

1. Purpose

To ensure all hazards, near misses and incidents occurring at the Greater Dandenong City Council (GDCC) are reported, investigated, and recorded in accordance with legislative requirements.

The underlying principle of the investigation process is to determine the **cause** and **implement corrective actions** to remove or mitigate the risk and prevent a recurrence of similar incidents or near misses that cause injury or have a potential to cause injury. These investigations shall focus on the gathering of factual information and shall not to be used to assign **blame** to individuals.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all employees, contractors, and volunteers at GDCC workplaces.

3. Definitions

AHPRA: (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency)

Causal Factors: the primary reasons behind an incident.

Designated Work Group (DWG): is a negotiated and agreed grouping of workers who share similar workplace health and safety risks and/or conditions.

EAP: Employee Assistance Program

First Aid Injury (FAI): is where minor treatment was administered at work using a first aid kit e.g. band aid, bandage, ice pack etc.

Hazard: a source or situation with the potential to cause harm in terms of injury, illness, damage to property or environment or a combination of these.

Health Practitioner: An individual who is registered under the Medical Practitioners National Law in Australia (eg General Practitioner, Nurse, Physiotherapist, Chiropractor, Psychologist and other listed professions on the AHPRA website)

HSRs: Health and Safety Representatives

Immediate or Imminent Exposure: WorkSafe considers '*immediate exposure*' to mean the person was exposed to a serious risk to their health or safety when the incident occurred, including where the person was not injured or where an illness may arise later due to exposure to the incident. They consider '*imminent exposure*' to mean a person was or would have been exposed to a serious risk to their health or safety when the incident occurred.

Incident: an unplanned event resulting in, or having the potential for injury, ill health, damage or other loss.

Lost Time Injury (LTI): An injury or illness that is severe enough to lose an entire shift (or greater) and is supported by a medical certificate, a Police Report or discretion being exercised by management in regard to particular circumstances where a Staff member requiring leave of absence.

Medical Treatment Injury (MTI): An injury or illness that requires treatment from a health practitioner but does not involve lost time.

Near miss: any occurrence that might have led to injury or illness to a person.

Notifiable incident: dangerous occurrences and incidents which, as prescribed in the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004, are required to be reported to the statutory authority, WorkSafe.

Report Only: An incident occurred that affected the person, but no treatment for illness or injury was required.

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Root Cause Analysis: a technique to determine the causal factors for the occurrence of an incident.

Serious Risk: WorkSafe considers that the term 'serious risk to the health and safety of any person' means:

- that exposure to the incident created a risk which, if it had eventuated, could have resulted in death or a serious injury or illness of a person (seriousness of potential harm), and
- the level of risk was not minor, in that there was a real likelihood of the risk eventuating (likelihood of incident occurring)

4. Responsibilities

For general OHS responsibilities refer to OHS Responsibility Procedure

The Chief People Officer is responsible for ensuring the procedure is implemented and reviewed, as required.

Manager OHS is responsible for:

- monitoring and reviewing the system for effective incident management and reporting
- providing advice and recommendations to managers and employees on preventative and corrective action to improve the level of health and safety
- overseeing the conduct of investigations and corrective action/s of significant incidents.

Relevant Managers are responsible for:

- implementing the procedure in their area of responsibility
- communicating and consulting with relevant HSRs, employees, contractors and volunteers about this procedure
- informing their Director of a notifiable incident (see **5.3.3**) with the details provided to them from the Supervisor / Team Leader / Coordinator. In the immediate absence of the Director, the Manager has the responsibility to notify the CEO.
- enter and review incidents if they are a direct report for the affected employee, and / or in the absence of supervisors or responsible officers for other affected employees
- following up with any overdue tasks / corrective actions within Elumina.

Relevant Directors are responsible for:

- informing the CEO of a notifiable incident with the details provided to them from the Manager or Supervisor / Team Leader / Coordinator.
- following up with any overdue tasks / corrective actions within Elumina.

Employees are responsible for:

- reporting all hazards, near misses, or incidents, whether injury occurs or not, to the immediate supervisor and recorded in the **Incident, Near Miss & Hazard reporting system** in consultation with the Supervisor immediately following the incident.

In some instances, it may not be possible to contact the immediate supervisor in the event of an incident however **every effort must be made** to notify a Responsible Officer immediately an incident occurs.

Responsible Officers include:

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- Supervisor
 - Co-ordinator
 - Team Leader
 - Manager
 - Service Unit Leader **or** Team Leader or Co-ordinator of another Team
 - Office Administration
- completing the online Incident, Near Miss & Hazard report form, together with the Supervisor or Responsible Officer, **as soon as possible** following an incident occurring, or identifying a hazard. It is expected that the Report Form will be completed on the same day or within 24 hours, one working day of the incident or hazard identification.

The reason for the immediate reporting of incidents or near misses is to ensure that appropriate medical attention is provided where necessary and that measures can be taken to prevent a similar event occurring in the future.

Employees have a duty of care to protect their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or inactions.

- consult with the supervisor during the review / investigation of the incident to help identify the cause/s and to assist in deciding on the corrective actions required to eliminate or reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring again.

Supervisors or Responsible Officers are responsible for:

- assisting an injured worker to receive appropriate treatment (including EAP), where required, making safe the site or situation, and to notify GDCC's Team of any notifiable incident or dangerous occurrence in their area of supervision. Additional responsibilities in line with notifiable incidents include:
 - preserving or making the site safe in accordance with the above requirements
 - contacting GDCC's OHS Team on 8571 5276
 - emailing details of the incident to OHS Team within 24 hours to (OHS@cgd.vic.gov.au)
 - informing and providing details of the incident to their Manager
 - in the immediate absence of the Manager, informing and providing details to the Director
 - inform the injured worker of their DWG HSR contact.
- entering a hazard, incident or near miss in consultation with the reporting employee. The Supervisor or Responsible Officer is then required to investigate (review) the incident or near miss which will establish tasks or corrective actions to eliminate or reduce the risks or hazards that existed prior to the incident or near miss taking place.
- consulting with the reporting employee to identify the cause/s of an incident, and to consider their suggestions before deciding on the corrective action/s to eliminate or reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring again.

- implementing any task or corrective action that has been identified and assigned to the supervisor or responsible officer by the due date.

Return to Work Coordinator & Injury Management Consultant is responsible for:

- sending letters of acknowledgement to the injured or reporting person upon receipt of the Incident, Near Miss & Hazard Report.
- notifying all other relevant parties including the Health & Safety Representative (HSR) advising receipt of the Incident, Near Miss & Hazard Report for that injured or reporting person. Ensure a **Workers Injury Claim Form** is provided to an injured worker where necessary or as requested and provide advice of their entitlements under Councils Enterprise Agreement .
- ensuring that all injury and claim management processes are followed in accordance with the corporate *Injury Management Occupational Rehabilitation & Return to Work Procedure and OHS Post Incident Response and Debrief Administrative Procedure*.

Manager OHS or Health and Safety Consultant is responsible for:

- ensuring the information entered into the Incident Reporting system is of high quality, incidents are appropriately categorised, and that tasks or corrective actions are appropriate and adequate in response to the incident.
- assisting staff and supervisors, where requested, throughout the entry and review of incidents process.
- processing all incidents reviewed by supervisors and include all relevant persons on the email distribution list in a timely manner.
- ensuring that a thorough review (or investigation) of incidents and near misses are conducted in a professional, impartial and objective manner.
- assisting, where requested, in any review, investigation, audit, rehabilitation process and the formulation of corrective actions to control the risk of further injury or loss.
- maintaining accurate records and statistical information relating to incidents in the workplace.
- promoting an atmosphere in the workplace which is conducive to a harmonious and successful return to work, following the injury of an employee.
- notifying WorkSafe immediately after becoming aware of any notifiable incident or dangerous occurrence, and to provide a written report to the Authority of the incident or occurrence within 48 hours.
- notifying other authorities as required e.g., Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) for electrical or gas incidents, Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for any environmental incidents.

5. Procedure

5.1 Incident Response

When an incident occurs, the following actions must be taken:

- if safe to do so, attend to any injured person/s and/or call for first aid assistance
- notify emergency services if necessary
- enlist assistance as required
- if necessary and if safe to do so, make the site safe to prevent further incidents
- secure the site of the incident to ensure that it is not disturbed
- notify the following:
 - employee, contact their supervisor
 - contractor, contact their supervisor and/or their contract superintendent / representative
 - volunteers, contact their supervisor
 - visitors, contact person being visited

The Supervisor will provide information as to the appropriate staff to contact and provide advice on keeping the site undisturbed until the investigation is complete, unless necessary to prevent further injury.

As required the OHS Team will notify the statutory authority, WorkSafe, of all notifiable incidents (see 5.3.3 for further details).

5.2 First Aid and Medical Treatment

Depending upon the severity of the injury, appropriate first aid or medical attention should be sought. Any injury requiring urgent medical treatment ring the Victorian Ambulance Service [000].

Transportation

The Supervisor has the responsibility to arrange transport for the injured person, if required, which should be to the following medical treatment centre/s dependent upon availability and expertise:

- Sonic Health, The Valley Private Hospital, or Think Physio; or
- The injured person's treating practitioner

5.3 Reporting

Incident, Near Miss and Hazard Reporting

An incident, near miss and hazard report is to be completed for all hazards, incidents, injuries, illnesses, and system failures arising from reported hazards, incidents or workplace safety inspections and audits. This must be completed by the person involved in the incident or the person reporting the hazard in consultation with supervisors.

GDCC's Incident, Near Miss and Hazard reporting form can be found in *The Source > Safety, Health & Wellbeing > Report an Incident > Report an Incident, Near Miss or Hazard*

Types of Hazards and Incidents to be Reported

Hazards, near misses, injuries to employees, contractors and volunteers must be reported in Elumina - GDCC's Incident, Near Miss and Hazard reporting management system.

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Incidents that involve visitors, and depending on the circumstances, may come under public liability; therefore, reported via Pulse in the Risk system.

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Notifiable Incidents

Notification to the statutory authority, WorkSafe, is required where a hazard or incident, following requirements set out in *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

GDCC must notify WorkSafe immediately after becoming aware of an incident at a workplace which results in--

- the death of any person; or
- a person requiring medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance

medical treatment means treatment by a person registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law to practice in the medical, nursing or midwifery profession (other than as a student); or

- a person requiring immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital; or
- a person requiring immediate medical treatment for--
 - the amputation of any part of his or her body; or
 - a serious head injury; or
 - a serious eye injury; or
- the separation of his or her skin from underlying tissue (such as de-gloving or scalping); or
- electric shock; or
- a spinal injury; or
- the loss of a bodily function (example: loss of consciousness, loss of movement of a limb or a loss of the sense of smell, taste, sight or hearing or loss of function of an internal organ); or
- serious lacerations (example: requiring stitching or other medical treatment).

Note: Medical treatment does not include procedures carried out for diagnostic purposes only.

NOTICE OF DANGEROUS OCCURRENCE

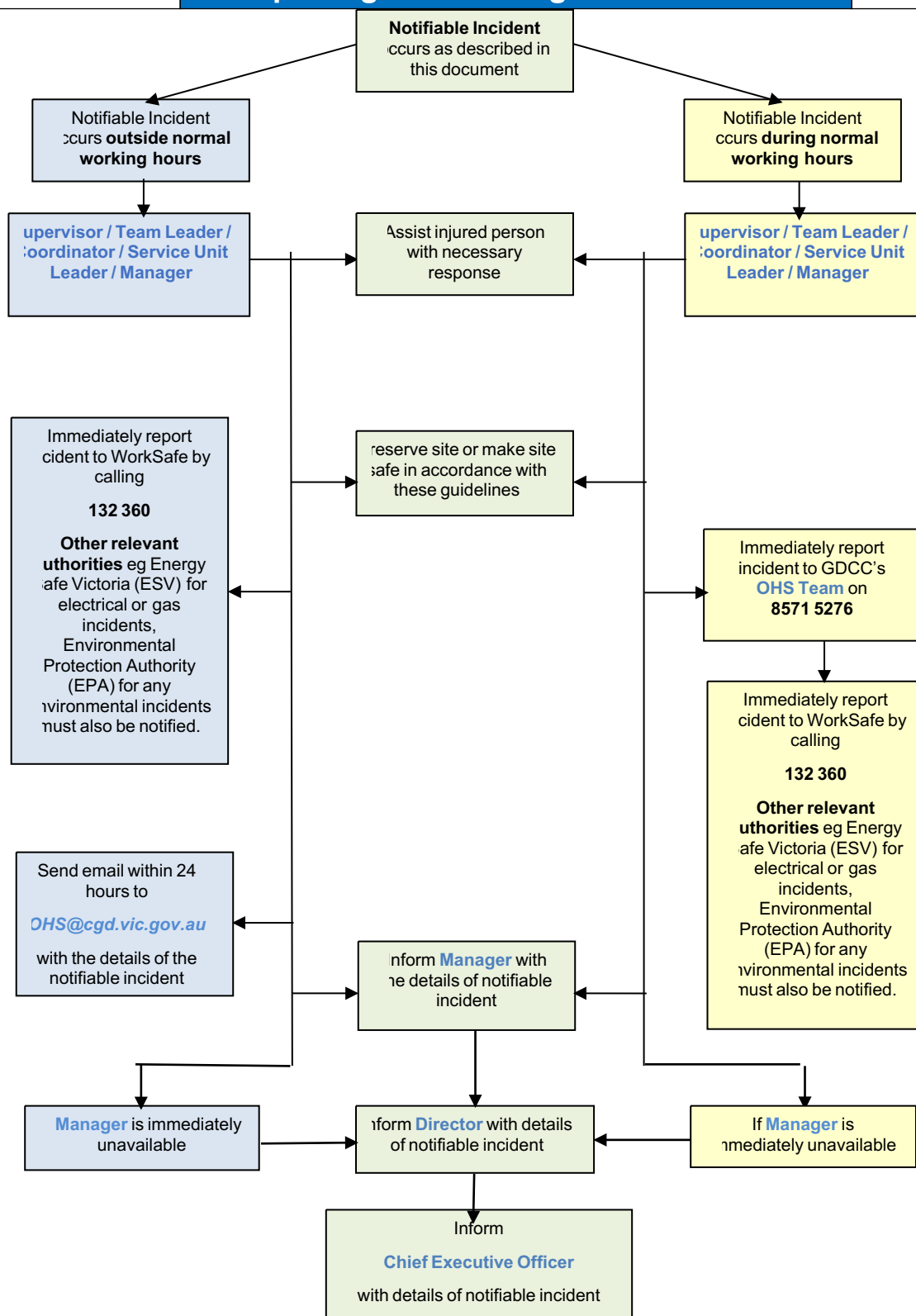
GDCC must notify WorkSafe immediately after becoming aware of an incident that exposed a person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant, including plant in relation to a mine, that the OHS Regulations prescribe, or the design of which must be registered in accordance with OHS Regulations; or
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or mine of any shoring supporting an excavation or mine; or
- the collapse or partial collapse of any part of a building or structure; or
- an implosion, explosion or fire; or
- the escape, spillage or leakage of any substance including dangerous goods as defined in the **Dangerous Goods Act 1985**; or
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or object; or
- the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings in a mine, underground excavation or tunnel; or
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in a mine, underground excavation or tunnel.

Note: Plant prescribed in the Regulations includes amusement structures, boilers, lifts, tower cranes, pressure vessels, scaffolds, tractors, hoists, vehicle hoists, earth moving machinery, temporary access equipment

Reporting responsibilities for notifiable incidents are described in section 4 of this document. The following process chart shows the responsibilities of staff during *normal working hours* and *outside normal working hours*;

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In the event that a notifiable incident occurs outside of normal hours and GDCC's Manager People and Change or the Health & Safety Consultant or OHS Advisor cannot be contacted, the supervisor has the responsibility to call WorkSafe on 132 360 to report the incident. *Reference:*

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<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/health-and-safety-topics/incident-notification>

The type of information and detail required when verbally reporting through the incident to WorkSafe is on the Incident Notification Form on the last page of this document. The WorkSafe Officer will ask questions in line with the format on the Incident Notification Form.

Once WorkSafe has been notified, Supervisors are required to report the incident to OHS Team via email (OHS@cgd.vic.gov.au) within 24 hours of the incident. It is important to include all details relevant to the incident in the email. The OHS Team will complete the Incident Notification Form online and submit it to WorkSafe within 48 hours of the verbal report.

There will also be a requirement to notify other authorities as required eg Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) for electrical or gas incidents, Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for any environmental incidents.

All other responsibilities under 'normal working hours' applies.

INCIDENT RECORDS

In addition to the notification, GDCC must provide a written record of the incident to the Authority within 48 hours of being made aware of the incident or dangerous occurrence, using the WorkSafe's Incident Notification Form.

GDCC must keep a copy of the record at the workplace or, if that is impracticable, at the usual place of business.

GDCC must ensure that the copy of the record is made available for inspection by--

- an inspector; and
- the health and safety representative, and
- a person assisting the health and safety representative, and
- the health and safety committee, and
- the injured person or a person authorised by the injured person or a representative of the deceased person.

GDCC must ensure that the copy of the record is kept for at least 5 years.

5.4 Incident Investigation

5.4.1 General

Investigations must begin as soon as possible; the purpose is to identify hazards and causal factors that contributed to the incident and identify possible preventative and corrective actions.

Where practicable, nothing at the site must be disturbed until after the completion of the investigation other than what is necessary to prevent further injury. Where appropriate, photographs or video footage may be taken and equipment held for subsequent examination or testing.

It is the responsibility of the relevant Supervisor to complete the incident investigation in a timely manner using the incident and near miss investigation form.

Investigation of Incidents in Council owned/controlled workplaces

Where an incident or near miss occurs in a Council owned / controlled workplace, the review / investigation process may be conducted by the Manager / Supervisor, the Health and Safety Consultant or OHS Advisor, and calling on other expertise as required. Supervisors must consult with the reporting employee to identify the cause/s of an incident, and to consider their suggestions before

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deciding on the corrective action/s to eliminate or reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring again.

Email notification of the review / investigation report relating to a workplace incident will be provided to the relevant DWG HSR and all parties to the review / investigation process.

It should be noted that an employer must not disclose medical information concerning an employee without the employee's consent unless the information is in a form:

- a) that does not identify the employee; or
- b) from which the employee's identity cannot be reasonably ascertained

As before, the DWG HSR may elect to inspect the workplace to assess the effectiveness of the remedial measures adopted after the investigation has been completed.

Investigation of Incidents within a private residence

Some workgroups in GDCC provide a service within a private residence. Incident investigations need a consistent, timely and systematic approach in all circumstances. When incidents occur within a private residence, it may require additional persons to take part in the investigation due to the circumstances of dealing with a client in their own home.

In these circumstances, the department / business unit shall document the investigation process in local procedures or manual.

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INCIDENT REVIEW / INVESTIGATION PROCESS

Advised of details of incident or near miss in their designated work area and receives email notifications from Elumina in regards to the creation and completion of tasks / corrective actions

1

Can involve:-
Manager
supervisor

Conducts review / investigation with reporting employee

Follow procedure in Elumina or on Investigation

Yes

Carry out hazardous manual

2

3

Monitor status of tasks and corrective actions in Elumina
H&S Representative reserves right to inspect Corrective M

4

5

Complete task / corrective action in Elumina

5.4.2 Investigation Methodology

The investigation process is to:

- gather facts
- identify hazards and causal factors
- determine corrective actions

5.4.3 Gather Facts

The Manager / Supervisor should gather facts by:

- interviewing the reporting employee
- reviewing photos, sketches and other evidence gathered during inspections and observations
- analysing systems of work, training records, maintenance and service records
- determining environmental conditions, such as lighting, floor surfaces, weather conditions etc.
- reviewing materials, equipment, chemical and substances involved
- interviewing witnesses
- establishing the sequence of events, and
- determining if any similar events have occurred before.

5.4.4 Identify Hazards and Causal Factors

The Manager / Supervisor should identify hazards and causal factors by:

- applying an appropriate root cause investigation method (refer to Investigation Form)
- analysing the differences between what actually happened and what should have happened before, during and after an incident (including incident recovery or emergency measures), and
- determining whether any existing controls failed e.g. was equipment guarded, chemical stored correctly, was the correct procedure followed etc.

5.4.5 Determine Corrective Actions

To prevent eliminate or reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Manager / Supervisor should determine corrective actions by:

- identifying new risk control actions or improving existing risk control actions to be implemented
- identifying the person/s responsible for carrying out corrective actions and an appropriate timeframe, and
- distributing findings of the investigation to employees, including relevant elected health and safety representatives, and other relevant persons.

All identified corrective actions are to be logged in Elumina against the corresponding incident or hazard report. This will be achieved by the relevant Supervisor conducting the investigation liaising in a timely manner with the Team, who will ensure all interested parties will be notified. Interested parties must include all line management, the reporting employee, the OHS Team, and the relevant HSR.

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5.5 Review of Corrective Actions

The Manager / Supervisor shall ensure the review of corrective actions is completed. Consider the following factors:

- Have corrective actions as stated been completed?
- Have the corrective actions been effective in reducing the risk of harm to people and property?
- Have the corrective actions introduced any new hazards?

Relevant employees affected by the hazard/incident and associated corrective actions shall be consulted in the process of verifying the effectiveness of controls/corrective actions. Any changes to the control measures shall be documented in Elumina which will send automatic email notifications to all listed interested parties updating them on the change. Interested parties must include all line management, the reporting employee, the OHS Team, and the relevant HSR.

The Manager / Supervisor shall review implementation of corrective actions and their outcomes (as recorded in Elumina) in a timeframe agreed by the OHS Team. Timeframes will be set dependant on the specific corrective action and the reasonable time required to obtain an assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation. A summary of the review will be included in the corporate OHS statistical report.

5.6 Training Requirements

Employees involved in leading, participating and implementing the incident reporting and investigation process shall complete appropriate training to ensure knowledge, understanding and competency of the key principles and processes.

6. References

AHPRA (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency)

Compliance Code (Plant) December 2019

Equipment (Public Safety) Regulations 2017

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017

WorkSafe Victoria / Guide to Incident Notification

7. Related Documents

OHS Policy

OHS Responsibility Procedure

OHS Risk and Change Management Procedure

OHS Consultation and Communication Procedure

OHS Issue Resolution Procedure

Current Enterprise Agreement

OHS Risk Register

Injury Management Occupational Rehabilitation & Return to Work Procedure

OHS Post Incident Response and Debrief Administrative Procedure

OHS Incident, Near Miss and Hazard Report Form

OHS Incident and Near Miss Investigation Form

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OHS Post Incident Debrief Form

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