

Operational Policy: Occupational Health & Safety		
2.4	Hazard, Incident, Near Miss & Injury Reporting	
Version:	3	Review: June 2017

Introduction:

Solve Disability Solutions (Solve) recognises that the health and safety of its employees is a priority and that if incidents do occur, they should be reported and investigated to ensure that the possibility of recurrence or further risk is minimised.

Solve understands the importance of incident reporting and investigation and has developed hazard inspection, hazard reporting and maintenance procedures to minimise workplace incidents or dangerous occurrences.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors of Solve.

This policy has been developed to ensure that all workers (including employees and volunteers), understand the processes to be taken in the event of a dangerous occurrence or incident.

Policy:

Solve commits to preventing workplace incidents and minimising dangerous occurrences and will endeavour to achieve a zero incident rate.

Solve will:

- provide a mechanism for reporting hazards, incidents, near misses and injury;
- investigate the abovementioned incidents to determine the root cause with the objective of preventing a recurrence;
- obtain statistical information about the abovementioned incidents;
- meet state legislative requirements for reporting incidents.

Definitions:

Incident is an event which causes or could have caused injury, illness, damage to plant, equipment, vehicles, property, material, or the environment or public alarm. It also includes losses of containment, fire, explosion, non-compliance with environmental regulatory requirements, vehicle incidents and off-site incidents. For the purpose of this policy statement, incidents include near misses.

A *hazard* is any source of potential damage, harm, or adverse health effects on something or someone under certain conditions at work.

A *near miss* is an incident that has a high probability of, but did not, result in injury or illness.

A *serious injury or illness* is an injury or illness that results in the consequences described in section 37(1) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 Act* ('the Act'). As a guide, these would include (but are not limited to) incidents that result in a person requiring immediate medical treatment at a hospital or other medical facility.

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Workplace includes any place where work is carried out on Solve’s behalf. This includes (but is not limited to) onsite workplaces such as Solve offices or workshops, as well as volunteer and client premises.

The *team leader* is the person responsible for leading the investigation into a specific incident or hazard.

Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of the **CEO** to:

- notify the Occupational Health and Safety Officer of all dangerous occurrences;
- be aware and understand the principles of incident and hazard reporting and investigation;
- deal with all matters relating to employee/volunteer welfare in the most appropriate and timely manner.
- In relation to the investigation of an incident or hazard,
 - Ensure that the reported safety hazard has been stabilised and approved alternative work practices have been implemented if required.
 - When required, ensure that a Team Leader is appointed to lead the investigation as soon as possible.
 - Actively monitor (at least weekly) the progress of the investigation, to ensure that it is progressing as intended.
 - Assist the OH&S Officer to resolve any issues that may arise.
 - Engage and fund specialist internal or external advisors as necessary.
 - Issue formal contracts for the provision of specialist advice.
 - Report progress of the investigation monthly to the Board.

It is the responsibility of all **Workers**, including employees, volunteers or contractors to ensure that:

- incidents and hazards are reported to management at the earliest opportunity;
- all requirements and obligations under the relevant legislation are complied with.

It is the responsibility of the **Occupational Health and Safety Officer** to:

- Assist in contributing to a safe work environment by encouraging a safe workplace culture and raising awareness of occupational health and safety requirements and guidelines;

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- Assist with the implementation of the organisation’s OHS plans and strategies;
- Encourage and facilitate the prompt reporting of incidents and hazards;
- Ensure State Authorities are appropriately notified of all reportable occurrences or events.
- Maintain accurate records and filing systems of reported incidents and hazards;
- In relation to the investigation of an incident or hazard,
 - Stabilise the reported safety hazard and implement approved alternate work practices if required.
 - When required, appoint a Team Leader to lead the investigation as soon as possible.
 - Actively monitor (at least weekly) the progress of the investigation, to ensure that it is progressing as intended.
 - Attend team meetings as required, to monitor progress and provide advice when needed.
 - Assist the Team Leader to resolve any issues that arise.
 - Recommend to the CEO if specialist advisors should be engaged to assist.
 - Report progress of the investigation (at least weekly) to the CEO.

It is the responsibility of the **Team Leader** to:

- Ensure that the investigation and resolution of a specific incident or hazard proceeds smoothly and as quickly as possible;
- Co-opt appropriate Solve staff and volunteers to assist with the investigation. The person/people who reported should be included as members of the team.
- Conduct weekly team meetings to monitor progress, provide guidance and resolve any issues that arise;
- Request the OHS Officer seek the support of specialist advisors when required;
- Report progress on the investigation (at least weekly) to the OHS Officer.

Procedures:

1. Worker Awareness and Consultation

Workers should be consulted on any matters that may affect their health, safety or welfare.

The CEO should ensure all employees are aware of their legal duty to take care to protect their own health and safety and to avoid adversely affecting the health and safety of any other person.

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The WorkSafe ‘If you are Injured’ poster should be displayed in a position that is visible to all workers.

The OHS Officer should use the ‘Safety’ section of the monthly Volunteer Newsletter to provide volunteers and staff with regular ongoing education on key OHS issues and practices.

2. Immediate Incident Response

All injuries and illnesses must be assessed by the nearest qualified First Aid officer to determine whether medical treatment is required. Refer OH&S Policy 2.1 *First Aid* for more information on First Aid responsibilities and procedures.

If medical treatment is required, the First Aid Officer must ensure that suitable arrangements are made for transport to a doctor or hospital. It should be noted that:

- all eye injuries (including foreign objects between the eye and eye lid which is not dirt or dust particles) must be referred to a doctor or hospital.
- when injury or illness involves a chemical, a Material Safety Data Sheet and other information which may have been prepared for such incidents must accompany the injured person to the doctor or hospital.

In the event of a death,

- Advise Emergency Services on 000.
- Advise the CEO and OH&S Officer immediately.

Ensure the site is safe. Depending on the incident, the site may need to be quarantined, or power disconnected, or faulty equipment removed from service. If practicable, cordon off the incident area to prevent anything being disturbed.

Refer to Operational Policy 2.3 *Critical Incident Management* for further information on Solve’s policies and procedures in regard to incidents of a more immediate and serious nature, i.e. death or serious injury, violence or evacuation of premises.

3. Hazard & Incident Reporting

The Occupational Health and Safety Officer must be notified immediately in the event of any incident occurring, or identification of hazardous or potentially hazardous work practices or work environments.

Any workplace incident or ‘near miss’ which has the potential to result in injury or damage to property must be reported in the same manner as an incident that results in injury or damage.

The following action must be taken for all incidents or identified hazards involving employees, volunteers, contractors, visitors or the general public:

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- All injuries resulting in lost work time must be reported to the Occupational Health and Safety Officer within 24 hours. In all other cases, employees must notify the CEO or OH&S Officer within 30 days of becoming aware of any injury or disease which has been contributed to by work.
- A Solve Incident Report Form must be completed and forwarded to the CEO or OHS Officer (see *Appendix A.10 Hazard/Incident/Near Miss/Injury Report Form*);
- The Solve Incident Report Form must be entered into the Solve Hazard Reporting database by the OHS Officer, and the CEO informed immediately of the incident;
- The CEO or OHS Officer must provide written acknowledgement of the receipt of the Incident Report Form to the report originator within 2 business days;
- A copy of the completed Solve Incident Report Form must be retained and filed by the OHS Officer.

In the event of an injury,

- details of the injury must be registered in the WorkCover Register of Injuries (Solve’s “WorkCover Register of Injuries” forms are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the CEO’s office);
- a written acknowledgement must be forwarded from the CEO to the injured party of the above WorkCover registration;
- for incidents resulting in workplace death, serious injury where medical treatment is required, or an incident that could have caused death or serious injury,
 - notify WorkSafe Victoria immediately after becoming aware of the incident,
 - provide a written report to WorkSafe Victoria in approved format within 48 hours of the incident,
 - retain a copy of the report for at least 5 years.
- The WorkCover Register of Injuries is to be filed in the CEO’s office.
- Copies of all documents are to be kept on the employee’s personnel file.

An employee raising a WorkSafe Injury Insurance Claim should follow the legislative and reporting procedures as documented in the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004. Refer to the WorkSafe Victoria website, www.worksafe.vic.gov.au for more information on employees’ rights, responsibilities and reporting requirements under the Act.

The CEO, in consultation with Solve’s OH&S Officer, will be responsible for processing employees’ WorkSafe Injury Insurance Claims. All claims will be processed in accordance with the legislative and reporting procedures as documented in the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004. Refer to the WorkSafe Victoria website, www.worksafe.vic.gov.au for more information on employers’ rights, responsibilities and reporting requirements under the Act.

4. Incident & Hazard Investigation

Upon receipt of a Solve Incident Report Form, the OHS Officer must, as soon as reasonably practicable, identify and record:

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- immediate actions taken to assist any persons injured during the incident
- immediate actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of the incident
- severity of the incident
- likelihood of the incident occurring or reoccurring
- resultant risk rating of the incident
- if an on-site incident investigation has already been completed, and by whom.

Within 2 working days of receiving the Incident Report Form, the OHS Officer, in consultation with the CEO, must determine who will be responsible for undertaking the incident investigation (i.e. can this be investigated by the OHS Officer alone or is an incident investigation team required?) and, if required, set up an incident investigation team.

5. Setting up an incident investigation team

In determining the format, members and size of the investigation team, the CEO and OHS Officer must take into consideration the risk rating of the incident (to be assessed in accordance with the OH&S guidelines *Risk Identification Guidelines*), and any other factors that may impact on the nature of the investigation, such as specific sensitivities of people involved in the incident, type of injury, etc.

Once the format of the investigation team has been determined, the OHS Officer must:

- inform those included in the investigation team of their roles and responsibilities (the person/people who reported the incident should be included as members of the team),
- appoint a Team Leader.

6. Commencing the incident investigation

The incident investigation must commence as soon as the investigation team has been set up. It is the Team Leader's responsibility to commence and lead the investigation, unless the incident is to be investigated by the OHS Officer alone.

The investigation should be conducted in accordance with the documented OH&S '*Guidelines for conducting an incident investigation*'.

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7. Communication during the incident investigation

Team meetings should be held weekly to review progress and plan future actions, with formal minutes kept and circulated to all participants after the meeting. Ideally, the OHS Officer and CEO should be included in weekly team meetings, or forwarded a progress report if they are unable to attend. The OHS Officer must be informed of potential delays so that timely remedial action can be taken.

The CEO must report on progress monthly to the Board. All communication with the Board in relation to an on-going investigation must be through the CEO. The Solve Board and (where possible) Board Members should not become involved in the operational aspects of the investigation, except to provide advice and guidance as necessary.

8. Documenting the incident investigation

The team must document the investigation on an *Incident & Hazard Investigation Form*.

The Team Leader must provide a copy of the completed incident investigation report to the OHS Officer and CEO.

Incident investigation reports must be retained and filed by the OHS Officer with the original Incident Report Form and other accompanying documentation.

9. Implementation of Corrective Actions

The team will recommend corrective actions to eliminate or reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring, so far as is reasonably practicable.

The OHS Officer must ensure that appropriate corrective actions are implemented, or that the recommended corrective actions are escalated to a person responsible for their implementation. The OHS Officer must monitor progress on implementing corrective actions and record when implementation is finalised.

When implementing corrective actions, the OHS Officer and CEO must ensure all relevant personnel are consulted and informed of changes to work practices.

10. Review of investigation reports and corrective actions

The FAR Committee must:

- Review Incident Investigation Reports submitted to the committee
- Nominate a person to review and report back to the committee on the effectiveness of the implemented control measures.

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Related Legislation & Documentation:

Solve guidelines for conducting an incident investigation
 Appendix 2.4 A_1 Incident & Hazard Investigation Form

Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004
 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

*(Refer to **Appendix 2_A_15 List of OHS Acts & Regulations** for a comprehensive list of related Acts and Regulations)*

Update History	Actions
<i>Date</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>23/7/2012</i>	<i>Policy created</i>
<i>10/11/2015</i>	<i>Minor modifications following volunteer review of policy</i>
<i>14/6/2016</i>	<i>Updated Related Legislation & Documentation section</i>
<i>18/10/2016</i>	<i>Update numbering to match new system including cross referenced policies</i>