

# The Blue Hand Group



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## Contents

- 1 Purpose
- 2 Scope
- 3 Procedure Overview
- 4 Procedures
  - 4.1 Reportable Incidents and Hazards
  - 4.2 Notifiable and Dangerous Incidents
  - 4.3 Reporting an Incident or Hazard
  - 4.4 Deciding on the Level of Investigation
  - 4.5 Minimum investigation requirements for Supervisor Investigations
- 5 References
- 6 Schedules
- 7 Procedure Information



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 1 Purpose

To ensure all personnel involved with, or affected by, The Blue Hand Group operations are aware of the reporting and investigation requirements for incidents and hazards.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all Employees, Volunteers, Students, Workers, contractors, Visitors, and members of the public while they are at the Charity premises or a partner business premises.

In special circumstances, an investigation by an independent investigator may be warranted and will be directed by the CEO. This Procedure does not apply to an independent investigation as specific terms of reference will accompany the appointment of the investigator.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure provides for the timely reporting of all safety-related incidents and hazards. Most of these incidents and hazards will require investigation by the Blue Hand Group, Supervisors, or in more serious cases, by Workplace Health and Safety (NSW) or other state regulator.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4 Procedures

### 4.1 Reportable Incidents and Hazards

#### 4.1.1 Reportable Incident (to the Blue Hand Group)

A Reportable Incident to the Charity includes any Notifiable Incident, and in addition:

- any injury, illness, or damage to equipment, plant, or vehicles that has impacted, or has the potential to impact in different circumstances, the safety of personnel involved with the Charity's business or undertaking.

#### 4.1.2 Reportable Hazard (to the Charity)

A Reportable Hazard to the Blue Hand Group includes:

- Any item of plant, any activity, any Procedure, or any incident which has caused, or has the potential to cause injury to people or damage to property, and it cannot be immediately rectified.
- Any 'near miss' incident that, although it did not result in an injury or disease, had the potential to do so.

### 4.2 Notifiable and Dangerous Incidents

#### 4.2.1 Notifiable Incident (to BHG or other state regulator)

An incident is notifiable if it arises out of the conduct of a business or undertaking and results in the death, serious injury, or serious illness of a person, or involves a Dangerous Incident.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.2.1.1 Serious injury or illness

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW) sets out that a serious injury or illness of a person is an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

- immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
- immediate treatment for:
  - the amputation of any part of their body
  - a serious head injury
  - a serious eye injury
  - a serious burn
  - the separation of their skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping)
  - a spinal injury
  - the loss of a bodily function
  - serious lacerations
  -

or medical treatment (treatment by a doctor) within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.2.1.2 Dangerous Incident

A Dangerous Incident is an incident in relation to a Workplace that exposes a Worker, Volunteer or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage, or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion, or fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised 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 that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations
- 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.

## 4.3 Reporting an incident or hazard

### 4.3.1 Notification of an incident

All incidents and hazards that meet the requirements of the definitions for Reportable Incidents, Reportable Hazards, and Notifiable Incidents must be reported to the appropriate level of authority depending on the following individual requirements, and as outlined in Table 1 Investigation and reporting summary:





# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.3.1.1 Reportable Incidents

Individuals at the Charity must report all personal incidents or injuries via The Blue Hand Group Incident Record/Report form accessible via their website.

## 4.3.1.2 Reportable Hazards

Individuals have an obligation to eliminate, guard against or protect others from any hazards as soon as they are recognised. If the hazards cannot be rectified immediately, the person must report the hazards to The Blue Hand Group, and report in an Incident Record/Report form accessible via their website.

If there is imminent danger, the person recognising the danger must:

- take steps to isolate the danger by closing doors, evacuating the area;
- restrict entry;
- call the emergency number 000; and
- advise surrounding persons and or stuff.

## 4.3.1.3 Notifiable Incidents

Notifiable work health and safety Incidents or potentially Notifiable Incidents need to be reported to The Blue Hand Group team immediately for a determination on whether the incident is notifiable. If the Charity's team determines the incident is notifiable, they will make the notification to Work Health and Safety NSW.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

Notifiable Incident sites must not be disturbed until a Work Health and Safety NSW inspector arrives at the site or directs otherwise (whichever is earlier). A Notifiable Incident site may only be disturbed to:

- assist an injured person;
- remove a deceased person;
- make the site safe or to minimise the risk of a further Notifiable Incident;
- facilitate a police investigation; or
- an inspector has given a direction to do so either in person or by telephone.

Notifiable Incidents must also be reported on The Blue Hand Group. The Charity's Safety team will provide guidance on the level of detail required in the initial report and this will usually be minimal until the direction is received from the Work Health and Safety NSW or other state regulators.

## 4.4 Deciding on the level of investigation

This section provides Information on the Decision process for investigating a Charity safety matter. For investigation purposes, safety incidents are categorised as:

- Notifiable to Work Health and Safety NSW;
- detailed investigation by the Charity;
- short investigation by the Charity;
- Supervisor investigation; or
- do not contribute to safety and do not need to be recorded.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

Table 1: Investigation and reporting summary

Type of Occurrences	Where to Report	When to Report	Who Will Investigate
Reportable Incident (to the Charity).	Supervisor Incident Record/Report	As soon as practicable.	The Charity Safety team or Supervisor.
Reportable Hazard (to the University).	Supervisor Incident Record/Report	As soon as practicable.	The Charity Safety team or Supervisor.
Notifiable Incident (to Work Health & Safety NSW aka WHSN).	Workplace Health & Safety.  Safety & Wellbeing  Incident Record/Report	Immediately (contact Safety & Wellbeing and they will make the notification).	Possibly by WHSN (if not WHSN then the Charity Safety team).



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.4.1 Background

Commonwealth and State Work Health and Safety Regulators determine if they are going to investigate Notifiable Incidents and advise the Blue Hand Group accordingly. They may choose to:

- investigate;
- delay their investigation;
- direct the Blue Hand Group to investigate and forward the report to the regulator;
- direct the Blue Hand Group to investigate and make the report available if requested at a future date; or
- allow the Blue Hand Group to follow its own reporting and investigation Procedures.

If the Regulator directs the Blue Hand Group to investigate the incident, a Decision is made on the level of investigation and the Decision process is the same whether it is a Notifiable Incident, Reportable Incident or Reportable Hazard.

Some occurrences may be subject to a 'detailed investigation', some to a 'minor or short investigation' and yet others may only require a Supervisor level investigation, as outlined in the Safety Investigation Reporting Schedule.

Other occurrences may be reported via an Incident Record/Report form or to a Supervisor but on initial investigation, it may be determined they do not contribute to safety and do not need to be investigated. These occurrences once completed and submitted, will remain in the database to ensure system integrity and may be used for analysis and record-keeping purposes.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.4.2 Priorities for investigating

The Charity's primary focus is on enhancing safety and in particular, those safety matters (including systemic matters) that may present a significant threat to the safety of Volunteers, Employees, Students, contractors, Workers, Visitors, and members of the public. The Charity will direct appropriate attention to identifying systemic factors that have the potential to result in catastrophic accidents.

In circumstances where the contributing factors are similar and the safety issues are well known, the likely safety benefits and lessons may not always justify allocating significant resources. In those cases, the Charity may undertake a limited fact-gathering investigation and report the details in an Incident Record/Report.

An example of a repetitive incident might be where an individual has slipped on stairs causing a serious personal injury. The level of injury might normally require a more detailed investigation but, due to the repetitive nature and well-known contributing factors (failure to use handrails, etc), the investigation and report may be quite short.

Equally, there is often as much or more to be learned from less Serious Incidents, patterns of incidents, and 'near misses' as there is from serious or catastrophic incidents, and where appropriate, the Charity will give priority to these sorts of investigations.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.4.3 Factors that may affect the level of investigation

The level of investigation is determined by resource availability and such factors as detailed below. These factors are presented in no particular order and may, depending on the circumstances, vary in the degree to which they influence the Blue Hand Group's Decision to investigate and the level of response:

- anticipated safety value of an investigation, including the likelihood of furthering the understanding of the scope and impact of any safety system failures
- likelihood of safety action arising from the investigation, particularly of enterprise wide significance
- existence and extent of fatalities/serious injuries and/or structural damage to University plant/other infrastructure
- obligations or recommendations under legislation
- nature and extent of public interest, in particular the potential impact on public confidence in the safety of the Blue Hand Group
- existence of supporting evidence or requirements to conduct a detailed investigation based on trends
- relevance to an identified and targeted safety program
- the extent of resources available and projected to be available in the event of conflicting priorities
- the risks associated with not investigating including consideration of whether, in the absence of a Charity investigation, a credible safety investigation by another party is likely
- timeliness of notification
- training benefit for the Blue Hand Group's investigators.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.4.4 Initiation of an investigation

When an occurrence has been classified (usually by the Charity's Safety team in accordance with this Procedure and in consultation with the CEO), an investigation will be initiated as follows:

- A detailed investigation can only be authorised by the CEO in consultation with the Charity Safety team and other key stakeholders.
- Short investigations can be initiated by the Charity's Safety team or may be directed by the CEO.
- Supervisor investigations are initiated when the initial Incident Record/Report form is submitted. Supervisor investigations may also be directed by the CEO or the Charity's Safety team.

## 4.4.5 Trend monitoring

Occurrences that may fit the definition of a safety incident but that in isolation do not represent a risk to safety, do not require individual investigation other than the investigation required once the Incident Record/Report form has been submitted.

Such occurrences may be referenced during trend monitoring of occurrences with similar factors and are entered into the Incident Record/Report for this purpose.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 4.5 Minimum investigation requirements for Supervisor investigations of Incident Record/Reports.

Supervisors are required to ensure all areas of the report are completed in the Incident Record/Report and particular attention is required in the 'Supervisor Comments' area. When investigating and writing Supervisor comments the Supervisor must consider and report on:

- the factors that contributed to the occurrence including:
  - individual actions
  - failed or absent defenses such as PPE, failure to hold handrails, etc.
  - environmental factors
  - systemic issues;
- actions required to prevent a recurrence; and
- recommendations for actions on a wider basis such as program, department, or whole of The Blue Hand Group.





# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 5 References

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW).



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 6 Schedules

This procedure should be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in 7 Procedure Information, below.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

## 7 Schedules

Policy Suite: Work Health and Safety Policy

Subordinate Schedules: Safety Investigation Reporting Schedule

Relevant Legislation: Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW),  
Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (NSW).

Related Procedures: Rehabilitation and Workers' Compensation Procedure and Work Health and Safety Management System Procedure.

Related forms, publications, and websites: State Insurance Regulatory Authority.

### Definitions:

**Decision:** A determination made by an Employee, Volunteer, Contractor, or other authorised delegate in the course of their duties on behalf of the Charity.

**Delegate:** Delegate (noun) means the officer, Volunteer, Employee, or committee of the Charity to whom, or to which, a delegation of authority has been made under this Policy.

**Employee:** A person employed by the Charity and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Blue Hand Group Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term, or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the Charity.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

**Information:** Any collection of data that is processed, analysed, interpreted, organised, classified, or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present facts, or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes and is not limited to, presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical form.

**Procedure:** An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a Policy.

**Student:** A person who is enrolled in a registered primary school, high school, and or university.

**Charity:** The term "Charity" or "BHG" means the Blue Hand Group.

**Contractor:** An entity or individual who contracts to perform work for another person or organisation, but is not employed by that person or organisation.

**Dangerous Incident:** An incident in relation to a Workplace that exposes a Worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage, or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion, or fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised 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 that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- the inrush of water, mud, or gas in workings.

**Notifiable Incident:** An incident is notifiable if it arises out of the conduct of a business or undertaking and results in the death, serious injury, or serious illness of a person, or involves a Dangerous Incident.

**Reportable Hazard:**

- Any item or plant, any Procedure, or any incident which has caused, or has the potential to cause, injury to people or damage to property, and it cannot be immediately rectified.
- Any 'near miss' incident that, although it did not result in an injury or disease, had the potential to do so.

**Reportable Incident:** Any Notifiable Incident and in addition:

- any injury, illness, or damage to equipment, plant, or vehicles that has impacted, or has the potential to impact in different circumstances, the safety of personnel involved with the Charity's business or undertaking.

**Serious Incident:** The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) sets out that a serious injury or illness of a person is an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

- immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
- immediate treatment for:
  - the amputation of any part of their body
  - a serious head injury
  - a serious eye injury
  - a serious burn
  - the separation of their skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping)
  - a spinal injury



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

- the loss of a bodily function
- serious lacerations

or medical treatment (treatment by a doctor) within 48 hours of exposure to a substance. It is also:

- any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, including any infection that is reliably attributable to carrying out work
  - that involves providing treatment or care to a person; or
  - that involves contact with human blood or body substances; or
  - that involves handling or contact with Animals, Animal hides, skins, wool or hair, Animal carcasses, or Animal waste products

**Supervisor:** Any person responsible for leading the activities of others. In the context of this Procedure, a Supervisor includes Employees at any classification level or title who have responsibilities for leading, managing, or supervising work teams and/or individual Employees and/or Volunteers.

**Visitor:** Includes those volunteers, representatives from other registered charities, and other persons who are engaged in unpaid activities on a Charity associated Site or Workplace.

**Workplace:** A place where work is carried out for the Charity and includes any place where a Worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work. Including and not limited to partners of the Charity such as venues and donating businesses.



# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

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# Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure

**Worker:** A person who carries out work in any capacity for the Charity, including work as:

- an Employee; or
- a Contractor or subcontractor; or
- an Employee of a Contractor or subcontractor; or
- an Employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking; or
- an outworker; or
- an apprentice or trainee; or
- a Student gaining work experience; or
- a volunteer; or
- a person prescribed by legislation to have specific qualifications or experience or who conducts a specific prescribed class of work.

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