

# STEPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Investigations are a must in any workplace

This is where you learn about how, what, where, and most importantly why an incident or accident occurred.



Here are some steps to get the most out of your investigations, ensuring you have the most appropriate and constructive control measures/corrective actions in place.

- 1 TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION.** It's important you act as quickly as possible. Time loses information and evidence, so assemble your team quickly.
- 2 REPORT THE INCIDENT/ACCIDENT.** Immediate reporting is crucial in achieving the best outcomes. It not only ensures appropriate medical treatment or control measures are put in place, but also provides very clear insight, into your system's inefficiencies.
- 3 REPORT TO YOUR AUTHORITIES.** Notifiable incidents are REQUIRED to be reported when it involves a fatality, dangerous occurrence, electrocution of any kind, or serious injury requiring the worker to be admitted to hospital. Fines and penalties can be issued if notifiable incidents are not reported. Go to [www.safework.sa.gov.au/law-compliance/compliance-rights/incidents/workplace-incident-notification](http://www.safework.sa.gov.au/law-compliance/compliance-rights/incidents/workplace-incident-notification) for more information.

# 4

**INVESTIGATE THE INCIDENT.** Take the time to go through what has happened. Below are steps to consider.

<p><b>Gather Information</b></p>	<p><b>Secure the scene.</b> This is done to protect others from injury or being put at risk but also reduces the risk of losing important evidence.</p> <p><b>Collect facts about what happened.</b> Once the scene is secured, it's important to obtain as many facts as possible. This includes statements from witnesses, photos, securing items or machinery for further investigation, including engineering reports. No amount of information at this stage is too much or not relevant.</p>
	<p><b>Develop a sequence of events.</b> It's important to create a time line of what happened. This allows for review of processes, behaviours, and the actions taken or not taken, that contributed to the incident. This is also one of the steps in flushing out what is relevant and what is not.</p>
<p><b>Analyse Information</b></p>	<p><b>Determine the cause.</b> After developing the timeline, analyse each step. Look at the injury itself, the event that occurred, and the systems in play. There are a variety of methods to analyse data. Seek out the option(s) best for you and your business. This will be where you determine what information is relevant and what is not.</p>
	<p><b>Recommend improvements.</b> Ensure any recommendations are effective and appropriate for controlling hazards; reducing the likelihood of an incident occurring again.</p>
<p><b>Implement Solutions</b></p>	<p><b>Write a report.</b> The report will outline the background of what has happened, and be your biggest ally when substantiating and implementing corrective actions. Ensure you are clear and concise and include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>Background</b></li> <li>&gt; <b>Description of the incident</b></li> <li>&gt; <b>Findings</b></li> <li>&gt; <b>Recommendations</b></li> <li>&gt; <b>Summary</b></li> <li>&gt; <b>Action list</b></li> <li>&gt; <b>Any attachments</b></li> </ul>

# 5

**SHARE THE FINDINGS.** Nothing is worse for an employee than to think nothing has been done. Communicate the findings with your business. Send out safety alerts, bulletins, include in newsletters, and include in your toolbox meetings. If your employees see something has been done, they will assist in future reporting and investigations.

Following these steps, will assist in ensuring you not only considered all avenues, but also provides invaluable information in making your workplace as safe as possible.