

Safe Work Guideline Incident Investigation

Prepared By:
Don Doherty

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Don Doherty

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An **Incident** is the unplanned or uncontrolled transfer of energy from one object to another that results in or has the potential of resulting in loss. A **Near Miss** is an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness, or damage – but had the potential to do so. Since there are usually more “near misses” than incidents result in injuries, investigation of near misses provides vital information for improving health and safety at the workplace and preventing more serious incidents.

The purpose of an incident investigation is not to find and assign blame, but to identify the immediate and underlying (root) causes of the accident/incident so that the necessary measures can be taken to prevent it from occurring again. At least 3 staff including the principal and/or decision unit administrator at each worksite should have formal OHS training in incident investigation.

Investigation protocol:

In the event of a serious work related injury/illness or near miss:

1. **Provide first aid/ medical attention:** Ensure the injured person(s) receive adequate first aid or medical attention as soon as possible.
2. **Secure the scene of the incident:** Survey the scene for hazards. If it is safe to do so, isolate the area where the incident took place and try not to disturb the scene. This is required to protect others from hazards or further injury and to preserve critical evidence necessary for the investigation.
3. **Report the incident:**
Report the incident or injury on the district *Work Related Incident Record* form and fax or email to OHS Coordinator at Central Services at as soon as possible within 24 hours of the incident. If the incident involves work related injury to staff covered by WCB and is likely to result in time lost from work beyond the day of the incident it must also be reported to the WCB (see *OHS Safe Work Guideline Reporting of Work Related Incidents*).
4. **Immediately notify** a district OHS Coordinator if the incident results in **serious injury or the potential for serious injury including:**
 - Work related injuries/illness that result in hospitalization of a worker;
 - Incidents involving workplace violence; chemical spills;
 - an unplanned or uncontrolled explosion or fire or flood causing serious injury or potential for serious injury;
 - collapse of a crane or hoist; and collapse or failure of any building component or structure necessary for the structural integrity of the building and
 - injuries that result in death of a worker

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If necessary, the OHS Coordinator will notify the appropriate government officials as required by Section 18 (1) of the OHS Act and assist site administration with the incident investigation.

5. **Conduct the investigation:** The supervisor/DU administrator in consultation with the employees involved must ensure an incident investigation is completed using the district *Incident Investigation Report* form. If needed an OHS Coordinator may be contacted for assistance with the investigation.
6. **Take corrective action and file the report:** The supervisor/DU administrator must review and sign the completed investigation report and ensure that the recommendations arising from the investigation are implemented. A copy of the completed *Incident Investigation Report* form should faxed to the OHS Coordinator at Central Services (780)842-3255 and filed in the OHS Documentation Binder at the worksite for least 3 years following the incident.

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