



## Incident / Hazard Reporting and Investigation

- Purpose
- Definitions
- Roles and responsibilities
- Procedure
  1. Immediate incident response
  2. Reporting incidents
  3. Incident investigation
  4. Reporting identified hazards
  5. Hazard investigation
  6. Records
- Performance Measures
- Documents / Forms
- References
- Further Information

### Purpose

This procedure outlines the requirements for the reporting and investigation of incidents that occur and hazards that are identified at the University or in the course of University business to assist with:

- preventing injury and/or a recurrence of a similar incident
- providing prompt medical assistance where an injury has occurred
- capturing data to monitor corrective action
- trend analysis to determine the appropriate use of resources and need for the development of specific preventative programs to eliminate/control risk on a priority basis
- informing the Vice Chancellor, Senior Management Group (SMG) and the University OHSW&IM Committee of identified trends and recommended action as appropriate.

This procedure also outlines the requirements for statutory reporting of:

- notifiable work-related injuries and dangerous occurrences, a mandatory requirement under the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Regulations 2010, Division 6
- radiation emergencies and accidents, a mandatory requirement under the Radiation Protection and Control Act 1982
- incidents involving electric shock or electrical burns, a mandatory requirement under the Electricity (General) Regulations 1997, Regulation 31.

### Definitions

**Corrective action** – is an action taken to control the risk and reduce the likelihood of injury following an incident occurring or a hazard present.

**Critical incident** - *for University Purposes* - a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which has the potential to harm life or well-being and causes extreme stress, fear or injury to the person experiencing or witnessing the event.

**Event** – for the purposes of this procedure and the online OHSW&IM system, an event is a significant incident involving multiple people where injury/illness has not occurred or is not known at the time of reporting.

**Hazard** – an object or situation that has the potential to harm a person, the environment or cause damage to property.



**HSR (Health and Safety Representative)** – is an employee formally elected to represent a designated workgroup and who has the authority under the OHSW Act 1986 to raise OHSW issues with management on behalf of their workgroup.

**Incident** – is any unplanned occurrence or event that results in or could have resulted in harm (injury, illness or damage) to persons, plant, material or the environment.

**Incident/Hazard investigation** - a process to identify all possible causes of an incident or reasons why a hazard is present and corrective action required to control a hazard.

**Lost-time injuries/diseases** – incidents that resulted in a fatality, permanent disability or time lost from work of one day/shift or more.

**Near miss** – is any incident that could have resulted in injury or illness to people, danger to health and/or damage to property or the environment.

**Risk** – is the probability and consequences of occurrence of injury, illness or harm.

**Statutory reporting** – a legal obligation to:

- immediately notify SafeWork SA of notifiable [work related injuries and dangerous occurrences](#)
- immediately notify the Environmental Protection Authority of any [radiation incidents and accidents](#)
- immediately notify the Office of the Technical Regulator of any incidents involving an [electric shock](#)

### **Roles And Responsibilities**

Managers – (Head of School, Unit, Institute, Centre, Division Director) are responsible to ensure that:

- this procedure is implemented in their area of responsibility and necessary resources are provided to support implementation
- supervisors are aware of the requirements relating to statutory reporting (as outlined in Section 2a), reporting timelines (as outlined in Section 2c) and receive information, instruction or training to enable incidents and hazards to be investigated
- appropriate management of injured or ill employees is facilitated
- employees, HDR students and contractors in their area of responsibility understand and comply with this procedure.

Supervisors – (any person, academic or non-academic who has responsibility for others at work/study/research or volunteer activities) are responsible for ensuring that:

- incidents that occur at the University or in the course of University business (involving employees, students, HDR students, contractors, volunteers, members of the public) are promptly reported within designated timelines
- identified hazards that cannot be fixed immediately are promptly reported to the responsible supervisor/ manager for appropriate action
- investigations are carried out as soon as practical and within designated timelines following an incident or hazard being identified
- incident / hazard details and the outcome of investigations are logged in the online [OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System](#) within designated timelines
- appropriate management of injured/ill employees is facilitated
- appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision is provided as necessary to ensure the health and safety of employees and others.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that they:

- comply with the requirements of this procedure to eliminate and/or reduce risk of injury/illness, harm to property or the environment
- don't place themselves or others at risk of injury or illness
- fix an identified hazard immediately if possible and able to do so safely
- promptly report incidents that occur and hazards that cannot be immediately fixed or controlled to their supervisor or manager and HSR (where applicable)



- complete the online occurrence report within the [OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System](#) within the designated timelines or where computer access is limited and/or non-existent, communicate details of the occurrence to the workplace nominated contact
- contribute to investigations where applicable including the identification, implementation and evaluation of appropriate risk control measures to prevent a recurrence
- actively participate in an established rehabilitation program or rehabilitation and return to work plan where necessary following an injury
- complete the OHSW online learning programs identified for their role.

Health and Safety Representatives are encouraged to participate in investigations and assist with the development, implementation and evaluation of measures to prevent injury/illness.

### Procedure

In the event an incident occurs at the University and/or as a result of conducting University business, the following steps shall be followed by the person or persons involved, the person nominated to investigate (responsible supervisor) and others rendering assistance:

#### 1. Immediate Incident Response

- a) If no danger to yourself, render immediate action to ensure the safety of yourself and others
- b) Where there is a foreseeable risk to yourself and others in rendering immediate action, seek assistance from Security (dial **88888** from an internal phone or the relevant [Security campus contacts](#) from an outside phone)
- c) Provide or obtain first aid treatment and where necessary, medical assessment in a hospital emergency room or by a general practitioner for any injuries sustained
- d) Isolate the site where there remains risk of further injury and to prevent any disturbance for investigation purposes (where an incident is notifiable to statutory authorities – refer to definitions above).

#### 2. Reporting Incidents

- a) Immediately notify your supervisor/manager of the incident that has occurred
- b) The responsible supervisor/manager shall:
  - i) immediately notify OHSW&IM Services on 8302 2459 of any serious incidents that meet the following criteria for statutory reporting:
    - [notifiable work-related injury or dangerous occurrence](#) (as defined in the OHSW Regulations 2010)
    - [radiation emergency or accident](#) (as defined in the Radiation Protection and Control (Ionising Radiation) Regulations 2000 or
    - incident involving electricity - [electric shock](#) (as defined in the Electricity (General) Regulations 1997).

**OHSW&IM Services shall notify the relevant regulatory authority as soon as reasonably practicable.**
  - ii) immediately advise the responsible Senior Manager where a serious injury/illness or death has occurred or where there is potential for serious harm to a person or persons, significant damage to property or serious impact on the environment
  - iii) Assist in facilitating injury management processes for the injured/ill employee.  
**Note:** Injury/Illness reports submitted to the online system will inform the University Injury Management team and initiate the Injury Management Early Intervention Program.
- c) The person involved or a person on their behalf shall:
  - i) log details of the incident using the online [OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System](#) as soon as practicable after the incident and within 12 hours  
**Note:** An employee or other authorised person shall log details of an incident in the online reporting system on behalf of a student, contractor or others (i.e. member of public, visitor)
  - ii) nominate the supervisor/manager responsible for the person injured or involved to investigate the circumstances of the incident. For example:
    - supervisor/manager directly responsible for an injured/involved employee
    - contract supervisor directly responsible for an injured/involved external contractor
    - school manager/course coordinator/program director directly responsible for an injured/involved student



**Note:** For incidents that occur in remote localities (e.g. on fieldtrips, placements etc), where computer facilities are limited and/or non-existent, details must be communicated to a nominated contact person who shall report the occurrence on their behalf.

### 3. Incident Investigation

The responsible supervisor/manager nominated to investigate an incident shall:

- a) ensure an investigation commences as soon as possible after an incident occurs and in consultation with:
  - the injured/involved person (where practical)
  - the HSR (where applicable)
  - the Divisional OHSW Senior Consultant/Coordinator (where applicable)
- b) any other personnel relevant to the matter
- c) establish that the incident site is safe prior to investigating to prevent further injury and where an incident is notifiable to statutory authorities, ensure the site is not disturbed and entered into until advice is sought from OHSW&IM Services (8302 2459 )
- d) gather factual information to describe the circumstances, for example:
  - the location of the injured/involved person at the time of the incident
  - any witnesses to the incident or individuals in the location before or after the incident
  - any plant/equipment or materials/substances used/handled at the time
  - the existing safety devices or control measures in use
  - the position of controls on machinery or any damage to equipment
  - workplace conditions such as lighting, floor surface, stair treads, warning signs, weather conditions if the incident occurred outside
  - the system of work being carried out
  - safe work instructions/procedure for the task being undertaken and if there were any deviations from these
  - any past reports of similar incidents, maintenance/repair or technical reports that include history details of plant/machinery/equipment used
  - training requirements including competencies and records of training
- e) arrange for debriefing where an incident has resulted in serious injury/illness, [death to a person or persons](#) and/or has impacted on other people or caused concern within an area. Debriefing shall be offered by the supervisor or manager and/or OHSW&IM/HR personnel to explain:
  - the outcome of the incident
  - the outcome of the investigation
  - any corrective/preventative action that has been or will be taken

Employee counselling should be offered to any personnel affected by the incident using the University's Employee Assistance Program provider – Davidson Trahaire Corpsych by calling: **1300 360 364**.

For critical incidents such as a fire, bomb threat or flood, refer to the [University Strategic Crisis Management Procedure](#).

- f) analyse factual information gathered to identify contributing factors and underlying causes relating to potential deficiencies in the following:
  - o **System** – a method, a set of independent and interrelated elements that function as a whole i.e. workplace procedures or processes that specify the way in which something is implemented
  - o **Design** – design of plant/machinery/equipment, design of work task/processes
  - o **Environment** – the surroundings in which work is performed i.e. work environment / work conditions / naturally occurring environmental conditions
  - o **Behaviour** – human factors including inexperience / complacency / work pressure / fatigue, medical illness etc.

**Note:** the investigation should identify causes other than just 'human error' or 'complacency' where factual information relates to potential deficiencies in any of the four categories mentioned above.

- g) make conclusions about why the incident occurred based on the investigation findings
- h) recommend appropriate corrective action/s in consultation with all personnel involved in the investigation to prevent a recurrence
- i) complete the incident investigation form, corresponding with the logged report within the online [OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System](#) including details of corrective action



taken or expected to be taken and submit within 5 working days of the incident occurring as a minimum

**Note:** It is acknowledged that more complex incidents may require greater than 5 days to investigate.

Corrective actions recorded on the online incident investigation form shall be followed up by OHSW&IM Services where necessary to ensure appropriate action is implemented to prevent a recurrence.

- i) include any planned action in the OHSW Local Action Plan, following the outcome of the investigation to ensure corrective action is implemented, particularly where an ongoing scheduled activity is required
- j) monitor and evaluate corrective action/s taken to ensure the controls selected have been effective to mitigate risk and have not presented any new hazards.

The school/unit/institute/centre OHSW working group or local area consultative forum shall analyse incident data to assist in identifying trends and the need for preventative intervention to control risk where indicated. UniSA Business Intelligence (BI) reporting system is the process used to generate management reports to authorised personnel for this purpose. Names of individuals must be excluded from general/group discussions to protect confidentiality and privacy.

OHSW&IM Services will monitor compliance with the required reporting timeframes and implementation of recommended corrective action through the BI reporting system. Non-conformances identified will be escalated where necessary.

University-wide incident data will be analysed to identify trends and determine the need for preventative intervention and appropriate use of resources on a priority basis. Recommendations are made to the University OHSW&IM Committee, Senior Management Group (SMG) and the Vice Chancellor as appropriate.

#### 4. Reporting Identified Hazards

- a) fix the hazard immediately and safely if competent to do so and there is no danger to yourself or others
- b) where the hazard cannot be fixed immediately, promptly notify your supervisor/ manager, the local HSR (where applicable) and isolate the site where there is immediate risk of injury
- c) log details of the hazard (attach photos where possible) using the online hazard report within the [OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System](#) to ensure appropriate action is taken to eliminate the hazard or mitigate the risk.

**Note:** Nominate the supervisor/manager responsible/in control of the area where the hazard was identified, to investigate the reasons for the hazard being present. For example:

- supervisor/manager responsible for a hazard present within the context of work performed within a school/unit/institute
  - contract supervisor responsible for a hazard relating to work undertaken by an external contractor
  - school manager/course coordinator/program director responsible for a hazard relating to a course undertaken by a student
- c) immediately notify Facilities Management Unit (FMU) of any campus related matters (ie. hazards relating to building / infrastructure) and raise a [Customer Service Request \(CSR\)](#) for assistance where corrective action is required.
  - d) supervisors/managers are required to proactively identify reasonably foreseeable hazards within the context of work being performed in a local area (i.e. hazards associated with working with chemical substances, plant and equipment, fieldtrips, working remotely, workloads etc) and advise employees and students of the requirement to report such a hazard to them immediately when identified. For example, a laboratory manager shall instruct people working in their laboratory to report any malfunction of a fume cupboard. Alternatively, a person observed performing an unsafe task, activity and/or in unsafe conditions should also be reported. Hazards identified through periodic workplace inspections that cannot be fixed immediately and require specialist advice/assistance, should be



reported using the online system to ensure appropriate corrective action is implemented to prevent injury.

### Examples of workplace hazards

The following are examples of the type of workplace hazards, including unsafe acts and unsafe workplace conditions that can be precursors to near misses and/or incidents which result in injury/illness. Reporting and addressing these hazards promptly allows the University to proactively manage safety.

**Unsafe Acts** - Performance of a task or other activity that is conducted in a manner that may threaten the health and/or safety of staff or others:

- operating without qualification or authorisation
- lack of or improper use of PPE
- failure to tagout/lockout defective equipment
- operating equipment at unsafe speed
- failure to warn others of danger
- bypass or removal of safety devices
- using defective equipment
- use of tools for other than their intended purpose
- working in hazardous locations without adequate protection or warning
- improper repair of equipment
- horseplay
- wearing unsafe clothing
- taking an unsafe position.

**Unsafe Conditions - A condition in the work place that is likely to cause property damage or injury:**

- defective tools, equipment, or supplies
- inadequate supports or guards
- congestion in the workplace
- inadequate warning systems
- fire and explosion hazards
- poor housekeeping
- hazardous atmospheric condition
- excessive noise
- poor ventilation.

## 5. Hazard Investigation

The responsible supervisor/manager nominated on the online hazard report to investigate an identified hazard shall ensure:

- a) an investigation/assessment is conducted in consultation with:
  - the reporter of the hazard
  - the HSR (where applicable)
  - other personnel (performing the activity / with knowledge of the hazard)
  - Divisional OHSW Senior Consultant/Coordinator (where applicable)
- o **to identify** the reason/s for the hazard being present and the hazard category type i.e. physical, mechanical/electrical, chemical, biological or psychological
- o **to assess** the probability (likelihood) and consequence of the hazard causing harm to any person, damage to property or impact to the environment. (Refer to the [OHSW Hazard Management Procedure](#) for instructions on risk assessment and forms to use when assessing the potential risk/s associated with an identified hazard)
- o **to control** the risk using the predetermined hierarchy of controls outlined in the OHSW Hazard Management Procedure, with the primary aim to eliminate the hazard wherever possible. Where this is not possible, select one or more control measures (from the highest possible option within the hierarchy to the lowest option) to minimise the risk as reasonably practicable
- o **to monitor** implemented controls and/or re-evaluate existing controls to determine if the most appropriate control measure is in place.



- b) corrective action/s recommended are implemented to either eliminate the hazard or manage the risk associated with it so that it no longer poses a threat
- c) the hazard investigation form, corresponding with the hazard report within the online [OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System](#), is completed including details of corrective action taken or expected to be taken and submitted within 5 working days of the hazard being reported  
Note: Corrective actions recorded on the online hazard investigation form shall be followed up by OHSW&IM Services where necessary to ensure appropriate action is recommended and implemented to prevent injury.
- d) any planned action is included in the OHSW Local Action Plan to ensure corrective actions are implemented, particularly where an ongoing scheduled activity is required
- e) control measures selected are monitored and evaluated to ensure the action taken has been effective to mitigate risk.

The school/unit/institute/centre OHSW working group or local area consultative forum shall analyse hazard data to assist in identifying trends and the need for specific intervention to prevent injury where indicated.

## 6. Records

All records should be maintained in accordance with the [University Document Control and Record Management Procedure](#). Electronic incident/hazard records are maintained in the University data warehouse.

## Performance Measures

- 75% of University incidents have been reported to OHSW&IM Services within 12 hours in accordance with strategy 14 of the OHSW Strategic Plan
- 75% of University incidents and hazards have been investigated and a report submitted to OHSW&IM Services within 5 working days of the incident date and/or the hazard report date
- 75% of recommended corrective actions have been implemented by the expected completion date.

## Documents / Forms

[Online OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System](#)  
[Online OHSW&IM Hazard & Incident Reporting & Investigation System User Guide](#)

## References

[University OHSW&IM Policy](#)  
[University OHSW Strategic Plan \(PDF 126kb\)](#)  
[University Injury Management Strategic Plan](#)  
[University OHSW&IM Management System \(PDF 250kb\)](#)  
[OHSW Hazard Management Procedure](#)  
Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986  
[Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Regulations, 2010](#)  
Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986  
Radiation Protection and Control Act 1982  
Electricity (General) Regulations 1997  
AS/NZS 4804: 2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – General guidelines on principles, systems and supporting techniques  
AS 1885.1 Workplace Injuries and Disease Recording Standard  
SafeWork SA Workplace Health and Safety Handbook

## Further Information

For further information on this procedure, contact OHSW&IM Services on 8302 1635 or your [Divisional OHSW Senior Consultant](#)