Health, Safety and Wellbeing Procedure - Incident Reporting and Investigation

Note: Notwithstanding anything stated in this procedure, in the event of an emergency, any person on University premises should call for emergency services (by dialling 000). They should then inform a member of Campus Security (1800 931 633) as soon as possible to allow Campus Security to coordinate and expedite the attendance of emergency services.

This procedure anticipates that, where a person has been injured, first aid and other appropriate emergency responses have been enacted and the injured person(s) has received immediate necessary treatment.

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This procedure outlines processes and requirements for reporting and investigating workplace incidents at Charles Sturt University (the University). It requires and supports staff to:

a. report incidents
b. properly investigate all incidents
c. take corrective action to prevent the recurrence of incidents
d. reduce work health and safety (WHS) risks at the University.

Scope

(2) This procedure has the same scope as the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Section 2 - Policy

(3) This procedure supports the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Section 3 - Procedures

Part A - Overview

(4) For compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act (WHS Act) and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy, this procedure must be followed to manage and report any work health and safety:

a. incidents (occurrences that could or do result in injury and/or ill health), and
b. notifiable incidents (occurrences that could or do result in the death of a person, a serious injury or illness, or a dangerous incident – as defined in Section 5 - Glossary).

(5) Incidents and notifiable incidents may also constitute an emergency and/or crisis and require managing under:

a. Emergency Management Procedure and site emergency plans
b. Crisis Management Procedure, and/or
c. Student Critical Incident Plan.

(6) The University promotes reporting and investigating of all work health and safety incidents. This supports a safety culture where learning from errors is used to prevent a recurrence and to comply with legislation.

Part B - Preserving the incident site

(7) When a notifiable incident occurs:

a. do only what is needed to make the site safe (e.g. provide first aid, fight any fire, contain spills, electrical isolation, physical barriers and contact emergency services)
b. preserve all evidence as it is until the regulator approves otherwise
c. suspend work in any area where a serious incident has occurred and there is a risk of a similar incident occurring again; work must not resume until the investigation has been completed and/or corrective action(s) taken.

(8) For all other incidents:

a. take appropriate immediate action to minimise the risk of further injury or damage, if it is safe to do so, before reporting the incident (e.g. provide first aid, fight any fire, contain spills, electrical isolation, physical barriers, and contact emergency services)
b. preserve all evidence as it is, where possible, until a Health, Safety and Wellbeing staff member approves otherwise.
c. photograph any evidence that needs to be moved before moving it.

Part C - Reporting

Reporting internally

(9) All notifiable incidents must be reported immediately to the Manager, Health Safety and Wellbeing.

(10) All other incidents must be reported through the Incident and Risk Management System within 24 hours of the incident occurring. If it is not practicable to use the online system, complete the WHS Incident Report and Investigation Form and email to Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

(11) An incident report:

a. may be made by any person involved in the incident, including the person affected by the incident, and
b. must be made by any first aid officers and security officers attending the incident.

(12) Where incidents constitute an emergency, refer to the site emergency plans for additional reporting requirements. Site emergency plans for University managed facilities can be found via FM Central.

(13) Incidents must also be reported to relevant managers and supervisors within the organisational unit that is responsible for the work area and/or the person(s) involved.

(14) Incidents involving:

a. motor vehicle accidents, where damage is significant, must also be reported to the local police.
b. drones must be reported in accordance with the University Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Operations Manual, which can be obtained from the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research).

Reporting to SafeWork

(15) Health, Safety and Wellbeing must notify SafeWork NSW as soon as practicable, but within 48 hours, of any serious incident.

(16) Health, Safety and Wellbeing must notify SafeWork NSW even if the person injured or killed is not a University worker or student.

Reporting to Workers Compensation Insurer

(17) Health, Safety and Wellbeing must notify the University's workers compensation insurer of all employee work-related injuries and illnesses. Notification must be within 48 hours of the incident occurring or of the University receiving notification. See also the Injury Management and Return to Work Procedure.

Part D - Investigation of incidents

(18) Investigations must be completed by supervisors/managers, or another appropriately assigned investigator, within one week of being reported. Failure to investigate an incident will be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee and other relevant compliance committees.

(19) The person investigating must:

a. gain an understanding of what happened by:
    i. visiting the incident site (it may also be appropriate to take measurements such as light levels and distances)
    ii. talking to the injured person, witnesses and experts
    iii. reviewing documents and records related to the activity involved in the incident (these might include risk assessments, safe work procedures (SWPs), training records etc.)
b. identify the contributing factors and hazards that caused the incident
c. decide on suitable corrective actions. These must be consistent with the hierarchy of controls (see the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Procedure - Risk and Hazard Management)
d. discuss and agree on actions with the person(s) who will be responsible for them
e. record the investigation and corrective actions in the Incident and Risk Management System.

(20) Incidents involving drones must be investigated in accordance with the University Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Operations Manual which can be obtained from the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research).

Review incident and investigation reports

(21) When requested by Health, Safety and Wellbeing staff, heads of organisational units must review all incident investigations and corrective actions for suitable completion. If needed, further investigation and/or additional or changed corrective actions may be requested.

Recordkeeping

(22) Incident records must be maintained as per NSW general disposal authorities. This may be up to 75 years for an incident that results in a serious personal injury or incapacity to University employees. Where a new incident

management software is introduced before retention requirements are met, incident records must be migrated to the new system.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(23) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(24) This procedure uses terms defined in the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy, as well as the following:

a. Critical incident – has the same meaning found in the Emergency Management Procedure.
b. Dangerous incident – (as per the WHS Act) means an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes any person to a serious risk resulting from an immediate or imminent exposure to:
    i. an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
    ii. an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
    iii. an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
    iv. an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
    v. electric shock, including minor shock resulting from direct contact with exposed live electrical parts (other than 'extra low voltage') including shock from capacitive discharge
    vi. the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing
    vii. the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be design or item registered under the Work Health and Safety Regulations, for example a collapsing crane
    viii. the collapse or partial collapse of a structure
    ix. the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
    x. the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel, or
    xi. the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel.
c. Immediate treatment - means the kind of urgent treatment that would be required for a serious injury or illness. It includes treatment by a registered medical practitioner, a paramedic or registered nurse. Even if immediate treatment is not readily available, e.g. because the incident site is rural or remote or because the relevant specialist treatment is not available, notification must still be made.
d. Incident - means an unplanned event resulting in, or having the potential for injury, ill-health, damage or other loss. This includes injuries, accidents and near misses (including hazards).
e. Medical treatment - means treatment by a registered medical practitioner (a doctor).
f. Notifiable incident – (as per the WHS Act) means:
    i. the death of a person
    ii. a serious injury or illness, or
    iii. a dangerous incident.
g. Serious injury or illness - (as per the WHS Act) means an injury or illness requiring the person to have:
    i. immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
    ii. immediate treatment for:
        - the amputation of any part of their body
        - a serious head injury
        - a serious eye injury
        - a serious burn

- the separation of their skin from an underlying tissue (such as de-gloving or scalping);
- a spinal injury
- the loss of a bodily function
- serious lacerations

iii. medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance

iv. any infection where the work is a significant contributing factor. This includes any infection related to carrying out work:
- with micro-organisms
- that involves providing treatment or care to a person
- that involves contact with human blood or body substances
- that involves handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products

v. the following zoonoses contracted during work involving animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products:
- Q fever
- Anthrax
- Leptospirosis
- Brucellosis
- Hendra Virus
- Avian Influenza
- Psittacosis.

(25) For this procedure, the following interpretations may apply:

a. Work Health and Safety Act (WHS Act) – includes the equivalent state/territory legislation for University facilities and premises outside of NSW.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	20th December 2023
Review Date	20th December 2026
Approval Authority	Chief Operating Officer
Approval Date	19th December 2023
Expiry Date	20th October 2025
Unit Head	Frank Tamsitt Executive Director, Safety, Security and Wellbeing
Author	Andrea Bishop Associate Director, Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Enquiries Contact	Health, Safety and Wellbeing

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