

Investigation Methodology

19 steps to investigate workplace incidents.

1

Visit the accident scene.

2

Secure accident scene to preserve evidence.

3

Take measures necessary to prevent further injury or loss.

4

If a plan of the workplace is not available, do a rough sketch of accident area.

5

Record details, conditions, equipment and people involved, make diagrams, if possible take photos.

6

Interview witnesses or others involved in the work activity at the scene of the accident, starting with any eye witnesses to actual accident.

7

Interview the injured party if available.

8

Ask: What, When, Where, Who, How, Why? Establish what went wrong with the existing system of control.

9

Check the work planning and job instructions given.

10

Ensure that notification has been sent to WorkSafe.

11

Ensure that you have established and understood the sequence of events:

- Leading up to the accident
- During the accident
- The emergency response taken to prevent further harm
- The actions to secure and make scene safe.

12

Identify all hazards involved:

- Equipment and materials
- Work practices and procedures
- The work environment
- Any health issues
- Other circumstances contributing.

13

Assess the controls that were in place:

- Why were they inadequate?
- What is needed to improve?
- Who should be trained and how?
- Do others in the work group need to be trained?

14

Establish underlying causes. May be one or more of several factors. Some examples are:

- Inadequate supervision due to...
- Inadequate instruction due to...
- Inadequate enforcement of procedures due to...
- Correct equipment not where needed due to...
- Inadequate induction due to...
- Poor hazard identification and analysis due to...
- Substandard equipment due to...

15

Analyse the findings and record:

- What caused the damage
- The loss including extent and nature of injury
- The immediate cause/s; e.g. faulty guard, defective equipment
- The underlying causes; e.g. failure to check guard, failure to train others to ensure guard is in place.

16

Establish methods of control to rectify and prevent recurrence; e.g. who does what and by when:

- Immediate short-term steps to prevent further injury
- Long-term steps to prevent recurrence
- Management controls - training and supervision
- Local controls - weld up guard / establish system to check regularly.

17

Record all details, findings and corrective actions on the Accident Report form, using additional pages to record all information. Record hazard and controls on hazard identification form.

18

Communicate findings and solutions to:

- Injured person
- Health and Safety Manager (who will advise any other relevant person/s).

19

Close out. Follow up to ensure that:

- Recommended changes have been made
- That new controls have been implemented
- That training has been conducted
- That staff understand their new duties or controls
- That the new controls remain effective.



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