



# ADVICE SHEET 5

# REPORTING SAFETY

## WHY DO YOU NEED SAFETY REPORTING PROCEDURES?

...because they help you identify health and safety problems, and find solutions.

A simple reporting procedure will help you obtain important information about health and safety issues in the workplace, identify problems when they arise, and address them.

**Safety reporting procedures** make it simpler for you and your workers to manage safety issues and prevent recurrences of incidents and injuries. They help you understand why incidents occurred, assist you to make decisions and set priorities, and allow you to analyse trends in safety issues. These procedures may also identify hazards and risks that were previously unnoticed, and will guide you in developing new safe work procedures.

### WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE RED ZONE...

Notify significant incidents involving serious injury to people, damage to certain plant, equipment or property, and exposure to particular chemical substances.

You must have a register of injuries that enables your workers to record any workplace injuries they sustain. Use the attached form to develop a register.

...you are unlikely to have a system that documents safety problems and allows you to develop prevention strategies.

Ticks in the RED zone indicate that you need to take immediate action to ensure that safety issues – accidents, injuries and illnesses – are reported both internally, and where the law requires, externally.

### Involve your workers in the development of a safety reporting procedure

Consider:

- **what matters to report** – eg faulty equipment, hazardous spills, housekeeping issues, injuries, near misses.
- **how to report them** – for those work tasks that pose a serious risk, a written reporting procedure for major safety issues is appropriate so that you are able to better identify and analyse trends, and develop prevention strategies.
- **to whom to report them** – nominate someone to have authority to act upon the safety reports, such as yourself or a supervisor.

	<p>Many of your workplace safety issues will be minor and can be resolved without the need for documentation, particularly if the issue can be addressed immediately. In some situations, however, where there is a significant safety issue that cannot be resolved immediately, you are well advised to make a record of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• who made the report</li> <li>• when the report was made</li> <li>• to whom the report was made</li> <li>• nature of the problem</li> <li>• action taken to resolve the problem</li> <li>• further action required – what, when and by whom.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Report workplace injuries to your scheme agent within 48 hours if workers' compensation is (or is likely to be) payable.</b></p>	<p><b>Implement your safety reporting procedure</b></p> <p>The success of your safety reporting procedure rests with your workers – they must be keen to use it.</p> <p>Let them know about the procedures you have implemented, ensure that everyone is aware of their health and safety responsibilities, and assure them the reports will be used to improve workplace safety.</p> <p>New workers should be advised of these procedures during their induction training.</p>
	<p><b>Utilise your safety reports</b></p> <p>Your safety reports are an ideal resource from which you can develop and implement safety improvement measures. When incidents or injuries occur, use the safety reports to review and improve your safe work procedures. Review the reports to identify trends that may help you identify underlying safety problems. Discuss the reports with your workers.</p>
<p><b>External reporting of accidents, injuries and illnesses</b></p>	<p>The law requires workplace fatalities and certain serious accidents and incidents to be immediately reported to the health and safety authority in Queensland. Where an employee is injured there are also reporting requirements to your workers' compensation insurer. To find out further information on what needs to be reported, how to report the information, and who to report to, contact 1300 369 915.</p>

## WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE ORANGE ZONE...

**...you are beginning to identify safety problems, but are not doing all you can to prevent their recurrence.**

Ticks in the ORANGE zone indicate that you see benefit in safety reporting procedures, but you still need to examine the suitability of procedures and the consistency with which they are followed.

### **Do your workers understand the safety reporting procedures?**

For your safety procedures to be effective, your workers must understand them.

Are the procedures documented? Do your workers have a copy? Have you reviewed the procedures with your workers? Is everyone clear about their health and safety responsibilities?

### **Have responsibilities changed?**

Sometimes, when changes occur in your workforce, responsibilities for health and safety issues may need to be re-allocated. Ensure that everyone is aware of new roles and responsibilities. Don't allow follow-up action on safety issues to stall due to personnel changes.

### **Is the link between safety reporting and safe work procedures clear?**

When an incident or injury occurs in your workplace, it may indicate that:

- there is no safe work procedure for the task and it poses a significant risk
- the current procedure affords insufficient protection
- your workers are not following the safe work procedure.

After an incident or injury, review your safe work procedures and develop new procedures as appropriate.

Your safety reports should trigger a review of your procedures, training and supervision.

## WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE GREEN ZONE...

**...your workers are following procedures for reporting safety issues, and problems are acted upon.**

Ticks in the GREEN zone indicate that you have implemented a system for reporting safety issues, hazards and incidents, and ensure that safety reports are acted upon and corrective measures taken.

Use your safety reports as a management tool to continually improve safety in your workplace. Information from the safety reports may indicate:

- problems with your equipment
- difficulties with the workplace layout
- flaws in your procedures.

Speak with your workers about continual workplace safety improvements.

# EXAMPLE: HAZARD / INCIDENT REPORT FORM

1. **Who reported the problem?**

Time \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

2. **What is the problem?**

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3. **What has been done to rectify the problem?**

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Time \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

4. **What further action needs to be taken?** (eg review of safe work procedures, training)

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5. **Outline corrective action taken**

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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