



Australian Government

PMAWHS310 Investigate incidents

Release: 1

PMAWHS310 Investigate incidents

Modification History

Release 1. Supersedes and is equivalent to PMAOHS310B Investigate incidents

Application

This unit of competency covers the skills and knowledge required to investigate incidents in the workplace. These incidents can vary from large to small, completely internal or partially externally coordinated. They include all types of incidents and emergencies (e.g. process, work health and safety (WHS), and environmental).

An incident is an event which causes, or could have caused, injury or illness; damage to plant, material or the environment; disruption to production or public alarm.

An incident is an unintended event, or an unintended consequence of an intended event, such as:

- fire and explosion
- loss of containment
- excursions above/below acceptable limits for emissions or plant conditions
- excursions above occupational hygiene or biological exposure limits
- non-compliance with regulatory requirements
- security breaches
- failure to follow procedures
- complaints
- vehicle incidents
- on/off-site incidents.

This unit of competency applies to operators who are required to secure the incident site, identify and examine a range of evidence to determine likely cause of incident, record evidence and analyse results to identify improvements to procedures/processes.

This unit of competency applies to experienced operators, technicians, supervisors, and those in similar roles who undertake internal investigations of minor incidents and/or who assist in external investigations of more major incidents.

The exact definition of the scope of responsibility will depend on company policy, as will the level of the person undertaking these investigations. These investigations will be in accordance with company procedures for such investigations which will be consistent with any relevant regulations.

This unit of competency applies to an individual working alone or as part of a team or group and working in liaison with other shift team members.

This unit of competency applies to all work environments and sectors within the industry.

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Pre-requisite Unit

Nil

Competency Field

Work health and safety

Unit Sector

Elements and Performance Criteria

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

1	Review incident	1.1	Undertake site inspections of incident scene
		1.2	Communicate with relevant personnel regarding specific aspects of the incident
		1.3	Monitor corrective action procedures
		1.4	Communicate changes to the situation to appropriate personnel
2	Record investigation process and results	2.1	Establish and secure boundaries of the incident scene to prevent contamination of prospective evidence/exhibits.
		2.2	Identify and interview persons relevant to the incident
		2.3	Identify and record evidence/exhibits at the scene prior to examination to ensure continuity
		2.4	Assess relevant information, documentation and evidence/exhibits
		2.5	Determine point of origin and most likely cause of incident
		2.6	Determine risk factors affecting the incident
		2.7	Identify and analyse a range of other possible causes

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| | 2.8 | Identify and utilise support services to investigate the incident scene |
| | 2.9 | Process, record and communicate information/evidence/exhibits, forms and documents to appropriate personnel following enterprise policies and procedures |
| 3 | Make suggestions to improve incident handling and prevention | 3.1 Identify and assess tactical factors and resulting priorities occurring during the incident
3.2 Formulate appropriate suggestions to improve handling of similar incidents based upon information available
3.3 Identify incident cause and make recommendations to prevent a recurrence |

Foundation Skills

This section describes those language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

Range of Conditions

This field allows for different work environments and conditions that may affect performance. Essential operating conditions that may be present (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) are included.

Regulatory framework

The latest version of all legislation, regulations, industry codes of practice and Australian/international standards, or the version specified by the local regulatory authority, must be used, and include one or more of the following:

- legislative requirements, including work health and safety (WHS)
- industry codes of practice and guidelines
- environmental regulations and guidelines
- Australian and other standards
- licence and certification requirements

All operations to which this unit applies are subject to stringent health,

safety and environment (HSE) requirements, which may be imposed through state/territory or federal legislation, and these must not be compromised at any time. Where there is an apparent conflict between performance criteria and HSE requirements, the HSE requirements take precedence.

Procedures

All operations must be performed in accordance with relevant procedures.

Procedures are written, verbal, visual, computer-based or in some other form, include one or more of the following:

- job safety analysis (JSA) methods
- risk analysis/risk management procedures
- environmental risk/environmental management procedures
- personal protective equipment (PPE) and procedures
- emergency, fire and accident procedures
- hazard policies and procedures
- emergency procedures
- work instructions
- standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- safe work method statements (SWMS)
- formulas/recipes
- batch sheets
- temporary instructions
- any similar instructions provided for the smooth running of the plant

Hazards and risks

Hazards and risk factors must be analysed in order to identify possible and likely causes of incidents.

Identifying hazards requires consideration of one or more of the following:

- hazards remaining from the original cause of the incident
- hazards arising from conducting an incident investigation
- hazards arising from working in conjunction with incident response personnel.

Identifying risks requires consideration of specific hazards, including the following:

- what level of harm can occur
- how harm can occur (various chains of events that could result in harm from the hazard)
- the likelihood that harm will occur

Evidence gained Evidence gained as a result of investigations include one or more of the following:

- video tapes
- audio tapes
- drawings
- photographs
- plans
- manifests
- relevant documents
- records of interview
- personal notes
- physical evidence/materials
- debris
- soil

Support services Support services include one or more of the following:

- pathologists
- forensic investigators
- coroner
- government medical officers
- interpreters
- technical services
- legal officers
- undertakers
- forensic accountants
- information technology consultants
- document examiners
- handwriting experts
- financial organisations
- external law enforcement agencies

Interview strategies The purpose of the interview is to establish what happened, not who is to blame. Interviews must be planned and require consideration of the following:

- location
- timing
- method (direct questioning and empathetic questioning)
- strategies for developing rapport
- who is being interviewed
- legal and policy requirements that might apply
- exclusion of leading questions
- avoidance of cross-examination

Legal and policy requirements might apply according to the status of the person being interviewed. Requirements include one or more of the following:

- the presence of a solicitor, independent person, family member or interpreter
- special consideration that applies because of disability, child, parent, age, gender, ethnicity and race

Post-investigation documentation

Post-investigation documentation include one or more of the following:

- statements
- proformas
- photographs
- tape/video recordings

Relevant personnel

The relevant personnel for incident investigation referrals will depend on the type of information being conveyed and the enterprise policies and procedures. Typically they will include one or more of the following:

- employer
- personnel directly involved in responding to the incident, including:
 - first response personnel
 - emergency response team members
 - emergency team leader
 - first aid officers
- other personnel with emergency team leader responsibilities

Unit Mapping Information

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Links

Companion Volume implementation guides are found in VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=9fc2cf53-e570-4e9f-ad6a-b228ffdb6875>