

## Incident notification form

### Why do I need to notify the department of an incident?

It is a requirement under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 that all workplace incidents be notified.

### Why do incidents need to be notified within 24 hours?

Some incidents need to be notified to the regulator and the insurance company within 48 hours. Twenty four hour notification to the department allows incident processing and further notification to occur within the prescribed timeframes.

### Incident types

Near miss: an incident that DID NOT result in an injury, illness or damage but had the potential to.

Injury/illness: a condition arising from an incident that has affected a person's health.

Hazard/damage: anything with the potential to harm a person; or can or has caused damage to plant, equipment or property.

Dangerous occurrence: any situation exposing a person to serious risk from immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard. A summary of what constitutes a dangerous incident is summarised below.

### Examples of a dangerous incident?

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion of fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurized substance
- electric shock
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing
- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to any plant, substance or thing
- 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 other event prescribed by the regulations

### What is a serious injury/illness?

Any injury or illness that results in death or serious injury/illness requiring the person to have immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, or immediate treatment for:

- amputation of any part of their body, or a serious head injury
- a serious eye injury
- a serious burn
- separation of a person's skin from an underlying tissue such as degloving or scalping
- spinal injury
- loss of a bodily function
- serious lacerations
- medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance

### Who should notify WorkCover NSW of a serious incident?

The Director, Health and Safety will determine who will notify WorkCover of a notifiable incident as required.

### Can I submit an incident notification on behalf of someone else?

Yes, any worker in the department can submit a notification on behalf of another worker, as long as the notifier has access to the departmental intranet.

### **Where does the incident notification go when it is completed?**

The notification will be sent to the health and safety team for follow-up and management of any injuries/illnesses and a copy to the affected person's supervisor and head of branch. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that their line management is informed of incidents as required. In an emergency response (for Biosecurity or natural disaster emergencies), the section manager responsible for that worker is also notified.

### **Why does an incident investigation need to be completed within 3 business days of the incident?**

Incident investigations are an important part of managing the risk and controlling hazards across the department. Timely investigations ensure that hazards are identified and controlled to prevent further incidents from occurring.

### **What happens if there is a delay in completing the incident investigation?**

A reminder will be sent via email to the supervisor regarding pending incident investigations. These notifications will begin the day before an incident investigation is due and if an investigation is not completed by the third business day an email will be sent to the head of branch for follow up.

### **What if I have forgotten my supervisor login and password to complete the incident investigation or review my incidents?**

Your USERNAME is your departmental email address. Your password is the unique password that was issued to you when you were notified of the incident via email. If you are unable to locate your password or the original email notification you can request a new password through the "**forgot password**" portal on the supervisor login page through the Health and Safety intranet.

### **Why do I have a unique password for every incident investigation?**

A unique password is issued for every incident until a point in the near future when the online incident notification form will be linked to a single login, permitting auto population of employee details and the ability to use a single password to access both incident investigation and incident details.

### **What do I do if I need to change or review information entered onto an online incident notification form?**

Contact the health and safety team on (02) 9842-8001 or (02) 6391-3585.

### **I have selected "add another affected person" but wish to change the details of an affected person entered earlier, how can it be done?**

Once "*add another affected person*" is selected, the information entered onto the form will be finalised and submitted. If further changes are required please contact the health and safety team.

### **When is a formal incident investigation required?**

A formal incident investigation is required for all incidents **except** where the incident is a low risk incident and the supervisor is satisfied with the existing controls put in place at the time of the incident and no further action is required.

### **How do I locate incidents assigned to me?**

Login to the supervisor's page using the login details provided in the email notification that was sent when the incident was submitted. Only incidents where you are assigned as the supervisor will be visible. Additionally, the search bar can be used to find incidents by incident number, contact details of the notifier or affected person, notification date and site.

### **What is the purpose of the human behaviour factors?**

To gain an understanding of the affected person's thoughts on what may have contributed to the incident. They are not used to direct blame towards any particular party but will assist in determining if there are gaps in preventative measures.

### **What affect will this form have on my Workers' Compensation liability?**

Workers' compensation continues to operate on a "no fault" basis. This form will be used to notify of injuries/illness and give an initial indication of the severity of an incident. A professional medical assessment from a medical practitioner will be taken as the authority for Workers' Compensation claims.

### **Who is considered the head of branch?**

The head of branch is the highest level of authority in a branch within a division. The head of branch may be a Principal Director, Director, CEO, Chief Scientist, or anyone acting in those roles during a period of absence.

### **If there is damage to property, equipment, plant or the environment, will this form cover all my reporting requirements?**

Damage will still need to be reported to the appropriate site manager/site controller, however this form must still be completed to record the incident and for safety interventions.

### **What is an emergency response?**

An emergency response initiated by the department applies to response and recovery activities for Biosecurity and natural disaster emergencies. Response and recovery activities are characterised by a different reporting structure and usually different work environment and supervisors. Emergency management prevention, preparedness and long term recovery activities are considered part of normal business. Refer to 'WHS Obligations for managing external stakeholders - Fact sheet'.

### **Do I need to complete this form when I am involved in an emergency response for the department?**

Yes, tick the box for 'incident occurred as part of a Biosecurity emergency response operation'. This will require different information to be entered when compared with working in your substantive position.

### **What is the emergency response name?**

The emergency response name consists of the hazard (e.g. bushfires or avian influenza) and the location (e.g. North Coast or Maitland).

### **What is the personnel ID in an emergency response?**

Your personnel ID is the number assigned to you at induction into an emergency response and is located on your photo ID card.

### **What are the worker types and are they different in an emergency response?**

- *Employee*: subject to direction from the employer/PCBU to perform work; is paid on a time basis; and has tools/materials supplied by the employer
- *Contractor*: engaged to carry out a particular task with their own tools/materials; that may employ others, delegate or sub-let work; is paid on the basis of a quotation for the task
- *Student*: undertakes work experience without pay or reward
- *Volunteer*: undertake work without pay or reward but may be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses (refer to Volunteers Fact sheet)
- *Visitor*: performs no work and is not paid; may also include clients, customers, friends, and family at a workplace

### **Who is my supervisor when working in an emergency response?**

Your current supervisor will be the section manager (of the emergency response), or if you are the section manager it will be your supervisor. At induction into the response you will be provided with the manager's contact number and role email address to complete the form.

### **In an emergency response, who is responsible for conducting the investigation?**

The section manager responsible for the worker must complete the investigation within the required timeframes. This may be delegated, however the section manager remains responsible for the content of the investigation.

### **How is my substantive supervisor notified of the incident resulting in an injury in an emergency response?**

There is a field within the notification to enter the substantive supervisor's email address which will be used to send a copy of the completed notification and investigation. It is the responsibility of the section manager to ensure the substantive supervisor of an injured worker is notified.

### **Which Division, Branch and Unit are responsible for emergency response workers?**

Primary Industries, DPI Biosecurity & Food Safety and the Emergency Operations, Intelligence & Programs unit are responsible for emergency response workers and incidents. This information is auto-populated on the form when 'incident occurred as part of a Biosecurity emergency response' is ticked.