



ADVICE SHEET 5

REPORTING SAFETY

WHY DO YOU NEED SAFETY REPORTING PROCEDURES?

...because they help you identify health and safety problems, and find and implement 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. These procedures may also identify safety issues that were previously unnoticed, and will guide you in developing new safe work procedures and improving existing ones. When linked with an incident investigation process, they help you understand why incidents occurred, assist you to make decisions and set priorities, and allow you to analyse trends in safety issues.

<p>WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE RED ZONE...</p>	<p>...you are unlikely to have a system that documents safety problems and allows you to develop prevention strategies.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Involve your workers in developing a safety reporting process</p>	<p>You must have a process to record all injuries and incidents that occur at the workplace. An injury record form can be downloaded from www.worksafe.qld.gov.au. You can use the attached form for general reporting of hazards.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what issues to report – e.g. faulty equipment, hazardous spills, housekeeping issues, injuries, near misses, general safety hazards, suggestions for improving processes etc. • how to report them – establish the process, at the very least, of verbally reporting issues to either supervisors or management. Written reports of issues allow you to be able to track and analyse trends. If possible have workers make suggestions about suitable control strategies. • who to report issues to – issues should be reported to supervisors or management. You should nominate someone to have authority to act upon the safety reports, such as yourself or a supervisor.

<p>Record safety reports</p>	<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"> • who made the report • when the report was made • to whom the report was made • nature of the problem • action taken to resolve the problem • management sign-off • any feedback given to the person who reported the issue • any further action required—what, when and by whom?
<p>Encourage worker participation</p>	<p>The success of your safety reporting procedure largely rests with your workers—they need to see the benefit of it and be keen to use it.</p> <p>Let them know about the procedures that have been developed and implemented, ensure that everyone is aware of their health and safety responsibilities. Assure workers of your commitment to taking all reports seriously and using them to improve workplace safety.</p> <p>Always keep workers informed about the outcomes of any issues they report. New workers should be advised of these procedures during their induction training.</p>
<p>Use your safety reports</p>	<p>Your safety reports are an ideal resource from which you can develop and implement safety improvements. 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>Report certain accidents, injuries and illnesses</p>	<p>The law requires that workplace fatalities and certain serious accidents and incidents (including dangerous events) be reported to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland within specified timeframes. 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 or go to our website. Incident Notification Forms (Form 3) can be downloaded from www.worksafe.qld.gov.au.</p> <p>Where an employee is seriously injured there are also separate reporting requirements to your workers' compensation insurer. See Advice Sheet 6 for more information about workers' compensation issues.</p>

<p>WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE ORANGE ZONE...</p>	<p>...you are beginning to identify safety problems, but are not doing all you can to prevent their recurrence.</p> <p>Ticks in the ORANGE zone indicate that you see benefit in reporting safety issues, but you still need to examine the suitability of procedures and the consistency with which they are followed.</p>
<p>Check workers understanding of the processes.</p>	<p>For your safety reporting procedures to be effective, your workers must understand them. Are the procedures documented? Do your workers have access to a copy? Have you reviewed the procedures with your workers? Is everyone clear about their health and safety responsibilities?</p>
<p>Review and update responsibilities periodically</p>	<p>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. Having a written register of reported issues will greatly assist in this process.</p>
<p>Review safe work procedures</p>	<p>When an incident or injury occurs in your workplace, it may indicate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is no safe work procedure for the task and it poses a significant risk • the current procedure isn't effective • your workers are not following the safe work procedure. <p>After an incident or injury, review your safe work procedures and make changes or develop new procedures when inadequacies become apparent. Your safety reports should trigger a review of your procedures, training and supervision.</p>
<p>WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE GREEN ZONE...</p>	<p>...your workers are following procedures for reporting safety issues, and problems are acted upon.</p> <p>Ticks in the GREEN zone indicate that you have implemented a system for reporting safety issues and incidents, and ensure that safety reports are acted upon and corrective measures taken.</p>
<p>Look for continuous improvement opportunities</p>	<p>Use your safety reports as a management tool to continually improve safety in your workplace. Information from the safety reports may indicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • problems with your equipment • difficulties with the workplace layout • flaws in your procedures. <p>Consult openly and regularly with your workers about continual workplace safety improvement opportunities.</p>

EXAMPLE HAZARD/INCIDENT REPORT FORM

1. Who reported the problem?

Time: _____ Date: _____

2. What is the problem?

3. What has been done to rectify the problem?

Time: _____ Date: _____

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

5. Outline corrective action taken

Time: _____ Date: _____

6. Has the problem been fixed? If not, what further action will be taken?

Signed: _____ Dated: ____ / ____ / ____

DISCLAIMER:

The materials presented in this publication are distributed by the Queensland Government as an information source only. The information and data in this publication are subject to change without notice. The Queensland Government makes no statements, representations, or warranties about the accuracy or completeness of, and you should not rely on, any information contained in this publication. This document is guidance material only and must be read in conjunction with the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*, relevant Regulation and Codes of Practice. The Queensland Government disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs you might incur as a result of the information being inaccurate or incomplete in any way, and for any reason.