

Work Health and Safety

Notification of Incidents

WHS/OHS incidents

The South Australian Work Health and Safety Act 2012 and the Northern Territory Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 place a requirement on the Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) to notify the Regulator/(SafeWork SA) when certain accidents or incidents occur. Certain incidents also require notification to other regulators. See [Section 5](#) below.

Note - Similar requirements exist in other Australian jurisdictions.

Definitions

1. Notifiable Incidents

Notifiable Incident means:

- The death of a person
- Serious injury or illness
- Dangerous incident

Serious Injury or Illness

The table below expands on what is meant by a *Serious Injury or Illness*.

Serious Injury or Illness	Guidance
Immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital	<p>Admission into a hospital as an in-patient for any duration, even if the stay is not overnight or longer.</p> <p><u>It does not include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-patient treatment provided by the emergency section of a hospital (i.e. not requiring admission as an in-patient) and immediate discharge. • Subsequent corrective surgery such as that required to fix a fractured nose.
Immediate treatment for the amputation of any part of the body	<p>Amputation of a limb such as arm or leg, body part such as hand, foot or the tip of a finger, toe, nose or ear.</p> <p><u>It does not include:</u></p> <p>Bruising or minor abrasion or laceration to the skin.</p>
Immediate treatment for a serious head injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fractured skull, loss of consciousness, blood clot or bleeding in the brain, damage to the skull to the extent that it is likely to affect organ/face function. • Head injuries resulting in temporary or permanent amnesia.

Serious Injury or Illness	Guidance
Immediate treatment for a serious eye injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury that results in or is likely to result in the loss of the eye or total or partial loss of vision. • Injury that involves an object penetrating the eye (for example metal fragment, wood chip). • Exposure of the eye to a substance which poses a risk of serious eye damage. <p><u>It does not include:</u></p> <p>Eye exposure to a substance that merely causes irritation.</p>
Immediate treatment for a serious burn	<p>A burn requiring intensive care or critical care which could require compression garment or a skin graft.</p> <p><u>It does not include:</u></p> <p>A burn that merely requires washing the wound and applying a dressing.</p>
Immediate treatment for the separation of skin from an underlying tissue (such as de-gloving or scalping)	<p>Separation of skin from an underlying tissue such that tendon, bone or muscles are exposed (de-gloving or scalping).</p>
Immediate treatment for a spinal injury	<p>Injury to the cervical, thoracic, lumbar or sacral vertebrae including the discs and spinal cord.</p>
Immediate treatment for the loss of a bodily function	<p>Loss of consciousness, loss of movement of a limb or loss of the sense of smell, taste, sight or hearing, or loss of function of an internal organ.</p> <p><u>It does not include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mere fainting, or • a sprain, strain or fracture.
Immediate treatment for serious lacerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious lacerations that cause muscle, tendon, nerve or blood vessel damage or permanent impairment. • Deep or extensive cuts. • Tears of wounds to the flesh or tissues—this may include stitching to prevent loss of blood and/or other treatment to prevent loss of bodily function and/or infection.
Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.	

Serious Injury or Illness	Guidance
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) with micro-organisms (ii) that involves providing treatment or care to a person (iii) that involves contact with human blood or body substances (iv) that involves handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products. 	
<p>The following occupational zoonosis contracted in the course of work involving handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Q fever (ii) Anthrax (iii) Leptospirosis (iv) Brucellosis (v) Hendra Virus (vi) Avian Influenza (vii) Psittacosis. 	

Dangerous Incident

A *dangerous incident* means an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to the person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- (a) an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance; or
- (b) an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire; or
- (c) an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam; or
- (d) an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance; or
- (e) electric shock; or
- (f) the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing; or
- (g) 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; or
- (h) the collapse or partial collapse of a structure; or
- (i) the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation; or
- (j) the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel; or
- (k) the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel; or
- (l) any other event prescribed by the Regulations; but does not include an incident of a prescribed kind.

2. What To Do In The Event of a Notifiable Incident

Should an incident, injury or illness from the table or list above occur:

- make the area safe, but do not otherwise disturb the site
- report the matter immediately to University Security (82012880) and to the Associate Director, WHS (0414190024), who will report the matter to the appropriate Regulator and will inform the University's Senior Executive and the Office of Communications and Engagement of the incident and the area Health and Safety Representative (HSR).

3. Preserving the Site

The person with management or control of the workplace must ensure that the site or any plant, substance, structure or thing where the incident occurred is not disturbed, so far as is reasonably practicable, until an inspector arrives at the site or any earlier time that the inspector directs, unless it is required to assist an injured person, remove a deceased person, to make the area safe, or are directed by police.

4. Another Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) Involved

Where there are other PCBU's (e.g. Contractors) involved, each PCBU must notify the relevant Regulator.

5. Other Incidents Types That Need To Be Reported To Regulators

5.1 Electrical Incidents/Accidents

Under the SA Electricity Act and Regulations, the University must report electrical incidents or accidents (including those that result in an electric shock), or involve gas infrastructure or gas fitting to the Office of the Technical Regulator (OTR), as well as to SafeWorkSA. The Associate Director, WHS will report any such incidents to the OTR and SafeWorkSA as follows:

- death – immediately by phone
- injury requiring medical assistance – within 24 hours
- all other incidents – within 10 working days

5.2 Radiation incidents and accidents

Under Radiation legislation, the University must report all radiation incidents and accidents (including loss or theft or a radioactive substance or radiation apparatus) to the South Australian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Radiation Protection Branch. The Associate Director, WHS or the University Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) will be responsible for reporting any such incidents to the EPA.

5.3 Chemical spills

Any significant chemical spills that may potentially cause pollution must be reported to the WHS Unit who will determine if it needs to be reported to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

5.4 Boating incidents/accidents

Boating incidents/accidents that result in or include:

- the loss of a vessel
- a collision with another vessel or an object
- the grounding, sinking, flooding or capsizing of a vessel
- a fire
- a loss of stability that affects the safety of the vessel
- a close quarters situation
- the death or injury, or possible death or injury, of a person on board
- the loss, or possible loss, of a person from a vessel (even if picked up)

must be reported to University Security, Associate Director WHS or the University Diving and Boating Officer immediately.

The Associate Director, WHS must report any incidents listed above to the SA Department of

Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (as the authorised agency of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority) as soon as possible, and must provide a written report the Department within 72 hours.

5.5 Drugs and other Controlled Substances

As the holder of controlled substance(s) licenses the University must report the following:

- suspected theft
- unaccounted loss
- suspected drug or substance abuse or diversion by a staff member

Any such incidents must be reported to University Security and to the Associate Director, WHS immediately. The Associate Director, WHS will report to the relevant authority (Controlled Substances Licensing, Department of Health and Aging, and depending on the incident, the SA Police).

5.6 Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate (SSAN)

Any loss or theft of SSAN must be reported to the Police and SafeWorkSA immediately by the Associate Director, WHS.