

HAZARD AND INCIDENT REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING PROCEDURE

March 2015

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure all hazards, incidents and accidents involving Monash University staff, students, property and activities are reported, investigated, and recorded in accordance with legislative requirements.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to the staff, students, contractors and visitors at the Australian campuses of Monash University.

3. ABBREVIATIONS

EPA	Environment Protection Authority
OHS	Occupational health and safety
OH&S	Monash Occupational Health & Safety
MUOHSC	Monash Occupational Health & Safety Committee
S.A.R.A.H	Safety and Risk Analysis Hub
VWA	Victorian Workcover Authority

4. DEFINITIONS

A comprehensive list of definitions is provided in the [Definitions tool](#). Definitions specific to this procedure are provided below.

4.1 INCIDENT

Incident is defined as any occurrence that leads to, or might have led to, injury or illness to people, danger to health and/or damage to property or the environment. For the purpose of this procedure, the term 'incident' is used as an inclusive term for injuries/illnesses, accidents and near misses.

4.2 NEAR MISS

A near miss is defined as any occurrence that might have led to injury or illness to a person.

4.3 NOTIFIABLE HAZARD/INCIDENT

Serious hazards and incidents which, in accordance with legislative obligations, are required to be reported to the statutory authority, Victorian Workcover Authority (VWA).

4.4 REASONABLY PRACTICABLE

Reasonably practicable is defined in OHS legislation as having regard to the following in relation to ensuring health and safety:

- the likelihood of the hazard or risk concerned eventuating;
- the degree of harm that would result if the hazard or risk eventuated;
- what the person concerned knows, or ought to reasonably know, about the hazard or risk and any ways of eliminating or reducing the hazard or risk;
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or reduce the hazard or risk; and
- the cost of eliminating or reducing the hazard or risk.

5. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

A comprehensive list of OHS responsibilities is provided in the document [OHS Roles, Committees and Responsibilities Procedure](#). A summary of the specific responsibilities relevant to Hazard and Incident reporting and investigation is provided below.

5.1 HEAD OF ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

It is the responsibility of the head of academic/administrative unit to ensure that all hazards and incidents involving staff, students, visitors and contractors in their academic/administrative unit and/or property for which they have responsibility, are reported, investigated and corrective/preventive action recommended and implemented.

To fulfil this responsibility they must:

- ensure that the staff in their academic/administrative unit are informed about, and follow this procedure;
- ensure that appropriate staff receive suitable training and can demonstrate competency to carry out their role in hazard and incident reporting, investigation and recording;
- review hazard and incident reports for their area, indicate the status of recommendations and ensure their effectiveness;
- ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that adequate financial provision is made available to institute recommendations made on hazard and incident reports;
- ensure that records of hazard and incident reports, and the progress of recommended corrective/preventive action, are maintained for their area.

5.2 SUPERVISOR

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that any incidents involving students or staff under their supervision are reported, investigated and recorded according to this procedure and that the recommended corrective/preventive actions are, as far as is reasonably practicable, implemented and reviewed to ensure their effectiveness.

Supervisors must:

- notify the Safety officer and the Health & Safety representative of any hazards or incidents that occur to the students or staff members that they supervise or in the areas that they supervise, as soon as practicable;
- complete the online hazard and incident report in S.A.R.A.H., participate in the investigation of the hazard or incident with the Safety officer and Health & Safety representative.

5.3 SAFETY OFFICER

The role of the Safety officer is to facilitate and co-ordinate the reporting, recording and investigation of all OHS hazards and incidents by:

- informing those involved of reporting requirements and investigation requirements as outlined in this procedure;
- immediately notifying OH&S and the head of academic/administrative unit following the occurrence of a notifiable hazard or incident;
- leading investigations and providing technical input or arranging appropriate expert advice or assistance from elsewhere;
- advising the supervisor who is participating in the investigation on requirements for the report and assisting in preparation and circulation of the report;

- speaking to the hazard and incident report(s) at the meeting of the local OHS committee at which these report/s are tabled;
- providing advice to management and the local OHS committee on any proposed changes that may arise from hazard or incident investigations;

5.4 HEALTH & SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE

5.4.1 Under OHS legislation, Health & Safety representatives may inspect any part of the workplace at which a member of the representative's designated work group works:

- at any time after giving reasonable notice to the employer or employer's representative; and
- immediately in the event of any accident, hazardous situation, dangerous occurrence or immediate risk to the health and safety of any person.

5.4.2 The Health & Safety representative must therefore be:

- notified of incidents as soon as is reasonably practicable and participate in the investigation of all reported hazards and incidents;
- consulted by management and the local OHS committee on any proposed changes which may arise from hazard and incident investigations.

5.5 LOCAL OHS COMMITTEE

The role of the local OHS committee is to review the hazard and incident reports for their area in order to:

- monitor the adequacy of investigations undertaken and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the corrective/preventive actions recommended;
- provide advice on corrective/preventive action recommended and/or make further recommendations as necessary;
- review the implementation and effectiveness of recommended corrective/preventive action of previous incidents;
- disseminate relevant information arising from hazard and incident investigations to appropriate sections of the academic/administrative unit;
- analyse trends in hazard and incident reports received so as to be able to recommend and monitor prevention programs.

5.6 OH&S

OH&S will:

- provide advice to heads of academic/administrative units, supervisors, safety officers, Health & Safety representatives and local OHS committees on hazard and incident reporting, recording and investigation;
- carry out hazard and incident investigations in areas remote from buildings, e.g. footpaths and car parks, or in areas where responsibility is not clear;
- according to circumstances, carry out certain investigations and inquiries;
- disseminate relevant information arising from hazard and incident investigations to appropriate sections of the university community;
- report all incidents involving students, contractors and visitors and/or significant property damage (>\$10,000) to the Manager, Financial Resources Management Division and to the Director, Audit and Risk Management.
- report all notifiable incidents to the relevant statutory authorities and assist with any subsequent enquiries or investigations.

5.7 WORKCOVER UNIT, HR OPERATIONS

WorkCover unit, HR Operations will:

- meet statutory notification requirements for worker's compensation claims.

5.8 INDIVIDUALS (STAFF, STUDENTS)

Each student and staff member must:

- ensure that all hazards and incidents in which they are involved or in areas for which they have responsibility are reported as soon as reasonably practicable
- ensure their supervisor, safety officer, Health & Safety representative and/or OH&S, are made aware of the incident or hazard as appropriate;
- participate in an investigation of the hazard or incident.

6. REPORTING HAZARDS AND INCIDENTS

6.1 TYPES OF HAZARDS AND INCIDENTS TO BE REPORTED

The categories below define the types of hazards and incidents that must be reported.

- 6.1.1 Hazards, near misses, injuries to staff, students, contractors and visitors sustained whilst in university owned or occupied buildings and grounds;
- 6.1.2 Hazards, near misses, injuries to staff, students, contractors and visitors sustained whilst engaged in university activities;
- 6.1.3 Hazards or incident involving potential risk to, or contamination of, air, water or soil, on or off-campus, or noise levels to local communities that exceed regulatory limits and that result from any activity undertaken by the university.

7. NOTIFIABLE HAZARDS AND INCIDENTS

7.1 INJURIES & ILLNESSES

Notification to the statutory authority, VWA is required where a hazard or incident at a workplace or equipment site results in:

- death
- serious injury
- medical treatment within 48 hours following exposure to a substance
- immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
- immediate treatment for:
 - amputation;
 - serious head injury;
 - serious eye injury;
 - separation of skin from underlying tissue (de-gloving or scalping);
 - electric shock;
 - spinal injury;
 - loss of bodily function, including loss of consciousness; and
 - serious lacerations.

7.2 DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES (HAZARDS AND NEAR MISSES)

Notification is also required of situations that expose a person in the immediate vicinity to an immediate health and safety risk through incidents including:

- collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, items of plant required to be licensed or registered;
- collapse or failure of an excavation or the shoring supporting of excavation;
- collapse or partial collapse of a building or structure;
- implosion, explosion or fire;
- escape, spillage or leakage of substances; and

- objects or substances falling from a height

7.3 ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS AND INCIDENTS

Notification to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is required of any hazard or incident involving potential risk to, or contamination of, air, water or soil, on or off-campus, or noise levels to local communities that exceed regulatory limits and that result from any activity undertaken by the university.

8. GENERAL PROCEDURES

8.1 HAZARD AND INCIDENT RESPONSE AND NOTIFICATION

When an incident occurs, the following actions must be taken:

- 8.1.1 Attend to the injured and notify emergency services if necessary. Enlist assistance if required.
- 8.1.2 Make the site safe to prevent further injury, accident or incident.
- 8.1.3 Secure the site of the incident to ensure that it is not disturbed
- 8.1.4 Notify the supervisor of the hazard or incident immediately.
In the case of:
 - a staff member, contact the supervisor or manager;
 - a student, contact the staff member supervising the activity, e.g. demonstrator, lecturer;
 - a resident and the hazard or incident occurs in Monash Residential Services area, contact Monash Residential Services (MRS)
 - a contractor, contact their supervisor or the project manager;
 - any non-staff while in university owned or occupied buildings and grounds, may contact Monash Security, reception desk of the area or a staff member.
- 8.1.5 The supervisory staff member to whom the hazard or incident is reported must immediately notify the appropriate Safety officer or Health & Safety representative. Where neither party can be contacted they must notify [OH&S](#).
- 8.1.6 OH&S will provide information as to the appropriate personnel to contact and provide advice on keeping the site undisturbed until the investigation is complete, unless necessary to prevent further injury, loss or contamination.
- 8.1.7 **As required, OH&S will notify the:**
 - The statutory authority, VWA of all notifiable hazards and incidents
 - Chairperson of the Monash Occupational Health & Safety Committee (MUOHSC);
 - Chairperson of the Institutional Biosafety Committee, if biohazardous substances are involved;
 - Chairperson of the Radiation Advisory Committee, if radiation is involved;
 - Manager, Financial Resources Management Division and the Director, Audit and Risk Management, if the incident involved students, visitors or contractors and/or significant property damage (>\$10,000).
- 8.1.8 **As required, Environmental Sustainability will notify:**
 - the statutory authority, EPA of all notifiable environmental hazards and incidents

- Manager, Financial Resources Management Division and the Director, Audit and Risk Management, if the incident involved students, visitors or contractors and/or significant property damage (>\$10,000).

8.2 REPORTING HAZARDS AND INCIDENTS

8.2.1 Hazard and incident reports

8.2.1.1 The online hazard and incident report is to be completed in S.A.R.A.H., which can be accessed from the [OH&S website](#) or through the my.monash portal.

8.2.1.2 Person completing the hazard and incident report

- The report must be completed by the person involved in the incident or the person reporting the hazard whether they are staff, students, contractors or visitors;
- Where this is not possible, it is the responsibility of the supervisor of the person/area/activity to complete the report;
- Otherwise anyone may complete the report.

8.2.1.3 Hazard and incident reports containing issues of a confidential nature, e.g. stress-related or unacceptable behaviour, are automatically forwarded to the Manager, OH&S, bypassing any party as necessary.

8.2.1.4 Comprehensive reports, photographs, diagrams and video footage can be attached as required.

8.2.2 Workers Compensation claims

Staff who is injured may decide to submit a WorkCover claim. Workers' Compensation claim forms are available from [Human Resources Division](#), any Post Office or General practitioner.

8.2.3 First aid injury report

8.2.3.1 First aiders must record all treatment (however minor) on the first aid injury report. These forms can be obtained from the [OH&S website](#).

8.2.4 Reporting procedure for first aid injuries

- Injury/illness occurs and is treated by first aider.
- First aid injury report is completed by first aider.
- Completed first aid injury report is sent to [OH&S](#) as soon as reasonably practicable.

8.2.5 Notification of Financial & Resources Management Division and Audit & Risk Management Office

OH&S is responsible for notifying the Manager, Financial Resources Management Division and the Director, Audit and Risk Management of all incidents involving students, contractors and visitors and/or significant property damage (>\$10,000).

8.2.6 Requirements to effectively complete an investigation

8.2.6.1 The prime purpose of a hazard or incident investigation is to establish both the immediate and underlying causes of the hazard or incident so as to identify actions to:

- prevent any incident that may result from the hazard, and/or
- correct the problem and to prevent a recurrence of any incident.

8.2.6.2 So far as is reasonably practicable, the management representative (normally the Safety officer) must consult with the Health & Safety representative of the area concerned during investigations.

8.2.7 Procedure for completing an investigation

8.2.7.1 Identify the sequence of events that occurred prior, during and after the hazard or incident being identified.

8.2.7.2 Identify the hazards applicable.

8.2.7.3 Identify the nature of any injury or affliction that was sustained as a result, not just immediate but upon further information.

8.2.7.4 Identify any contributing factors.

8.2.7.5 Identify if the activity was a process, and if this is the case initiate a review of the risk management associated with this process and attach this to the finalised investigation.

8.2.7.6 Identify suitable controls measures in line with the hierarchy of controls.

8.2.7.7 Controls which are not implemented must follow the corrective and preventative actions procedure.

8.2.8 The Safety officer, together with the supervisor of the staff member or student and Health & Safety representative, are responsible for conducting the investigation and preparing the report.

8.2.9 The Safety officer will provide technical input or arrange appropriate expert advice or assistance from OH&S or elsewhere. Other staff as necessary can be invited to participate.

8.2.10 The Safety officer will provide advice to management and the local OHS committee on any proposed changes that may arise from hazard or incident investigations.

8.2.11 Investigation of notifiable hazards or incidents

This will be done by OH&S in conjunction with the VWA and/or the EPA. The nature and extent of the notifiable hazard or incident will determine whether it is investigated using the standard procedure (8.2.1 – 8.2.10) or by a committee of inquiry (8.2.12).

8.2.12 Committee of inquiry

- 8.2.12.1 In consultation with the Dean of Faculty/Head of Division, the Manager, OH&S, will determine the need for a committee of inquiry, considering the nature and extent of the hazard or incident.
- 8.2.12.2 The Manager, OH&S will consult with the Dean of Faculty/Head of Division and appropriate employee or student organisations regarding the composition of the committee and the terms of reference for the inquiry.
- 8.2.12.3 The Manager, OH&S must obtain the Vice-Chancellor's approval of the composition and terms of reference of the committee of inquiry.
- 8.2.12.4 Committees of inquiry for notifiable hazards and incidents will normally be chaired by a senior member of staff and include representation from OH&S, the appropriate Health & Safety representative(s), technical experts, other staff and external experts as necessary. Inclusion of experts from another academic/administrative unit can provide an essential element of the independent review of hazards or incidents by a committee of inquiry.
- 8.2.12.5 Reports of committees of inquiry are to be forwarded to the:
- Vice-Chancellor;
 - Dean of Faculty/Head of Division;
 - Head of academic/administrative unit;
 - Chairperson, local OHS committee;
 - Health & Safety representative; and
 - Safety officer.
- 8.2.12.6 Reports of committees of inquiry must be submitted within three months of the occurrence of the incident. In cases where the investigation is necessarily prolonged, a progress report is to be submitted within the three month time limit.

8.2.13 **General investigation guidelines**

- 8.2.13.1 An investigation must begin as soon as possible after the hazard or incident is reported and the medical needs of any injured people have been met. For this to happen, OHS hazards must be reported as soon as they are identified and incidents must be reported as soon as possible after they occur.
- 8.2.13.2 Where practicable, nothing at the site must be disturbed until after the completion of the investigation other than what is necessary to prevent further injury, loss or contamination until the investigating officer(s) or committee has authorised clearing away.
- 8.2.13.3 Where appropriate, photographs or video footage must be taken and equipment held for subsequent examination or testing.
- 8.2.13.4 It is desirable to take statements from witnesses. These statements must be taken as soon as possible after an incident. Witnesses must be interviewed separately and questions must be carefully considered so that facts and opinions are not confused. Witnesses may seek support from their health and safety representative or any other person as desired.
- 8.2.13.5 It must be emphasised that the purpose of an investigation is not to assign blame for the hazard or incident but to establish

the causes so as to identify actions necessary to correct the problem and to prevent a recurrence.

- 8.2.13.6 It is essential that investigations are sufficiently broad to assess the full range of technical, human and administrative factors involved in the hazard or incident even if some factors are outside the chief responsibilities of the area. Both the immediate and underlying causes of the hazard or incident must be investigated.
- 8.2.13.7 The Safety officer must table completed hazard and incident reports, **without disclosing personal details**, at the next meeting of the local OHS committee.
- 8.2.13.8 Where information and recommendations derived from a hazard and incident report has general relevance to other sections of the university, it will be the responsibility of OH&S to bring that material to their attention by distributing hazard alerts, information sheets or reports or by developing/revising policy or procedures.

8.2.14 **Corrective/preventive action**

Following an incident, it is the responsibility of the appropriate Head of academic/administrative unit to take steps to correct the problem and to prevent a recurrence by implementing the recommendations arising out of the investigation. In considering these recommendations the Head of academic/administrative unit needs to take into account the duty of employers in OHS legislation to provide a healthy and safe work environment so far as is reasonably practicable. 'Reasonably practicable' is defined in section 4.7 of this procedure.

If the recommendations are deemed not to be reasonably practicable, then the head of the academic/administrative unit must refer them back to the Safety officer, supervisor and/or Health & Safety representative, providing an alternative solution.

- 8.2.15 In areas remote from buildings, e.g. footpaths and car parks, or areas where responsibility is not clear, OH&S will carry out the investigation.

8.3 **REVIEW OF HAZARD AND INCIDENT REPORTS BY LOCAL OHS COMMITTEES**

- 8.3.1 The Safety officer will speak to the hazard and incident report(s), **without disclosing personal details**, at the next meeting of the local OHS committee.
- 8.3.2 The local OHS committee must review the hazard and incident reports received in the respective academic/administrative unit in order to:
- monitor the adequacy of investigations undertaken and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the corrective/preventive actions recommended;
 - provide advice on corrective/preventive action recommended and/or make further recommendations as necessary;
 - review the implementation and effectiveness of recommended corrective/preventive action of previous incidents;
 - disseminate relevant information arising from hazard and incident investigations to appropriate sections of the academic/administrative unit;
 - analyse trends in hazard and incident reports received so as to be able to recommend and monitor prevention programs.

9. POST EVENT ACTIONS

9.1 COUNSELLING

Counselling must be offered for any person affected by the hazard or incident.

9.2 DEBRIEFING

Where a serious or significant hazard or incident has impacted on other people or has caused concern within an area, a debriefing must be offered by the supervisor or Safety officer to explain:

- the outcome of the hazard or incident;
- the outcome of the investigation; and
- any corrective/preventive measures that have been or will be taken.

10. RECORDS

10.1 DATABASE

10.1.1 OH&S is responsible for ensuring that all hazard and incident reports involving Monash University staff, students or property, or other persons or property for which the university has a legislative responsibility are maintained in S.A.R.A.H. .

10.1.2 In accordance with the [Records management procedure](#), hazard and incident reports will be retained indefinitely.

10.1.3 OH&S will use the data to:

- plan health and safety programs and initiatives;
- monitor the effectiveness of corrective/preventive actions;
- produce quarterly reports on hazard and incident statistics and trends for management and local OHS committees;
- disseminate information relating to hazards and incidents and their prevention to MUOHSC and other relevant sections of the university community;
- meet statutory record-keeping requirements.

11. TOOLS

The following tools are associated with this procedure.

[Managers and Supervisors guide to online Hazard & Incident reporting](#)

12. COMPLIANCE

This procedure is written to meet the requirements of:

Accident Compensation Act 1985 (Vic)
Dangerous Goods Act 1985 (Vic)
Environment Protection Act 1970 (Vic)
Equipment (Public Safety) (Incident Notification) Regulations 1997 (Vic)
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 (Vic)
AS/NZS 4801:2001 *Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems – specifications with guidance for use*
OHSAS 18001:2007 *Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems – requirements.*

13. REFERENCES

13.1 MONASH UNIVERSITY OHS DOCUMENTS

[OHS roles, committees and responsibilities procedure](#)

[First aid procedures](#)

14. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version number	Date of Issue	Changes made to document
4.1	November 2010	Procedures for Hazard and Incident Reporting, Investigation and Recording.
5	August 2013	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Document title changed to "Hazard and Incident Investigation, Reporting and Investigation Procedure"2. Updated Definitions section3. Sections 7, 8 & 9 in v4.1 were consolidated into section 8- General Procedures to include response, notification, reporting and investigation steps, in line with new Incident Report and Incident Investigation forms.4. Reference section was updated
5.1	February 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Removed all references and links to the Hazard and Incident report form and replaced with "online hazard and incident report in S.A.R.A.H.2. Added S.A.R.A.H. to Abbreviations section3. Removed all reference to maintaining hardcopies of incidents, as all will be retained in S.A.R.A.H. indefinitely.4. Added link to Definitions tool.5. Added "Compliance section"6. Updated "Tools section"