OHS & ENVIRONMENTAL INCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

1. Introduction

The University strives to ensure the health and safety of its staff, students, contractors and visitors, and to reduce its environmental impact, as far as is reasonably practicable.

All Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) and Environmental incidents that occur in the course of University business must be reported. This is crucial to assist the University to understand, investigate and manage risks to its people, property and environment.

Some potentially high consequence incidents require immediate notification by OHS staff to regulators such as WorkSafe Victoria. Serious consequences may apply if this requirement is not met.

OHS & Environmental incidents include:

- Injuries or illnesses
- Incidents or near misses
- Property loss or damage
- Environmental damage.

2. Key Regulatory Requirements

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) requires employers to, so far as reasonably practicable, to provide a safe workplace.

The Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 (Vic) requires employees to report work-related injuries and illnesses to an employer, and for the employer to maintain a register of injuries.

3. Incident Reporting

Staff, students, contractors and visitors are required to report any OHS & Environmental incident and/or hazard to their local supervisor or the manager of the work area as soon as reasonably practicable. The incident should be reported:

- via Themis EHS Incident Reporting, for those who have access to Themis; or
- on a hard-copy S3 Incident Report form.

High consequence incidents should be reported immediately, and other incidents should be reported within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident, injury or illness. For more information about high consequence incidents, refer to Safety Bulletin 01-07: Serious Injury and Incident Notification.

4. Responding to an OHS incident if a person(s) is injured:

1. Protect your health and safety;
2. Protect the health and safety of others;
3. Provide aid to any injured persons involved in the incident (if necessary);
4. Call for first aider (if necessary);
5. Call emergency services (if necessary);
6. Call campus security to coordinate access for emergency services on campus (if necessary);
7. Take essential action to make the site safe or to prevent a further incident (if applicable).
5. Responding to an OHS or Environmental incident if no-one is injured or after injured person(s) have been assisted:

1. Isolate the incident site or take essential action to prevent a further incident;
2. Confirm if the incident requires immediate notification to WorkSafe (you can refer to Safety Bulletin 01-07: Serious Injury and Incident Notification for guidance on the types of incidents to which this applies);
3. If immediate notification is not required, restore site or commence repair work to make the site permanently safe;
4. If immediate notification to a regulator may be required, contact OHS staff through Security on 8344 6666.

6. Health and Safety Representative Involvement

An elected employee Health and Safety Representative for a designated work group may inspect the workplace immediately following an incident occurring, providing it is safe to do so.

7. Supervisor Responsibilities

Incident reports are normally received by the reporter’s supervisor. If the reporter’s usual supervisor is not the best person to receive the incident report, the reporter can change the recipient to another staff member with management responsibility.

The nominated recipient is required to acknowledge the incident report.

**Incident Investigation Teams - Requirements and Responsibilities**

The Incident Investigation Team may include the following participants:

- Local supervisor or manager (Team Leader)
- Persons involved in the incident and witnesses
- Health and Safety Representative (if reasonably practicable)
- Local OHS Practice Expert.

The supervisor normally acts as the Team Leader. At least one team member should be trained in University of Melbourne Incident Investigation methodology.

The incident investigation team establishes the facts of circumstances leading up to the incident, during the incident and after the incident, by gathering and considering information including the effectiveness of the existing risk assessments and risk controls.

More detailed advice on what to investigate is available from OHS Incident, Injury, Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure.

The Incident Investigation team must recommend corrective actions to eliminate or reduce the risk of reoccurrence of a similar incident so far as is reasonably practicable.

The Incident Investigation Team Leader must provide a copy of the completed incident investigation report to the local OHS Committee and the Local OHS Practice Expert for the Budget Division.

If the incident risk rating is medium, high or very high, then the supervisor must ensure that a formal incident investigation is completed. This would normally be undertaken by an incident investigation team.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that appropriate corrective actions are implemented or that the recommended corrective actions are escalated to a person responsible for implementation.

The supervisor is required to ensure that when corrective actions are being implemented, the local personnel affected are consulted about the corrective actions.

The supervisor is required to monitor progress of implementation of corrective actions and record when implementation of corrective actions is finalised.

8. OHS Committee Responsibilities

The Budget Division OHS Committee (or if applicable, the Local OHS Committee) is required to review incident investigation reports submitted by Incident Investigation Team Leaders.

The OHS Committee is required to nominate a person (usually the OHS Coordinator) to review and report back to the committee on the effectiveness of the implemented control measures.

9. Documents and Help

- OHS incident report and investigation forms, as well as help with Themis EHS Incident Reporting, are available from: http://safety.unimelb.edu.au/tools/incident/
- The University’s formal procedure for Incident Reporting and Investigation is available from: http://safety.unimelb.edu.au/publications/procedure/incident/
- Please contact your Local OHS Practice Expert or OHS Coordinator for further advice.