

## **ACCIDENTS**

The recording of accidents is a vital activity for all employers. It is good practice to monitor the number and type of accidents that are recorded.

### **Dealing with Accidents and other Dangerous Incidents**

When an incident occurs, prompt action should be taken by a responsible person to deal with any immediate risks. Action may include:

- first aid treatment
- isolating any danger
- fencing off a hazardous area

The responsible person, in consultation with a trained first aider if appropriate, should decide whether the emergency services should be notified. In cases of doubt, or when a member of the public is affected, call an ambulance. For further information and advice refer to *First Aid Guidance* in the document library.

For minor injuries which are within the first aider's capability to treat, they should provide appropriate treatment.

Some smaller sites do not have an employee trained as a first aider. In these cases an arrangement may be made with another nearby employer for their trained first aiders' to give assistance if required. The responsible person should keep up-to-date information about other employer's first aiders if this is appropriate.

The responsible person should ensure as a matter of priority that the danger has been isolated. Consultation may be necessary with an engineer or with management, but the principle is to remove the source of danger which resulted in the incident.

Fencing off hazardous areas may be appropriate if the source of danger cannot be removed by other means. The aim is to protect persons from coming into contact with hazardous equipment, structure or sources of danger which cannot be removed immediately. Fencing might also be appropriate where disturbance of an accident site would obstruct emergency services or subsequent investigations.

The responsible person should consider the need for photographs or measurements, if the nature or severity of the incident makes this appropriate. If the taking of measurements or photographs exposes persons to risks, this should be avoided or postponed.

### **Recording Accidents**

Although most accidents will fortunately be minor, even these usually cause pain and distress.

The recording of accidents is a vital activity for all employers. It is good practice to monitor the number and type of accidents that are recorded. The number and pattern of accidents will provide an indication of what circumstances, activity or equipment is causing accidents and indicates whether risks are being adequately controlled. An increase in eye injuries in a workshop environment may indicate that the rules regarding the wearing of eye protection are not being followed. Alternatively it might be that the right type of eye protection is not being provided. An increase in back injuries might be indicative of a need for retraining, that goods have started to arrive in larger or heavier sizes or that mechanical handling equipment is defective or broken.

It is important that the details of any accident are recorded and the incident investigated by a responsible manager in all cases.

All companies with more than 10 employees are required to keep a record of accidents in a prescribed format.

Employees should report accidents to their line manager and should ensure that details are entered into the site Accident Book, which should be approved and conform to Data Protection principles (a BI 510 accident book with detachable pages meets these requirements). An incident record form may be utilised to assist with investigation of the incident. For further information and advice refer to the *Incident, Hazard and Near Miss Record Form* under the 'accidents' subtopic in the document library.

Accidents to contractors, visitors to the site and members of the public should always be recorded in detail on an Incident Report form as appropriate.

It will be useful to obtain written statements from those who witness accidents or dangerous incidents/near misses. These statements are for information only at the initial stage, but witnesses may be asked to appear in court if the need arises. For further information and advice refer to *Witness Statement Form* under the 'accidents' subtopic in the document library.

Copies of Incident Investigation Forms and witness statements, where appropriate, should be sent to the appropriate manager and site owner/agent's Insurance Department. This is particularly important where incidents may result in an insurance claim, since failure to report may result in loss of cover.

## **Formal Reporting of Incidents**

**From 1 October 2013, The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR 2013) comes into force, which introduces significant changes to the existing reporting requirements. The main changes are to simplify the reporting requirements in the following areas:**

- the classification of 'major injuries' to workers is being replaced with a shorter list of 'specified injuries';
- the previous list of 47 types of industrial disease is being replaced with eight categories of reportable work-related illness;
- fewer types of dangerous occurrence require reporting

**There are no significant changes to the reporting requirements for:**

- fatal accidents;
- accidents to non-workers (members of the public);
- accidents which result in the incapacitation of a worker for more than seven days

**Recording requirements remain broadly unchanged, including the requirement to record accidents resulting in the incapacitation of a worker for more than three days.**

There are legal duties on:

- employers
- self-employed people
- people in control of premises

to report work-related deaths, specified injuries or over-seven-day injuries, work related diseases, and dangerous occurrences (near miss accidents).

### **Over seven days**

If one of your employees has an accident at work which results in them being absent for more than seven consecutive days, this must be reported. Similarly, if they are unable to do their full range of duties for more than seven consecutive days this is also reportable.

This does not include the day of the accident, but does include any days that the person would not normally have been expected to work such as holidays or weekends.

In this situation you may need to ask the person if they would have been able to carry out all of their duties if they had been at work. Reports of 'over seven day' accidents must be made within fifteen days.

### **Injuries to non-workers (if a member of the public is taken to hospital)**

Work-related accidents involving members of the public or people who are not at work must be reported if a person is injured, and is taken from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment to that injury. There is no requirement to establish what hospital treatment was actually provided, and no need to report incidents where people are taken to hospital purely as a precaution when no injury is apparent.

If the accident occurred at a hospital, the report only needs to be made if the injury is a 'specified injury'

These are only reportable where the accident is as a result of the work activity or workplace e.g. a person trips over a trailing cable and is taken to hospital – the accident is reportable. If a person merely loses their balance, falls over and is taken to hospital, this is not reportable as the accident is not work related.

### **Specified injuries (formerly Major injuries)**

You must also report certain specified injuries. If an employee has a specified injury (see below) caused by work, it must be reported by the quickest possible means regardless of how long they are off work. Reportable specified injuries include:

- a fracture, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes;
- amputation of an arm, hand, finger, thumb, leg, foot or toe;
- permanent loss of sight or reduction of sight;
- crush injuries leading to internal organ damage;
- serious burns (covering more than 10% of the body, or damaging the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs);
- scalpings (separation of skin from the head) which require hospital treatment;
- unconsciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia;
- any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space, which leads to hypothermia, heat-induced illness or requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.

## **Dangerous Occurrences**

As well as specific specified injuries, you must also report certain dangerous occurrences by the quickest possible means. These include:

- the collapse/overturning/failure of any load-bearing parts of lifting equipment such as hoists, fork lift trucks, cranes or excavators
- electrical short circuits that cause fire or explosion resulting in the stoppage of the equipment involved for more than 24 hours or which has the potential to cause death
- the collapse (or partial collapse) of scaffolding which is more than 5 metres high resulting in a substantial part of the scaffold falling or overturning
- the collapse (or partial collapse) of any floor or wall of any building used as a workplace
- the release or escape of any substance in a quantity that could cause death, specified injury or damage to health

## **Diseases**

### **Reportable occupational diseases**

Employers and self-employed people must report diagnoses of certain occupational diseases, where these are likely to have been caused or made worse by their work. These diseases include (regulation 8 and 9):

- carpal tunnel syndrome;
- severe cramp of the hand or forearm;
- occupational dermatitis;
- hand-arm vibration syndrome;
- occupational asthma;
- tendonitis or tenosynovitis of the hand or forearm;
- any occupational cancer;
- any disease attributed to an occupational exposure to a biological agent.

If an employee gives you written diagnosis from a doctor that they have a specified disease you may need to report it. In order for it to be reportable, it must be listed in the relevant regulations and result due to a specific work activity.

## **Fatalities**

The death of any person, whether or not they are at work must be reported if it results from an accident caused by work.

In all cases of doubt as to whether an incident is reportable it is advisable to err on the side of caution and report the incident. Contact the Health and Safety Executive advisory team on 0300 0031747 where experienced consultants are available to give practical advice and assist you further.

When an Enforcement Officer receives an incident notification, they can send an officer to carry out a full investigation.

## **Notification and Reporting**

The information required is included on form F2508 or F2508A in the case of diseases (refer to example forms *F2508* and *F2508a* under the 'accidents' subtopic in the document library).

The responsible person must report the incident to the Incident Contact Centre (ICC) as soon as possible in one of the following ways:

To make a report, go to [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor) . A telephone service can be used to report fatal and specified (formerly major) injuries only – call the Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 9923 (opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5 pm).

### **Recording requirements**

Records of incidents covered by RIDDOR are also important. They ensure that you collect sufficient information to allow you to properly manage health and safety risks. This information is a valuable management tool that can be used as an aid to risk assessment, helping to develop solutions to potential risks. In this way, records also help to prevent injuries and ill health, and control costs from accidental loss.

You must keep a record of:

- any accident, occupational disease or dangerous occurrence which requires reporting under RIDDOR; and
- any other occupational accident causing injuries that result in a worker being away from work or incapacitated for more than three consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident but including any weekends or other rest days). You do not have to report over-three-day injuries, unless the incapacitation period goes on to exceed seven days.
- If you are an employer who has to keep an accident book, the record you make in this will be enough.

You must produce RIDDOR records when asked by HSE, local authority or ORR inspectors.

### **Overview**

- Purchase copies of the Accident Book
- Draw up and implement a suitable procedure for managing accident/incident records
- Nominate suitable individual(s) who will receive accident/incident records for secure storage
- Monitor accidents/incidents to spot trends
- Familiarise yourself with the types of accidents that require to be reported
- Be aware of the various means of contacting the ICC
- Nominate suitable individual(s) who will receive accident/incident records for secure storage and make the appropriate reports to the ICC

### **Further Guidance**

Reporting accidents and incidents at work - A brief guide to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg453.pdf>

Examples of reportable incidents <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/examples-reportable-incidents.htm>

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2013/1471/contents/made>

Accident Book, BI 510, ISBN 9780717626038

Available from HSE Books, telephone 01787 881165 [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk)