were accurate at time of publication.

### Standards Australia

Standards Australia is the peak body that sets standards with relevant working parties. The standards they set are requirements that indicate the minimum level of acceptable performance or quality relating to a specific hazard, process, product or industry standard.

Their website is [www.standards.org.au](http://www.standards.org.au)

According to their website;

Standards Australia is the nation's peak non-government Standards organisation. It is charged by the Commonwealth Government to meet Australia's need for contemporary, internationally aligned Standards and related services.

The work of Standards Australia enhances the nation's economic efficiency, international competitiveness and contributes to community demand for a safe and sustainable environment.

It leads and promotes a respected and unbiased Standards development process ensuring all competing interests are heard, their points of view considered and consensus reached.

Standards Australia also recognises, rewards and promotes excellence in design and innovation through the Australian International Design Awards program and other design promotion initiatives.

#### **Our four key areas:**

##### **1. National and International Standards Information and Coordination**

Standards Australia is the central point for government, industry and the community to find information about non-government consensus Standards in Australia and around the world, and how to participate in their development.

##### **2. Accreditation of Standards Development Organisations**

Standards Australia supports the accreditation of other Standards Development Organisations through the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO). This highly autonomous body independently assesses and approves other organisations such as industry associations to develop Australian Standards.

##### **3. Standards Development**

A range of development pathways is offered to stakeholders looking to develop new or update existing Standards.

##### **4. Design Assessment and Promotion**

Standards Australia operates one of the world's leading design assessment programs through its Australian International Design Awards (AIDA). With more than 50 years of benchmarking excellence in design and innovation, the AIDA is charged with fostering a culture of design and innovation in Australia.

#### **Safe Work Australia**

Safe Work Australia is a good starting point to get information on safe work practices that relate specifically to your industry and area of expertise. Their website is;

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

Please note that at time of publication this information was accurate.

Some of the specific information that is discussed on the website includes;

#### **Safety in your workplace**

##### **National Standards and guidance material**

Safe Work Australia publishes National Standards and guidance material for a range of health and safety issues.

##### **Hazardous substances and dangerous goods**



Safe Work Australia publishes documents for the classification of hazardous substances. These documents form the basis of a nationally consistent regulatory approach for the control of workplace dangerous goods and hazardous substances.

### **Public sector work health and safety**

Safe Work Australia is encouraging the public sector to play a leadership role in work health and safety practices through research, the development of resources and guidance material to ensure safety in the workplace is a priority.

### **Safe design**

Safe design is a process of hazard identification and risk assessment to eliminate or minimise risk of injury throughout the life of the product.

### **Training, skills and licensing**

Safe Work Australia publishes education and training resources to assist organisations in the development of effective work health and safety guidelines and training packages.

## **Policies and Procedures for Organisations**

All companies should have in place a relevant WHS procedure or guidelines which staff members, managers and team members are expected to adhere to at all times to meet with the required legislation and Duty of Care.

### **WHS policies and procedures should be aimed at:**

**Preventing occupational and environmental hazards, risks and illnesses**

**Ensuring all staff members have access to a healthy and safe working environment**

**Ensuring all staff members have an opportunity to become involved in the decision making processes relating to WHS issues**

**Ensuring all staff members are aware of their rights and responsibilities when it comes to safety and WHS in the workplace**

Managers should be looking for ways to access information on WHS at all times. Information can usually be gained from both internal and external sources.

These sources can include any of the following;

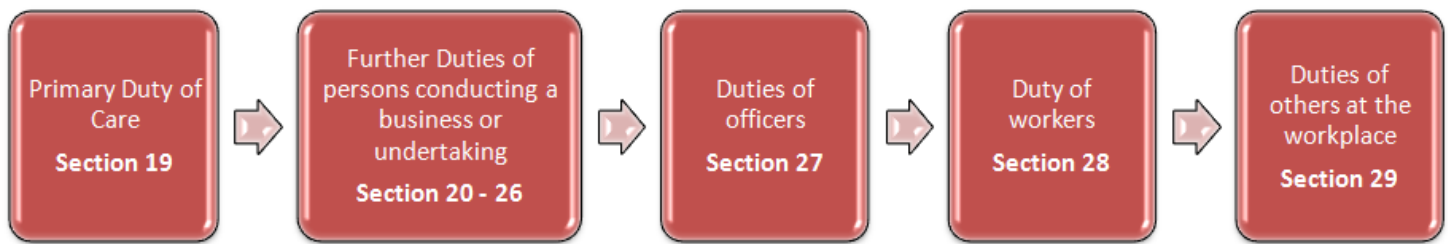
Internal	External
Accident and incident reports	Industry body newsletters
Risk assessments conducted by internal staff	Risk assessments conducted by external staff
Staff meetings	Internet
WHS Committee meetings and findings	Media
Surveys	Workshops
Ad hoc conversations and observations	Seminars
General business documentation such as Annual Reports and other policies and procedures	Advice from industry experts

### Whose duty is it?

Work health and safety legislation is the codification of the common law duty of care. This means that all duty holders must do everything that is “reasonably practicable” to protect the work health and safety of everyone at the workplace. This duty of care falls on all:

- Employers
- Company directors
- Managers
- Supervisors
- Employees
- WHS representatives and committees
- Contractors

The aim of regulations is to minimise risk of injury or illness at the workplace. The management and control of risk in the control of hazards and risks in the workplace and provide them opportunities to contribute and participate in the process. The Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice for example provides for workers to take a more proactive action in the decision making process through consultation. The more that workers and others participate and contribute to work health and safety, the more informed their decisions shall be.



Duty holders under the Common Law duty of care need to prove to the satisfaction of the court that the actions that they have taken to protect others from risk are reasonable and practicable. Duty holders need to clearly know what their duty is, what the implications are for each group and what happens if they do not comply.

**Codification ensures that:**

- Employees know the information held by the employer about hazards in the workplace and how to control them. If the employee has any information about improving the hazard control, then they have an obligation to do so.
- The forms of consultation and participation are up to the employees in the workplace, and may include the election of a health and safety representative to act for them.
- That all legislative contingencies are identified. Confidentiality of information and its connection to the WHS Act and Privacy Act 1988.
- The contribution of the community in the work health and safety process

To support the regulations and legislation, there are the voluntary codes of practice which will provide organisations and their representatives with the way to promote best practice and can be adjusted to suit the needs of each workplace.

Where an organisation does not choose to conform to a work health and safety code of practice or an industry code of practice, they are required to demonstrate their duty of care. This duty of care requires that they develop a safety management system that reflects the practices and demonstrates their duty of care.



## **1.2 - Apply knowledge of workplace policies, procedures and processes to identify workplace requirements regarding responding to incidents**

The Work Health and Safety Act (WHS Act) part 3 requires the regulator to be notified of certain 'notifiable incidents'. Work health and safety regulators are committed to preventing work-related deaths and injuries. Notifying the regulator of 'notifiable incidents' can help identify causes of incidents and prevent similar incidents at both that workplace and other workplaces.



- Immediate notification of a 'notifiable incident' to the regulator after becoming aware of it
- If the regulator asks—written notification with 48 hours of the request, and
- Preservation of the incident site until an inspector arrives or directs otherwise.

Failing to notify is a criminal offence and penalties apply.

### What is a 'notifiable incident'?

A 'notifiable incident' as outlined in the WHS Act is:

- the death of a person
- a 'serious injury or illness', or
- a 'dangerous incident'

arising out of work carried out by a business or undertaking or a workplace.

'Notifiable incidents' may relate to any person—whether an employee, contractor or member of the public.



### Serious injury or illness

Even if immediate treatment is not readily available, for example, because the incident site

is rural or remote or because the relevant specialist treatment is not available, the notification must still be made. Notification is required of a serious injury or illness of a person if they require any of the following:

Trigger	Example
Immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital	Admission into a hospital as an in-patient for any duration, even if the stay is not overnight or longer.  <b>It does not include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Out-patient treatment provided by the emergency section of a hospital (i.e. not requiring admission as an in-patient) and immediate discharge.</li> <li>➤ Subsequent corrective surgery such as that required to fix a fractured nose.</li> </ul>
Immediate treatment for the amputation of any part of the body	Amputation of a limb such as arm or leg, body part such as hand, foot or the tip of a finger, toe, nose or ear.  <b>It does not include:</b>  Bruising or minor abrasion or laceration to the skin.
Immediate treatment for a <b>serious</b> head injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fractured skull, loss of consciousness, blood clot or bleeding in the brain, damage to the skull to the extent that it is likely to affect organ/face function.</li> </ul>

Trigger	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Head injuries resulting in temporary or permanent amnesia.</li> </ul>
Immediate treatment for a <b>serious</b> eye injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Injury that results in or is likely to result in the loss of the eye or total or partial loss of vision.</li> <li>➤ Injury that involves an object penetrating the eye (for example metal fragment, wood chip).</li> <li>➤ Exposure of the eye to a substance which poses a risk of <b>serious</b> eye damage.</li> </ul> <p><b>It does not include:</b></p> <p>Eye exposure to a substance that merely causes irritation.</p>
Immediate treatment for a <b>serious</b> burn	<p>A burn requiring intensive care or critical care which could require compression garment or a skin graft.</p> <p><b>It does not include:</b></p> <p>A burn that merely requires washing the wound and applying a dressing.</p>
Immediate treatment for the separation of skin from an underlying tissue (such as de-gloving or scalping)	<p>Separation of skin from an underlying tissue such that tendon, bone or muscles are exposed (de-gloving or scalping).</p>
Immediate treatment for a spinal injury	<p>Injury to the cervical, thoracic, lumbar or sacral vertebrae including the discs and spinal cord.</p>
Immediate treatment for the loss of a bodily function	<p>Loss of consciousness, loss of movement of a limb or loss of the sense of smell, taste, sight or hearing, or loss of function of an internal organ.</p> <p><b>It does not include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fainting, or</li> <li>➤ A sprain, strain or fracture.</li> </ul>
Immediate treatment for <b>serious</b> lacerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Serious</b> lacerations that cause muscle, tendon, nerve or blood vessel damage or permanent impairment.</li> <li>➤ Deep or extensive cuts.</li> <li>➤ Tears of wounds to the flesh or tissues—this may include stitching to prevent loss of blood and/or other treatment to prevent loss of bodily function and/or infection.</li> </ul>
Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.	
Any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, including any infection that is reliably attributable to carrying out work:  (i) with micro-organisms	

Trigger	Example
<p>(ii) that involves providing treatment or care to a person</p> <p>(iii) that involves contact with human blood or body substances</p> <p>(iv) that involves handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products.</p>	
<p>The following occupational zoonoses contracted in the course of work involving handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products:</p> <p>(i) Q fever</p> <p>(ii) Anthrax</p> <p>(iii) Leptospirosis</p> <p>(iv) Brucellosis</p> <p>(v) Hendra Virus</p> <p>(vi) Avian Influenza</p> <p>(vii) Psittacosis.</p>	

## Dangerous Incidents (commonly referred to as 'near misses')

Notification is also required of any incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- An uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- An uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- An uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- An uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
- Electric shock:
  - examples of electrical shock that are not notifiable
    - shock due to static electricity
    - 'extra low voltage' shock (i.e. arising from electrical equipment less than or equal to 50V AC and less than or equal to 120V DC)
    - defibrillators are used deliberately to shock a person for first aid or medical reasons
  - examples of electrical shocks that are notifiable
    - minor shock resulting from direct contact with exposed live electrical parts (other than 'extra low voltage') including shock from capacitive discharge
- The fall or release from a height
- The collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be design or item registered under the work health and safety regulations
- The collapse or partial collapse of a structure
- The collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- The inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel
- The interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel.



Any of these occurrences are reportable as a 'dangerous incident' (or 'near miss') if a person is exposed to a serious risk from immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard.

For most hazards such as plant or a structure collapsing a person will need to be in the immediate vicinity to be exposed to a serious risk to their health or safety.

However some hazards such as an uncontrolled leak of a hazardous gas or a fire can travel towards a person and expose them to a serious risk to health and safety away from the original source.

A dangerous incident includes both immediate serious risks to health or safety, and also a risk from an immediate exposure to a substance which is likely to create a serious risk to health or safety in the future, for example asbestos or chemicals.

Only occurrences involving a 'serious risk' are notifiable taking into account the likelihood of a serious illness or injury occurring from the incident. This would include any situation which seriously endangers or threatens the health or safety of a person.



### **Work-related incidents that occur outside a workplace may be notifiable**

Work-related incidents may occur outside the workplace and these may still be notifiable if they involve a death, serious illness or injury or a dangerous incident. For example:

- An object like a hand tool is kicked off a multi-storey building under construction hitting a person below
- Scaffold collapse that causes serious injury to persons below
- Cladding is dislodged off a multi-storey building that is a workplace, hitting a person passing by at street level.

### **1.3 - Communicate requirements to individuals and parties appropriate to own job role and work area**

Relevant information on WHS policies and procedures needs to be available to all staff at all times. Regular meetings should be enforced to ensure staff members are made aware of their responsibilities and what is expected from them.

Managers should be looking for ways to communicate this information to staff and team members. Safety is everyone's job, and everyone should be aware of their roles in keeping each other safe in the workplace. This can be done via the induction program when an employee first joins the company, or during regular updates and reviews with the employees.

Regular workshops, updates and meetings should be held to keep employees updated on progress, changes and any other relevant information they need to manage their workplace so it is safe, healthy and enjoyable for all staff members.

Some organisations have a safety incentive program in place to encourage staff members to be safe and report any findings relating to WHS. Companies that promote the positives when it comes to safety will have an upper hand in ensuring workplaces are safe.



Information on safety in the workplace should be documented and distributed accordingly to ensure all staff members are aware of latest developments and new legislation as it arises.

**Workers have a responsibility to:**

Behave in a professional manner at all times

Cooperate with their managers and the organisation in regards to their responsibilities

Not put anyone at risk in the workplace, including themselves

Report any issues that could be considered dangerous or life threatening immediately to their manager, supervisor or the relevant authority

Adhere to the Code of Conduct, Policies and Procedures and any other relevant organisational expectations

Follow instructions as set out by the organisation in terms of evacuation and emergency procedures

Advise a co-worker if they see something they are doing could result in a dangerous situation

Use only equipment they know to be safe at all times

**Employers have a responsibility to:**

**Provide a safe working environment for their staff**

**Provide safe equipment and Personal Protective Equipment if required**

**Not put anyone at risk in the workplace**

**Ensure that there are relevant emergency and evacuation procedures in place in case of emergencies etc.**

**Adhere to the Code of Conduct, Policies and Procedures and any other relevant organisational expectations**

**Ensure that there is a procedure for the use, handling, storage and transportation of hazardous substances**

**Protect all staff from any potential risks in the workplace arising out of use of equipment, hazardous substances and machinery**

**Ensure visitors and contractors are safe at all times**

Provide information on the safe use of equipment etc

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## 2. Assist with implementing initial incident response procedures

### 2.1 - Assist with providing first aid according to workplace procedures and processes, where necessary

#### First aid personnel and equipment

A person conducting a business or undertaking at a workplace must ensure that the provision for first aid equipment is available in the workplace. Each worker needs to have access to the equipment and the facilities for the administration of first aid (Regulation 42). The organisation also must have a sufficient amount of trained workers to administer first aid (Regulation 43). The number and nature of the hazard and the composition, size and location of the workplace and its workers will impact on the number of trained personnel are sufficient.

First aid resources will usually include a first aid kit, trained personnel who can handle responses such as workers suffering breathing difficulty, defibrillation, CPR and control of contacting emergency services when a worker is ill.

#### First aid

The main aim of immediate first aid response is to offer first aid by qualified staff including:

- Preserving life of all personnel
- Protecting personnel from harm
- Provide pain relief and preventing injury or illness.

There are many types of injury that first aid personnel may need to respond to. Typical injuries in Australia include:

- Loss of consciousness
- Asthma
- Burns
- Chest pains
- Dehydration
- Drowning
- External and internal bleeding
- Heat stroke
- Poisoning



It is better to offer basic first aid than no first aid at all. Only qualified personnel with the appropriate minimal qualifications should offer aid.



Here are some basics you may come across in the workplace:

## Unconscious patient

### Danger

Check for danger to yourself, the patient and any others.

### Response

Check for response - ask name - squeeze shoulders

#### No response

- Send for help

#### Response

- Make comfortable
- Check for injuries
- Monitor response



## Send for an ambulance

Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance

## Airway

**Open mouth** - check inside mouth to see if any foreign body is present

- Place in recovery position
- Clear airway / open airway

**Open airway** by tilting head with chin lifted

## Breathing

**Check for breathing** – look, listen and feel

#### Not breathing normally

- Start CPR

#### Normal breathing

- Place in recovery position
- Monitor breathing
- Manage injuries
- Treat for shock

## CPR

**Start CPR - 30 chest compression : 2 breaths**

continue CPR until help arrives or the patient recovers

## Defibrillation

**Apply defibrillator** if available and follow voice prompts



## Asthma attack

### What to look for:

The patient may:

- Be unable to get enough air
- Be short of breath
- Become anxious, subdued or panic
- Focuses on breathing
- Coughing and wheezing
- Pale and sweating
- Blue around the lips, earlobes and fingertips
- Unconscious



### What to do:

#### Unconscious patient

- Follow DRSABCD

#### Conscious patient

- Put patient in a comfortable position
- Usually sitting upright or leaning forward
- Reassure the patient
- Tell patient to take deep breaths, don't crowd them allow them adequate fresh air

#### If they have medication:

- Encourage them to use blue reliever giving 4 puffs making sure patient has 4 breaths in-between
- Wait 4 minutes
- If no improvement give another 4 puffs

#### If no improvement:

- Ensure ambulance is on its way
- Continue 4 puffs every 4 minutes until the ambulance arrives

## Burns

**Do not** apply lotions, ointment or fat to burns

**Do not** touch the injury or burst any blister

**Do not** remove clothing or anything that may be sticking to the burn

### What to do:

- Follow DRSABCD

### Extinguish any burning clothing:

#### STOP, DROP and ROLL

- Pull patient to the ground
- Wrap in a blanket, jacket or similar
- Roll patient until flames are extinguished

### If it is a scald:

- Remove patient's wet clothing from the affected area

Hold burn under cold running water for 20 minutes:

- Thermal
- Scalds
- Chemical
- Bitumen
- Electrical

### Be aware some chemicals react with water and will worsen the injury

Remove jewellery and clothing from burnt area unless stuck to the burn

Cover the burn with non-adherent dressing

- Plastic wrap or clean dressing

## Seek medical aid

### Seek urgent medical aid:

- If the burn is deep and no pain exists
- If its larger than 20 cent piece
- If it involves the face, airway, hands or genitals
- If you are unsure how severe the burn is



## Chest pains

### What to look for:

The warning signs of heart attack vary and usually last for at least 10 minutes.

The patient may get more than one of these symptoms:

- Discomfort or pain in the centre of the chest. It may come suddenly or start slowly over minutes. It may be described as tightness, heaviness, fullness, squeezing.
- The pain may be severe, moderate or mild.
- Pain may spread to the neck, throat or jaw, shoulders, the back, and either or both arms.

### Other signs and symptoms:

- Shortness of breath
- Sweating
- Nausea / vomiting
- Dizziness



### What to do:

- Follow DRSABCD

Advise patient to sit or lie down:

- Ensure ambulance has been called
- Loosen any tight clothing

## Bleeding

### Warning

Wear gloves to prevent infection.

If patient becomes unconscious, follow **DRSABCD**.

If there is an embedded object in the wound, apply pressure either side of wound and place padding around the object before bandaging.

**DO NOT** apply a tourniquet, although, in extreme cases of blood loss due to trauma involving a limb, a tourniquet may be considered.

**What to do:****Apply pressure to the wound**

- Remove or cut patient's clothing to expose wound
- Apply direct pressure over wound — instruct patient to do this if possible
- If patient is unable to apply pressure, apply pressure using a pad or your hands (use gloves)
- Squeeze the wound edges together if possible.

**Raise and support the injured body part**

- Lie patient down
- Raise injured part above level of heart
- Handle gently if you suspect a fracture.

**Bandage wound**

- Apply a pad over the wound if not already in place
- Secure with bandage — ensure pad remains over wound
- If bleeding is still not controlled, leave initial pad in place and apply a second pad — secure with bandage
- If bleeding continues, replace second pad and bandage.

**Check circulation below wound****If severe bleeding persists—nil by mouth.****Call triple 000 for an ambulance.****Treat for shock.****Poisoning****What to look for:**

Signs and symptoms depend on the nature of the poisons which may be ingested, inhaled, absorbed or injected into the body. Symptoms may include:

- Abdominal pain
- Drowsiness
- Burning pains from mouth to stomach
- Difficulty breathing
- Tight chest
- Blurred vision

- odours on breath
- Change of skin colour
- Blueness around the lips
- Sudden collapse

#### **Unconscious patient**

- Follow DRSABCD

Ensure call for ambulance has been made

Call fire brigade if the atmosphere is contaminated with smoke or gas.

#### **Conscious patient**

- Follow DRSABCD

Listen to patient and give reassurance

**Try to determine type of poison taken.**

**Call Poisons Information Centre.**

**Send any vomit, containers and suicide notes with the patient to the hospital.**

#### **Support/counselling of personnel involved or affected**

Psychological services need to be offered as part of any response and recovery service. Many personnel will react to incident situations in different ways. Care and skill should be used to communicate with personnel who may never have been exposed to psychological services. You may need to offer information to allow them to choose whether they require services now or in the future. Information will provide them with the chance to determine what level of assistance they require.

Incidents are dependent upon the severity and will impact on personnel, within the organisation or part of the community in different ways. Make sure that all personnel are made aware of their options. It is essential that you alleviate the impact of the incidents and emergency situations and keep community and personnel at all levels of the assistance and support that they can receive.

If personnel have been exposed to negative emotions, providing them with support and the opportunity for counselling will provide them with a small level of comfort and in turn assist them in learning to live and cope with the experience.

### **2.2 - Assist with notifying, reporting and documenting incidents according to workplace procedures and processes**

### **2.3 - Assist with meeting legislative requirements regarding incidents, where necessary**



Organisations need to have appropriate record keeping systems in place to streamline the WHS procedures. Team members have an obligation to report incidents, accidents, potential hazards and near misses to management.

For this reason, there needs to be adequate control measures in place to ensure information is being reported properly and according to the required regulations and expected standards.

Companies should have in place a way to document, record, verify and improve on WHS information within the workplace.

Managers and stakeholders need the reassurance of understanding that the information being supplied to them is accurate and clear, concise and relevant.



**If information provided is not accurate and correct, there is the risk of:**

<b>Staff members being given incorrect information which can be detrimental to the organisation</b>
<b>Error rates going up, causing waste of time for staff</b>
<b>Staff members not feeling they can trust other team members</b>
<b>Waste of time taken to find accurate information</b>
<b>Possible consequences that can be detrimental to other staff members and compromise the safety of staff members</b>

**Information should be:**

- Written in a clear and succinct manner
- Kept in a centrally located file so the staff members that need access can access
- Updated often
- Version controlled so staff members know which is the latest version they are accessing

**Information that needs to be kept includes:**

<b>Accident reports – any reports that indicate accidents where an employee was hurt or equipment was damaged</b>
<b>Incident reports – no matter how trivial or minor an incident seems at the time, all incidents should be reported. This includes illnesses and near misses</b>
<b>Injury register – all injuries, no matter how small or trivial, need to be recorded</b>
<b>First aid register – this register should keep track of all first aid administered</b>

Managers need to ensure that they support the record keeping process by monitoring and evaluating the systems regularly, ensuring the systems are structured and well organised, that the policies and procedures support any required resources and that information is clearly assigned and locatable.

It is extremely important that any information provided is accurate, reliable, valid and able to be understood by the people that need to analyse the information for further use.

There are a number of compensation based statistics that set the parameters form the collection of statistics and information relating to the prevention of injury and illness in the workplace.

Managers and staff members can access this information and use it as a base from which to review any statistics relevant to their job roles and industries.

A systematic approach to problem solving and reporting of the results of monitoring should be taken when monitoring and reviewing information in regards to incidents. A systematic approach will ensure that danger areas are identified and corrective action is taken to protect the safety of work site personnel.

**To be systematic in report writing, it is essential that you are aware of:**

- Organisational procedures
- Research protocols to research within the organisation
- Legislative requirements that will impact on your actions
- Writing style required for the report.

Check the organisation's template to ensure that you are researching the correct information. Make sure that you have a report of the key issues when you develop a report.

Use findings in the monitoring of the incident to support any decisions that you recommend be made. Monitoring helps personnel to identify areas where improvements in the incident situation can be made. Use these findings to argue your point



When writing a report for key personnel and management, follow the expected proforma. If there is no template designed for the report, review historical data to find out the expected proforma for the report.

### When writing reports

Make sure that you stick to the facts – this means that you should not use the report to influence decisions. You may believe that the incident was not handled correctly, but it is not a part of the reports format to make those feelings known. All facts should be supported with data, such as findings in the monitoring process, review of the process and key points used to explain an event. You should make sure that you are completely professional at all times.



Ensure that you follow both work health and safety law and ensure that any confidentiality or privacy issues are dealt with in the appropriate manner. For example, if an investigator is called in to review the incident and you were asked to attend an interview. The worker may give permission for you to attend the interview as long as you do not divulge where the information came from. In this event, you could refer to the information provided by the worker, but you could not use their name or use information that would make them easily identifiable.

Make sure that any other laws are considered. This will include discrimination and the law of negligence and in some instance the ACCC legislation that has replaced Trade Practices law.

Take note of whom you are writing the report for. Language issues can arise at any level in the organisation. Make sure that you consider the wording of your report so that these personnel will be able to read and understand the report.

Consider how your report may be used. You may actually write a preliminary report that will be used as the foundation for an investigation. Your findings both from the monitoring and debriefing after the event can be used to identify any breaches in protocols and legislation. It is important to make sure that the facts that are used to support your recommendations are based on fact and not on reaction. For example, when a supervisor acted with negligence, an argument broke out between staff arguing about whether negligence occurred or not. You may mention the issue, but leave the notes on this issue out of the report. If an investigation is performed, the notes would be used then.

Communicate the report to management and key personnel in the appropriate manner. The way in which the report is presented and communicated will vary according to organisational procedures.

## 3. Assist with collecting WHS information and data relevant to an investigation

### 3.1 - Assist with obtaining information and data from those involved, using appropriate data-collection techniques, about actions and events leading up to or occurring during or after an incident

It is important that when obtaining information and data about incidents you understand what information will be required. With all incidents it is important to collect relevant clear information,

in some cases the incident may be notifiable and any information you have collected will help the regulator assess firstly, if the incident is notifiable and secondly if the incident will require further investigation by the regulator.

WHS regulators have set out the following in the cases of notifiable incidents:

<b>What happened: an overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide an overview of what happened.</li> <li>➤ Nominate the type of notifiable incident—was it death, serious injury or illness, or ‘dangerous incident’ (as defined above)?</li> </ul>
<b>When did it happen</b>	Date and time.
<b>Where did it happen</b>	<p>Incident address.</p> <p>Details that describe the specific location of the notifiable incident—for example section of the warehouse or the particular piece of equipment that the incident involved—to assist instructions about site disturbance.</p>
<b>What happened: detailed description</b>	Detailed description of the notifiable incident.
<b>Who did it happen to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Injured person’s name, salutation, date of birth, address and contact number.</li> <li>➤ Injured person’s occupation.</li> <li>➤ Relationship of the injured person to the entity notifying.</li> </ul>
<b>How and where are they being treated (if applicable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Description of serious injury or illness—i.e. nature of injury</li> <li>➤ Initial treatment of serious injury or illness.</li> <li>➤ Where the patient has been taken for treatment.</li> </ul>
<b>Who is the person conducting the business or undertaking (there may be more than one)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Legal and trading name.</li> <li>➤ Business address (if different from incident address), ABN/ACN and contact details including phone number and email.</li> </ul>
<b>What has/is being done</b>	Action taken or intended to be taken to prevent recurrence (if any).
<b>Who is notifying</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Notifier’s name, salutation, contact phone number and position at workplace.</li> <li>➤ Name, phone number and position of person to contact for further information (if different from above).</li> </ul>

Although all of this information may not be available at the time of notification, PCBUs must still notify the regulator immediately of the incident and provide the information they have. The rest of the information will be collected by the regulator at a later time.

The notifier must keep a record of the notifiable incident for at least five years from the date of notification. Penalties apply for failing to do so.

As a practical matter these records should include any directions or authorisations given by an inspector at the time of notification (including authorisations to disturb incident sites) and any confirmation you received from the regulator that you notified them about the incident.

### **Site Preservation**

The person with management or control of a workplace at which a notifiable incident has occurred 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 directs otherwise (whichever is earlier).

Requirements to preserve the incident site apply to any plant, substance, structure or thing associated with the notifiable incident. This means that any evidence that may assist an inspector to determine the cause of the incident is preserved.

#### **An incident site may be disturbed:**

- To assist an injured person
- To remove a deceased person
- To make the site safe or to minimise the risk of a further notifiable incident
- To facilitate a police investigation, or
- After an inspector has given a direction to do so either in person or by telephone.

The sooner the regulator is notified, the sooner the site can be released.

If however after arriving at the incident site an inspector considers that it should remain undisturbed in order to facilitate investigation of the incident they may issue a non-disturbance notice. This notice must specify the period for which the notice is to apply—no more than seven days.

Penalties apply if an individual or body corporate fails to preserve a site.

## **3.2 - Assist with identifying and accessing sources of additional information and data related to an incident**

Research includes the collection and assessment of information to resolve problems and make informed decisions. When researching and investigating WHS events; it is essential that the most recent data is used to make a decision.

To ensure that the most recent information is gathered, you need to be able to access the information. The only time you may be required to access information over a period of time is to identify trends or to determine how decisions were made to the past.

#### **There are two sources of information. They are:**

- Internal sources of information: information found within the organisation
- External sources of information; information found outside the organisation.

The type of information you need to source will be determined on the information that you require. For example, you work in a restaurant. Your manager has asked you to research different Workplace Health and Safety environmentally friendly products that will minimise the restaurants waste. You research the internet and contact suppliers for different options. These types of sources of information are external to the restaurant.

However, before you can make recommendations, you need to identify how much budget you have. This information can only be sourced internally, as it is only through an internal source that you will be able to find out the size of the budget.

**Data collection methods can be either:**

- Qualitative – descriptive or
- Quantitative – statistical.



**Appropriate data collection techniques may include:**

**Accessing information and statistics on accidents and dangerous occurrences**

This information can be found on the organisation's accident/incident reports. During the induction process, workers should be encouraged to report any incident or near miss so that you will be able to gather data which will give you a clear pattern of trends.

If there is an increase in risk, it is important to identify the cause of the increase in risk in that area. For example, an increase in risk may correlate with a change in procedure, or the introduction of a new worker. If there is no correlation, you may even check training records to identify when staff received their last training or learning session to reinforce their knowledge. If they have not received training recently, you should consider performing a revision training session to reinforce their knowledge and/or skills.

### **Conducting regular, accident or special workplace WHS inspections**

Changes in procedures, complacency with following procedure or insufficient training and/or reinforcement may have a negative impact on your statistics. If there is no sufficient information, changes have the introduced or training revised, you should consider performing a review to identify whether the corrective action that you may have implemented decreased the increase in incidence.



It is important to review the work area when changes have been made to the workplace. This process will assist you in ensuring that your corrective action has succeeded.

### **Engaging the services of an internal or external consultant or specialist WHS practitioner and Facilitating the engagement of personnel to conduct specialised testing on hazards in the workplace**

When your investigation takes you outside your area of expertise you may be required to consult with specialists and consultants who will assist you in testing hazards in the workplace. You may need to facilitate more than one specialist or consultant so that you can obtain a clear picture of the problem so that you know what avenues are open to you and you can in turn report your findings to the appropriate personnel.

#### **WHS specialists and technical testers to be engaged may include:**

**Audiologists** are professionals that study hearing, balance and related orders. They assess how people hear and use various technologies and therapies to help people with hearing and balance problems. Audiologists provide specialist services to

- Organisations and other professionals about hearing care
- Assess sensory aids, implants and other surgical implant devices
- Counselling implants to assist communication in hearing loss is present
- Assessments of auditory neural pathways, balance systems of best, central auditory processing and hearing when other disabilities are present
- Assessment of workplace hearing
- Specialist rehabilitation programs for people who have hearing problems

**Ergonomists** use data and techniques of several disciplines in the study of workplace design. They need to have an ability to learn and listen and consult with people carefully in the workplace when they are going to initiate any change

**Health professionals** can include physicians, dentists nurses, pharmacists, dieticians, physical therapist and patient will purpose. They usually work in hospitals, healthcare centres and other service delivery points including research and administration. They usually highly skilled so they would be able to provide advice and recommendations and support to individuals as long as their feedback is relevant to the problems are that they are trying to resolve.

**Occupational health professionals** usually implements and evaluates health and safety programs to ensure the health and safety of employees, as well as maintaining the level of knowledge in legislation so that's employees are able to meet their legal obligations under the health and safety act. They are also able to assist workers in returning to the workplace and part of the rehabilitation process.



**Occupational hygienists** are dedicated to the recognition, evaluation, communication and control of environmental stresses that may arise in the workplace as a result of injury, illness and impairment.

**Safety engineers** perform studies on a wide range of areas including computer science engineering mechanics, industrial processes, industrial hygiene, toxicology, as a control, fire protection and system safety. That action to protect people, property and the environment by:

- Anticipating, identifying and evaluating hazardous conditions and practices
- Developing hazard control design procedures
- Implementing, administering and advising on hazard control programs,
- Measure, audit and evaluate the effectiveness of the hazard control program; and
- Draft future safety plans or statements as per required by the organisation

**Safety professionals** are qualified advisors of work health and safety.

**Toxicologists** study the effects of chemicals, physical or biological agents on people, animals and the environment.

**WHS technical advisors such as:**

#### **Engineers**

- **Design** engineer works in multiple engineering disciplines including electrical, mechanical, industrial design, architectural engineers and civil engineering.
- **Acoustic** engineering studies the branch of engineering that deals with vibration and sound in technology and has often been referred to as noise control.
- **Safety** engineer refers to the area off engineering including systems and industrial, and in some cases system safety engineering. This may include fire safety engineering or system safety engineering.
- **Mechanical** engineering is related to the principles of physics and material science for analysis, design, manufacturing and maintenance of mechanical systems
- **Civil** engineering is concerned with our society's physical infrastructure such as the design of dams, bridges, pipelines and buildings. Civil engineers plan, test and design the structure of private and public areas and facilities.

## Maintenance and tradespeople

Maintenance involves the repair of mechanical and electrical devices as they become broken. Many organisations now provide ongoing maintenance as a way of ensuring that the whole system does not stop operations due to technical difficulties. But traits person is a skilled manual worker, including builders, plumbers, electricians and mechanics.

**Safety representatives** are included in WHS Act and have the obligation to work in the best interests of workers.

**If you are unable to find one of these professions, consult with one or more of the following bodies. In most instances, they will be able to direct you to the correct body.**

Investigating workgroup members' complaints thoroughly before presenting them to management or supervisors

When you develop a report for management it is essential that you have facts and if necessary figures to back them up. For example, workgroup members' complain that they leave work by the end of the day. You would need to identify the cause of the back complaints. Has there been a change in procedures? Are processes or equipment different? If so, what is different? Are staff performing their jobs correctly? Are they stressed? Stress adds strain to muscles, which can in turn exacerbate other injuries.

If you require further assistance you should consult with the appropriate professionals. When you develop a report, it is essential that you focus on providing management and supervisors with facts. For every point or recommendation that you make, it is essential to make sure that you provide facts to support your point of view.

When you make recommendations, you should not only provide support, you should consider the actions and events that are required to correct the actions that you will need to follow up with. *When you are providing information to management you should consider the likelihood of the occurrence and the level of severity.*

**The facts about the incident that you should consider providing management and supervisors with should include:**

**Systems** - A system relies on documents and procedures to guide management and workers on how to perform tasks. These documents include job descriptions, procedures to perform tasks, MSDSs about how to handle hazardous chemicals safely, manuals and instructions on how to operate electrical and robotic equipment safely and when necessary to provide specifications to determine if the equipment or plant is appropriate for the system.

**People** - People include the people who perform tasks, give instructions, assess and gather information on the operations of the firm. This may also include the people who are affected by the incident and how they are affected. External and internal consultants and specialists can also assist you in the investigation of a problem, especially when their unique skills can build on your own skills and knowledge.

**Tools** - Risk assessments, investigative reports and other statistical and descriptive information can assist you in your analysis of a WHS issue. It is important to be aware of each of the forms and how they are used so that you can relate back to the facts in each tool to provide evidence to management and supervisors to support your recommendations.

**Equipment** - Equipment is needed to perform tests, analyse feedback and statistical data, such as identifying trends. Equipment can also be a helpful tool that will protect you from a potentially hazardous risk.

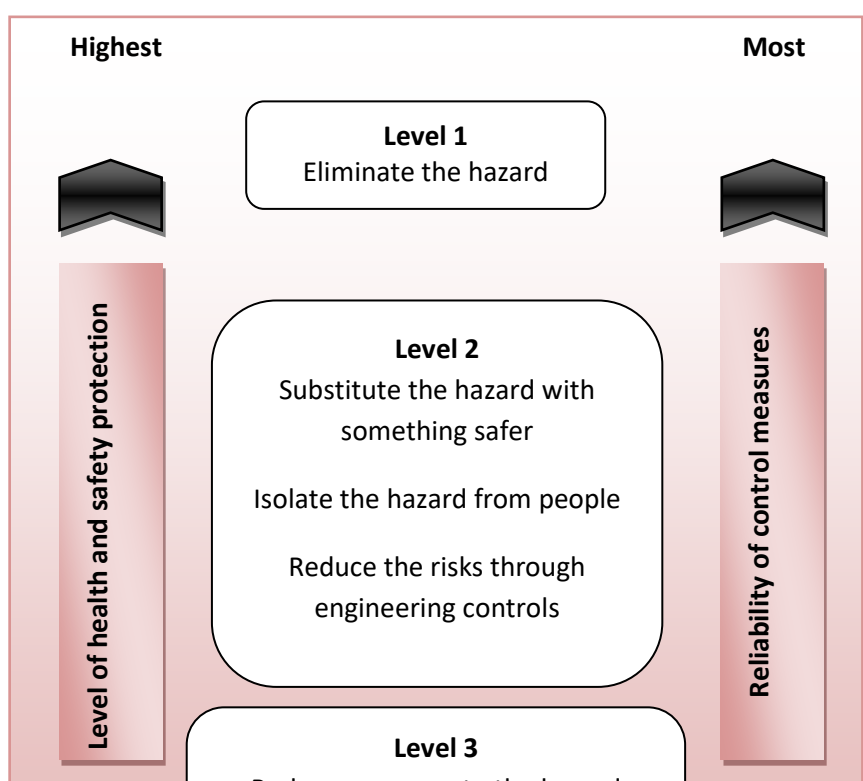
**Materials** - Materials such as chemicals and raw materials should be considered when identifying the cause of a hazardous, especially when they have a direct impact on the level of risk to workgroup members. Risk may arise in the compounds or components that make up the materials.

**Fixtures** - Placement of fixtures, lack of guarding, incorrect guarding or even the level of the fixture can place an unforeseen strain on a workers body. Take the time to consider the height of the fixture. If it is too high or too low the risk to the worker may be increased.

**Time and nature of any injuries sustained** - The time of an injury and nature of an injury sustained may cause different levels of injury. For example, a worker working on a manufacturing line may have a higher level of a minimal injury in the early hours of the day if their repetitive motions in tasks cause risk. As time increases, the higher the chance the level of injury is increased. If there is a correlation between time and injury, then you could participate in studies on repetitive injuries. Job rotation or redesign may need to be considered.

Make sure that you refer to the accident/incident report to ensure that your investigation of the incident is considered from all angles, even those that are not immediately available. Even the most obvious of hazard or risk are not considered in the light that they are too obvious.

The hierarchy of risk control is a tool that is used to assist organisations in ranking the level of protection and reliability a hazard control technique has in regards to eliminating risk.







The most effective type of control is to eliminate the risk. Consultation is an essential part of the risk control process. Consulting with workers and/or their representatives draws on the experience of these personnel and will assist you in the decisions that you make. Their involvement will also assist you in accepting the changes that are implemented to ensure that they perform their job safely.

When you choose a control for a specific risk it is essential that you determine the control measure that is most effective. In some instances you may be required to use two or more of the control measures to ensure that the workers have the highest level of protection.

Some of the risks may be resolved immediately, while there are times where short term fixes are put in place while the best method of resolving the risk is determined. When you choose a control focus on the highest control first which is to eliminate the risk.

## **Hazard controls**

### **Level One Control Measures**

#### **Actions taken to eliminate hazards entirely**

In most instances, eliminating a risk is more practical. However, elimination of a risk should occur when a process or procedure are developed during the planning stage. It will be cheaper to introduce elimination during the planning stage so that the control measures are aligned to the needs of the department. For example, a sound proof room will minimise a workers exposure to loud music if they work in a night club. This will minimise their exposure to risk while they are working for long periods of time.

### **Level Two Control Measures**

When the elimination of a risk is not reasonably practicable, the second level of control measures should be considered.

#### ***What is reasonably practicable?***

**Section 18 of the WHS Act** defines reasonably practicable as a “duty to ensure health and safety that in the performance of their work, which they assess:

- The chance of a hazard and risk happening
- The amount and level of harm that could arise from that risk.
- The amount of information a person may require in regards to the risk; and
- Whether there are suitable ways in which to minimise the risk based on the resources available and suitable in the control and minimisation of the risk.

For example, recent rains have caused pressure on the roof of your main entrance. Structurally the reception area is sound; however there are cracks in the walls that have allowed water to seep through. This water is seeping into the main entrance making the polished marble floors slippery. Severe cuts in budget due to the fluctuating interest rates have recently occurred in an effort to retain staff. This means that the amount of capital resources available to resolve WHS issues is low. Sealing the wall is expensive as the cracks in the roof have the potential of becoming bigger without further review.

The costs of replacing the roof to eliminate the risk may be too high. While you are attempting to resolve the risk you could ensure that the day cleaner would need to check the floor every hour when it was raining to mop up the floor. The amount of maintenance may vary according to the amount of rain. Signs have been strategically placed to let clients, the public and other workers know that

## What should you do?

To ensure that you are 'reasonably practicable' you should consider whether you should:

### Substitute another product or process to replace the hazard

In this instance, you could review the processes in place and determine whether there is another way in which you can repair the roof without replacing the whole roof in the interim.

### Isolate the hazard

In what ways can you isolate the hazard? If there are any ways, what should/could you do?

Isolation is separating the potential for harm against those exposed to the risk. There is only so long that signs and regular maintenance will work before the hazard becomes a risk.

### Use engineering controls

Could you capture the water before it hits the marble floors? Consultation with appropriate qualified personnel should occur to ensure that you have the information you require to make an informed decision. Re-diverting the water flow using engineering controls to make sure that the water flows away from the marble floors will minimise the risk. The resources available will influence the decision that you make. "Engineering controls are physical, meaning that they use a mechanical device or process" (How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice).

### Level Three Control Measure

#### Improve administrative controls such as changing policies, procedures or providing training

The hazards are not controlled at the source. Risk is minimised through the behaviour of staff and their supervisors. Even though these are the least effective way in which to minimise risk, staff should be trained on the procedures in place to control the risk. When a change process is implemented, it is important to make sure that staff is informed of the change, the type of change and when the change is officially implemented.

Using **PPE** (Personal protective equipment) may include:

- **Head protection** – such as a helmet should protect the head from falling debris in a work environment.
- **Face and eye protection** – includes a face mask to protect the worker from inhaling foreign fumes such as chemicals and pollution. Eye protection includes goggles and safety glasses that protect the eyes from falling debris and from chemicals and fumes.
- **Respiratory protection** should be worn in closed areas and may be worn to protect against inhaling foreign chemicals and fumes.
- **Hearing protection** such as ear muffs and ear plugs should be worn by workers who work in a noisy area or are using a noisy machine, especially if they are working in the area or using the equipment for a long period of time.
- **Hand protection** protects hands from germs or chemicals and other foreign matter.

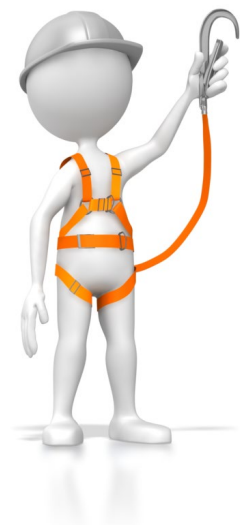
- **Clothing and footwear** includes safety boots, high visibility clothes such as overalls and pants to ensure that workers are not protected from the elements or chemicals and from risk of falling or dropped items, including debris.

**Administrative controls and PPE** should only be used to protect workers from risk. They should only be used when:

- The control measures that could be used are not practical for the given situation
- It can be used as an interim measure until a more appropriate control measure can be used; and
- To back up another higher control measure.

**Chapter Three, Part 3.2, Division 5, Sections 44 to 47 of the WHS Regulations provide strict instructions about the PPE that should be used at a workplace including:**

- Ensuring that PPE is chosen to minimise risk to the health and safety of personnel in the workplace
- That the PPE is appropriate to the nature of the work and hazards associated with the work;
- That the PPE fits the person wearing it;
- That the worker wears the PPE as far as is practicable; and
- That sufficient PPE is available in the case that PPE should be replaced, repaired or maintained so that risk is minimised



PPE must be worn by workers as far as reasonably practicable in accordance with the instructions training and information they receive. This includes training during the coaching and mentoring process, during formal or informal training or when they are provided with procedures that require the use of PPE.

It is also important to understand the level of severity involved in the risk. This knowledge will assist you in your research as you will be able to prioritise the incident and take action faster to ensure that the workplace is safe. Identifying the level of severity or lack thereof will also help you measure

## 4. Assist incident investigations

### 4.1 - Assist investigators and provide relevant information during investigations

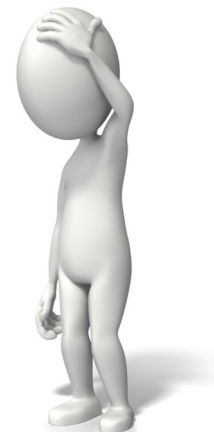
### 4.2 - Use appropriate techniques when participating in workplace investigations

One of the primary duties of a person conducting a business or undertaking under Section 19 (g) of the WHS Act is to ensure that workers health and the conditions at the workplace are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness and injury of workers arising from the conduct of the business. Your role will be to identify whether the conditions in the workplace contributed to the illness and/or injury of personnel while they were working.

When you identify the cause of an incident, it is important to determine the impact the hazard will have to personnel within the workplace. Hazard/s may include sources or situations with a potential for harm in terms of:

### **Injury and Ill health**

Injury and ill health under Section 36 of the WHS Act means people who are required to seek immediate attention as an inpatient in a hospital that requires immediate treatment for injuries such as spinal injury, burns, head injury, burns, lacerations and loss of body functions.



### **Damage to property**

When operating equipment and as part of their legal obligation under duty of care workers must act in a safe manner that does not place them and others around them at risk. A failure to report a risk is inaction and a failure to act which can leave workers open to fines and litigation. Damage to property can arise when a worker knows that equipment is not operating correctly. If a worker or others fail to report the problem with the property and a worker is injured or made ill then they may be fined under the WHS Act.

### **Damage to the environment**

Damage to the environment may be concerned with:

- Consumption of energy, water and waste
- Erosion and sediment
- Air and atmospheric contaminants
- Contaminated land and
- Noise.

Under the same principle, workers should report the potential for damage so that others are not placed at risk.

As part of identifying the cause of the hazard or risk, it is important that you recognise that an incident may not arise out of one failure to act. Instead you may find that hazards can arise out of several events. For example, a worker identifies a broken chemical dispenser. They fail to report it. The broken chemical dispenser that dispenses hazardous substances causes the substance to seep into the air. This can have an ongoing impact to not only the health and safety of workers but can also impact on the environment.

Consider the impact to the environment, if the hazardous substance seeps into the general environment, it may damage the land and soil



by

poisoning it. This in turn may cause property damage if the building is surrounded by housing or farming. In the case of farming, if the hazardous substance poisons their soil, then they will not be able to sell their product. If they do, then the consumer may find poisoned.

**In this instance the source of injury or illness arose from:**

1. Inaction of a worker to report a risk
2. Damage to the environment, which leads to
3. Damage to property.

During each step of the process, make sure that you consult with personnel within the organisation. Consultation should also take into consideration the appropriate experts to assist in the process when you require more information that is outside your level of experience to make a determination in regards to the level of impact a source of the hazard has.

For example, consider the above example. When dealing with risk, it is imperative that a full measure of the level of risk applies. For that end, you may need to test the soil to determine the level of poison it has received and whether or not the level of poisoning is safe to a consumer or not. When you analyse the source of the incident, it is essential that you determine the intervention points.

Workplace investigations are necessary to identify any contributing factors to the occurring incident but also as a pro-active way in which to identify hazards before they can develop into an injury or illness. There are no rules as to who can do a workplace investigation; however, it is recommended that the person who performs the investigation has experience in the work area. This person should be either a supervisor for that area or the Health and safety representative or safety officer.

As part of the harmonisation of work health and safety, it is important that whoever performs the investigation consults with team members in the area. One of the goals of the harmonisation program is to foster a co-operative, consultative relationship between duty holders and the persons who they owe duties and their representatives.

It is important to talk with all individuals and parties that were involved or in the vicinity of the incident to gain a clear picture of who or what may have caused the incident. It is not about finding someone to blame it is about preventing any further incidents as far as possible occurring in the future. As part of this process, it is important that team members are provided with sufficient information to ensure that they can provide informed feedback to you. For example, a change measure has been put in place to improve productivity and ensure that the worker is not stressed due to the repetitive nature of their job. How can an improvement be identified if the worker is not aware of their previous work performance and whether the changes put in place achieve their goals if he does not know why the changes were made and the impact of those changes?

Checklists can be used during the investigation to identify hazards. Checklists can help you identify the area of concern. For example, you may need to check whether workplace changes that have been implemented have ensured that the goals set have been met.

Your organisation may have one type of checklist, or a series of checklists that are separate for each area, especially when job roles, equipment and plant are different. It is important to make sure that you use the correct checklist. This means that you should make sure that you are familiar with the

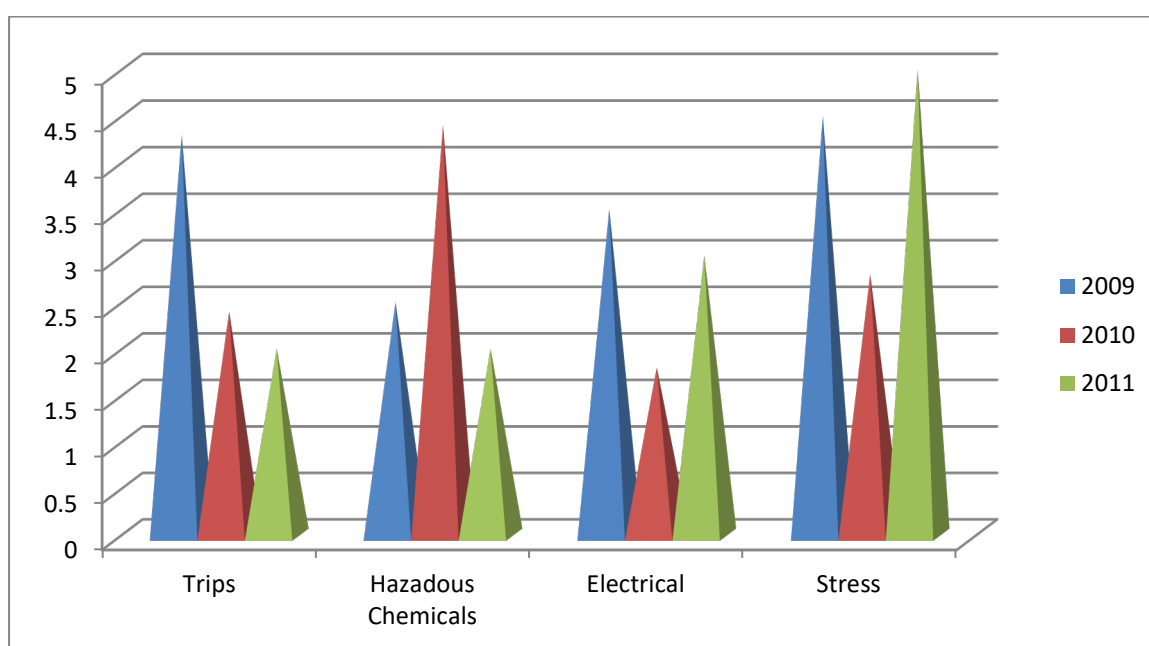
location of the appropriate checklists on your organisations data base. If you do not have access to the data base and do not have a copy of the checklist, make sure that you obtain a copy of the appropriate checklist from the appropriate member of your team.

Where an appropriate checklist is not available, you may need to make modifications to existing. Once a workplace investigation has been completed, the incident should be fully documented and areas that require corrective action need to be addressed. This may mean that any hazards that are identified should be assigned to the appropriate personnel for review and this assignment should be documented as per your organisations procedures.

### 4.3 - Review reports on incidents injuries and illnesses

Nearly all organisations require that staff must complete accident/incident reports. These same organisations will usually provide training in regards to WHS reporting of incidents when new employees are inducted into the organisation. Many organisations have databases that are used to enter accident/incident report data. This data can then be converted into graphs and tables that will assist you in identifying trends. Many databases can be formatted to present reports to identify trends in accidents and incidents.

These reports can help you identify trends such as increases and decreases to the incidence of accidents or near misses. If your organisation does not have a computer system that allows you to identify trends you may need to resort to systematically manage the accident/incident report.



For example, if you view the injuries or illnesses in this graph, you can see that the amount of trips has decreased, that last year there was a high increase in injuries and illnesses due to hazardous chemicals and that electrical and stress injuries has increased in 2011. The figures demonstrate the trends over three years.

Always double check the cause of an actual injury. There are times that an organisation will require all staff who witnessed an event or more than one staff completed the form in reflection of the same event. Witnesses should not be counted as an injury or illness. However, if more than one person is injured or ill, then each separate report should be processed.

## 4.4 - Contact responsible persons and relevant authorities when required

Who needs to be notified after an incident will depend upon the nature and severity of the incident not all are notifiable please refer to section 1.2 which outlines what a notifiable incident would constitute. Whoever has the role of managing and investigating the incident within the organisation should be the individual that makes the notification to the relevant regulator. Once your organisation representative becomes aware of the incident, the regulator must be notified as soon as they became aware of the incident as a part of operations. Notice must be given in either writing or by telephone (**Section 38 of the WHS Act**).

Failure to report an accident/incident report, an individual can be fined \$5 000 and a body corporate can be fined \$25 000.

In most instances, an incident, even a near miss must be reported to your team leader. In other organisations, you may be required to report to your supervisor and your work health and safety representative. If you are not sure who an accident/incident should be reported to, ask a member of your team or your team leader/supervisor.

Every organisation has its own policies and procedures. Make sure that you familiarise yourself with the appropriate procedures in your work area. Access this information if you would like to check the procedure.

Do not contact the regulator personally unless the reporting of the accident/incident is part of your organisations responsibilities.

## 5. Assist in implementing recommended measures and actions arising from investigations

### 5.1 - Communicate recommendations arising from investigations to relevant others

### 5.2 - Assist with measures and actions appropriate to own job role and work area

All research on investigations needs to be systematic. The research of new knowledge and information should be done in a professional manner, within your level of authority. Remember, your level of authority can be found within your job description. If you need to access information from a different department or outside your level of authority, you must obtain the correct authorisation.

For example, you need access to the organisations human resource database. You log into the computer and you try to access the human resource database. You do not have access to the database. Do not just go to another worker and access the appropriate information. Standard procedure is to make sure that you do not give your user name and password to a third party so that other personnel have access to your computer. If any breach of





the organisation's security occurs, you could be accused of making that breach, especially if several personnel have and use your user name and password.

Instead, consult with the human resource department's representative as per your organisation's procedures. If you need to access the department's files and records, complete the organisation's procedures in regards to obtaining short term access to the information that you require.

When you research information, it is important that you do not access information without the permission of the worker. It is important that due care is taken to protect the confidentiality of all employee's under the 1988 Privacy Act. If you need to use the workers' information make sure that the information cannot be used to identify the employee.

When you communicate information and it is part of your responsibility to make recommendations, make sure that you give facts and figures to justify your recommendation. Investigators need to understand the reason why the recommendation was made.

If your job is to provide information, it is important to make sure that the information is provided in a logical, clear and concise manner. This means that you should group information in a way that investigators can understand. Your research and recommendations will be used to make informed decisions.

To maintain your workplace relationship with your work group, take the time to acknowledge their participation and suggestions.

Your organisation will also have set procedures in regards to the reporting of WHS in the workplace. These procedures ensure that you follow your legislative requirements. When you follow the organisation's procedures, you are working in a systematic manner. Take the time to know how an investigative report is written and what information you are expected to provide.

If necessary, identify where an original investigative report is found and observe how this report was developed.

In many instances, an organisation will have a template that you will be able to follow. This report may include: Time, Date, What happened, Where and How (if anyone was) injured. It may also include the steps that you followed, who you consulted with and their participation in developing the report.

**For every recommendation that you make, you need to provide:**

**Facts and information**

Why did you make the recommendation? If there is more than one choice, give facts and information explaining why you did not recommend them or why you made that recommendation over another?

If you make more than one recommendation, explain why you made each recommendation and prioritise each one.

**Acknowledgement of the worker or workers within your workgroup who suggested the recommendation.**



Remember the success of any consultation process is maintaining your credibility and making sure that you treat your team in the way in which you want to be treated. If you do not acknowledge other workers participation and their ideas and provide them with feedback as to their progress, they may not be prepared to participate in the consultative process again.

Your report must be appropriate for the audience. If your report is for workers to review, make sure that you keep it clear and simple. Organisational procedure may require that you use a presentation with a group meeting so that your team can ask questions and provide you with feedback.

If the report is for the inspector, then you will need to provide them with all of the information that will influence your answer.

When you write a report, make sure that follow your organisations reporting procedures. This may require that you number the report in a set manner or complete a document register that allows staff to track the location of the original copy of the report.

When a report is sent to an inspector who represents a regulator, you also may be required to send the report to appropriate personnel. Conversely you may be required to send the original report to a certain member of the organisation for review before a final draft is signed off by a member of management.

Informal communication usually refers to information that is passed through the use of casual conversation. Formal is usually used in a professional setting.

**The differences between formal and informal communication includes:**

Formal	Informal
➤ Scheduled in advanced	➤ Unscheduled
➤ Arranged with participates	➤ Random participants
➤ Participants are given a role	➤ No set roles
➤ Has an agenda	➤ No arranged agenda
➤ One way communication	➤ Two way communication
➤ Formal language	➤ Informal language that may use slang.

## Formal and informal methods

### Participating in group and individual meetings

Group meetings provide you with the opportunity to ensure that information is provided to parties in a consistent manner. In many instances, organisations will ensure that workgroups are provided with information during a group meeting. Group meetings are an excellent environment when consultation is occurring. Group members are able to throw ideas at each other and come to conclusions.

When group members are not able to attend meetings, it is important to make sure that you share the same information with them. The one problem that may arise in one on one meeting is that you may use different words to explain an issue and these words may be interpreted in a different way. For more information on meetings, please refer to Section One of this learner guide.

### Presenting findings

Presentations may be in either a report format or given as a presentation. For presentations to be effective people will develop transparencies and present them using an overhead projector, use graphic presentation programs such as Lotus FreeLance Graphics and Microsoft PowerPoint to prepare and present information is increasing.

These software programs allow personnel to create graphics such as flow charts, tables, graphic, animations and sound in a variety of ways. Presentations can be designed so that information is pre-set and appears on the screen with just the click of a mouse or touch of the keyboard. The presenter even has the ability to add, change or remove information mere minutes before you present it. Presentations designed on laptops are convenient and user friendly allowing personnel to present presentations almost anywhere.

When used correctly, a presentation can make a positive impact in that viewers remember the material that is carefully designed. However, if you have too much animation, too many transparencies, colors, fonts or too much sound effects, you may overwhelm the viewer.

### **Providing written summaries, letters, emails, memos, minutes and reports**

When you communicate with other parties it is important to consider the most appropriate way in which to reach the other party. For example, a manager who is always hard to reach may require that information is sent to them via email so that they can review the information at their own leisure. Conversely, committee members will prefer a copy of minutes to a meeting to ensure that they are aware of what arose in the last meeting, the agreed delegation of duties and the proposed agenda for the next meeting.

Copies of formal communication WHS issues are usually filed in a folder within your database. Take the time to learn the location of these files to ensure that you can refer to them as part of your research.



### **Using interpreters and translators**

The only difference between interpreters and translation is the difference between medium. The interpreter translates orally, whereas a translator interprets written text. The key skill of a translator is their ability to write well, express themselves clearly in the target language. In a culturally diverse work environment, when information needs to be interpreted to ensure that workers clearly understand a hazard, it's possible control and resolution issues, interpreters and translators may be called in to interpret or translate information so that workers can consult and cooperate when they understand what is happening.

The method of communication that you use will vary according to not only legislative and organisational requirements, but also in regards to the needs and requirements of the stakeholder. It is essential to make sure that the information is easily accessible, easy to understand and communicated in a way which will ensure that the recipient receives it.