

THE ETHICAL CONSULTING GROUP

RESPONDING TO WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy articulates how ECG employees and management will respond to all workplace accidents and incidents. It describes how to fulfil reporting and related responsibilities in order to maintain safe and healthy workplaces.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all ECG employees and any person who is considered to be an ECG worker under the *Work Health Safety Act 2011 (ACT)* (the WHS Act).

BACKGROUND

The ECG is committed to maintaining safe and healthy workplaces. As well as immediate response to workplace accidents and incidents, corrective and preventative actions must be taken, where necessary, to prevent the recurrence of an accident/incident. Reporting workplace accidents/incidents at a local level is of critical importance to how the ECG manages risks to health and safety at a wider organisational level.

PRINCIPLES

1. In the event of a workplace accident/incident action must be taken with the express aim of immediately assisting any injured persons (without endangering self or others), whilst ensuring the safety of other people in the workplace.
2. Other response action must include appropriate reporting of the accident or incident as prescribed by ECG policy and any specific direction given by the work area.

3. Risk management action must form part of the response to workplace accidents and incidents; consistent with the ECG Work Health and Safety Risk Management Policy.

RESPONDING TO NOTIFIABLE INCIDENTS

4. As provided by the policy, ECG managers are required to report notifiable incidents that occur within a workplace regardless of whether or not the person/people involved is/are considered to be ECG workers:
 - a. to WorkSafe ACT immediately, by the fastest possible means; and
 - b. in writing to WorkSafe ACT no later than 48 hours after the notifiable incident has occurred.
5. The person who is responsible for reporting a notifiable incident to WorkSafe ACT immediately is the workplace supervisor/manager.
6. ECG managers and entities must undertake a formal internal workplace accident/incident investigation (the investigation) when a notifiable incident has occurred within an ECG workplace.
7. ECG managers and entities must determine the correct scale and scope of the investigation which is proportionate to the risk associated with the accident/incident's recurrence.
8. An investigation must be undertaken in line with the procedure outlined in Annexe A of this policy.

OTHER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

9. ECG managers and entities must report all workplace accidents and incidents to all relevant parties and within the timeframes detailed in Annexe B of this policy.
10. Managers within the ECG will judge, on a case by case basis (except in the event of a notifiable incident), whether an accident or incident involving a person who is not considered to be an ECG employee warrants further reporting and/or local remedial action to protect individuals from further harm.
11. The information collected by ECG for the purposes of responding to workplace accident/incidents will not be used for any other purpose than that which has been disclosed in this policy.

12. Storage, handling and disposal of documentation associated with the response to workplace accidents/incidents must be undertaken by managers and entities in line with the ECG Principles and Policies.
13. ECG Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) must not be provided with a copy of the personal information associated with an accident/incident report without the written permission of the person to whom the report relates.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All ECG employees have a responsibility to ensure that they:

- understand and comply with workplace safety policy, practice and procedure;
- report any incident or accident including identifying and notifying of potential significant risks of accident or injury as per legislation and this policy;
- report notifiable incidents to WorkSafe ACT if they are the workplace supervisor/ manager at the time and location the notifiable incident occurs; and
- assist with any investigations of, or response to, accidents/incidents in which they were involved.

Company Directors

Company directors have primary responsibility for the implementation of this policy at all levels in their organisations, and for ensuring that procedures are in place for accident/incident reporting, investigation and response.

Senior Managers

It is the responsibility of the senior managers, within their own areas of responsibility, to:

- ensure all accidents/incidents are reported appropriately as per this policy and legislation;
- ensure that all accidents/incidents are reviewed and investigated where required;
- identify, implement and monitor appropriate risk and hazard control measures;
- ensure, as far as possible, that all workers in their area of responsibility are aware of the workplace's safety and accident/incident reporting expectations;
- regularly inform workers of reporting requirements and outcomes of investigations; and
- ensure that records of all accidents/incidents and the records of investigations are completed and held securely.

Workplace supervisors/managers are responsible for:

- ensuring that the workplace is rendered safe to prevent further immediate injury pending investigation;
- ensuring appropriate first aid is rendered to any injured person/s;
- ensuring that the incident is reported appropriately (as per Annexe B);
- preserving the work area of a notifiable incident which requires investigation by WorkSafe ACT and/or other official personnel;
- ensuring that workers and witnesses, where applicable, participate as appropriate in the reporting of workplace accidents/incidents; and
- ensuring that injured workers are provided with ongoing care and support.

Work Health and Safety Team

The ECG WHS teams (or HR teams) are responsible for:

- advising and supporting the supervisor/manager to report an incident to WorkSafe ACT (where required) and other parties within the timeframes required by law and this policy;
- advising and supporting the supervisor of a worker involved in accidents or incidents to ensure they have the skills/information to assist the worker;
- following up with work area supervisors to ensure that any recommended actions following incident investigations have been documented and also implemented;
- providing appropriate briefing on workplace accidents and incidents to the HR manager and/or relevant executives with their organisation; and
- working independently or in collaboration with the safety support team to ensure that accident/incident reports are reviewed and risk assessed, and that appropriate investigation is undertaken.

WorkSafe ACT

WorkSafe ACT has responsibility for the administration, regulation and enforcement of the *Work Health Safety Act 2011* (ACT).

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE

This policy is aligned with:

- The *Work Health Safety Act 2011* (ACT) (the WHS Act);
- The *Information Privacy Act 2014* (ACT) (the Privacy Act);



ANNEXE A

CONDUCTING INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS INTO ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Procedure for conducting a formal internal workplace accident/incident investigation (the investigation) when a notifiable incident has occurred within an ECG workplace:

- a. form a team to conduct the investigation. It is preferable the team include a worker HSR, but where an HSR is not on the investigation team they must be consulted as part of the investigation process;
- b. undertake the investigation process in a timely and efficient manner;
- c. ensure the investigation is conducted in accordance with the ECG values and behaviours and Code of Conduct;
- d. liaise effectively with WorkSafe ACT and/or other relevant organisations and not hinder or influence any concurrent, separate, investigation into the notifiable incident;
- e. create a report summarising the findings of the investigation and accurately keep records pertaining to it;
- f. create an action plan containing the following information:
 - an assessment of the likelihood of the accident/incident recurring AND the magnitude of the threat to health and safety if it did (a risk rating);
 - details of what control measures, such as changes to work practices, will be introduced and an indication of when those controls have been/will be applied;
 - a risk rating post-application of controls;
 - indication of any recommendations made (or anticipated) by Worksafe ACT; and
 - a review date when the action taken to eliminate/control the risk of the accident or incident recurring will be evaluated.
- g. provide a written copy of the investigation documentation to WorkSafe ACT if requested;
- h. collect, use and store any information associated with the investigation in line with privacy principles; and
- i. consult with relevant workers regarding the results of the investigation and any proposed changes to policies, practices or procedures which affect them.

Managers may choose to undertake a formal internal workplace accident/incident investigation when a non-notifiable incident has occurred, however, in this situation, would not be required to provide WorkSafe ACT with any documentation pertaining to that assessment.

Information and assistance for managers/other entities on work health and safety risk management may be obtained through the ECG HR Team.

