

## ACCIDENT/INCIDENT INVESTIGATION RIDDOR

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the event of an employee, contractor, visitor or member of the public suffering an injury from a work related incident, certain procedures must be followed:

Initially the accident **MUST** be reported to the responsible person and recorded in the Company accident book as quickly as possible. Any employees working away from the company premises should contact the office where the accident book is located and request that an entry is made on their behalf by a work colleague. The responsible person or a member of Management should also be informed immediately by telephone/email.

The details that must be recorded in the Accident Book are:

- Name of the person suffering the injury;
- Date and time of the injury;
- Name of person reporting the injury;
- Cause of the injury;
- Any action taken as a result of the injury;
- Whether or not the injury is reportable to the enforcing authority (Health and Safety Executive or Local Authority);
- Nature of the injury (e.g.: part of the body affected).

The responsible person is required to report the incident to Company management, who will decide if it is reportable to the enforcing authority under RIDDOR. If it is, then an appointed member of management will contact the HSE in accordance with the guidelines in the RIDDOR reporting requirement. Over seven-day injuries must be reported within fifteen days of the incident to the HSE office (or the local authority Environmental Health Department) that serves the location of the accident. Serious incidents (which are reportable immediately) should be reported by the quickest possible means, and then must be followed up by the official reporting form within ten (10) days, unless reported to the Incident Contact Centre by phone or via the Internet.

Management will take the appropriate steps to ensure that the incident is investigated as soon as possible, that the results of that investigation are recorded on the Company's internal accident investigation form, and that remedial measures are put into place to prevent a recurrence.

If there is no supervisor in the area at the time of the incident then the employee suffering the injury **MUST** report the accident in the Accident Book and to management as soon as possible. A work colleague can undertake this responsibility if the injured person is unable to do this themselves.

If a member of public (or other person who is not an employee of this Company) is injured as a result of a work activity by one of our employees and that member of

public is taken to hospital for treatment, then the accident/injury must be reported to Company management WITHOUT DELAY.

Where an incident has occurred that is classified as a dangerous occurrence, then that incident must be reported to management WITHOUT DELAY, even if no-one was injured.

## **2.0 RIDDOR**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) is the law that requires employers, and other people in control of work premises, to report and keep records of:

- work-related accidents which cause death;
- work-related accidents which cause certain serious injuries (reportable injuries);  
diagnosed cases of certain industrial diseases; and
- certain 'dangerous occurrences' (incidents with the potential to cause harm).

There are also special requirements for gas incidents.

If you are an employer, self-employed or in control of work premises, you will have duties under RIDDOR.

### **2.2 What must be reported?**

For the purposes of RIDDOR, an accident is a separate, identifiable, unintended incident that causes physical injury. This specifically includes acts of non-consensual violence to people at work.

Not all accidents need to be reported, a RIDDOR report is required only when:

- the accident is work-related; and
- it results in an injury of a type which is reportable (as listed under 'Types of reportable injuries').

When deciding if the accident that led to the death or injury is work-related, the key issues to consider are whether the accident was related to:

- the way the work was organised, carried out or supervised;
- any machinery, plant, substances or equipment used for work; and
- the condition of the site or premises where the accident happened.

If none of these factors are relevant to the incident, it is likely that a report will not be required.

## **2.3 Types of reportable injury**

### **2.3.1 Deaths**

All deaths to workers and non-workers must be reported if they arise from a work-related accident, including an act of physical violence to a worker. Suicides are not reportable, as the death does not result from a work-related accident.

### **2.3.2 Serious Injuries (Reportable)**

The types of serious injuries which must be reported are as follows:

- Fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes

Bone fractures include a break, crack or chip. They are reportable when diagnosed or confirmed by a doctor, including when they are specified on a GP 'fit note'. In some cases, there may be no definitive evidence of a fracture (e.g. if an X-ray is not taken), but the injury will still be reportable if a doctor considers it is likely that there is a fracture. Self-diagnosed 'suspected fractures' are not reportable.

- Amputation of an arm, hand, finger, thumb, leg, foot or toe

Amputation includes both a traumatic amputation injury at the time of an accident, and surgical amputation following an accident, as a consequence of the injuries sustained.

- Any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight in one or both eyes

Any blinding and injuries causing reduction in sight are reportable when a doctor diagnoses that the effects are likely to be permanent.

- Any crush injury to the head or torso, causing damage to the brain or internal organs

Injuries to the brain or internal organs in the chest or abdomen are reportable, when caused by crushing as result of an accident.

- Any burn injury (including scalding)

Which:

- covers more than 10% of the whole body's total surface area or
- causes significant damage to the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs

Burns which meet the above criteria are reportable, irrespective of the nature of the agent involved, and so include burns caused by direct heat, chemical burns and radiological burns. Medical staff may indicate the approximate proportion of skin suffering burn damage, and charts are often available in hospital burns units. In adults of working age, the *Rule of Nines* can help estimate the body surface area (BSA) affected:

- skin covering the head and neck: 9%
- skin covering each upper limb: 9%
- skin covering the front of the torso: 18%
- skin covering the rear of the torso: 18%
- skin covering each lower limb: 18%

If the BSA of a burn exceeds 15% in an adult, they are likely to require hospitalisation for intravenous fluid resuscitation. Where the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs are significantly harmed as a consequence of a burn, this is a reportable injury irrespective of the surface area covered by that burn. Damage caused by smoke inhalation is not included in this definition.

- Any degree of scalping requiring hospital treatment

Scalping is the traumatic separation or peeling of the skin from the head due to an accident, e.g. hair becoming entangled in machinery. Lacerations, where the skin is not separated from the head, are not included, nor are surgical procedures where skin removal is deliberate.

- Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia

Loss of consciousness means that the injured person enters a state where there is a lack of response, either vocal or physical, to people trying to communicate with them. The length of time a person remains unconscious is not significant in terms of whether an accident is reportable. Asphyxia (lack of oxygen) may happen when a person enters an oxygen-deficient atmosphere, such as a confined space, or are exposed to poisonous gases, e.g. carbon monoxide.

- Any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space

Which:

- leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness or
- requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours

An enclosed space includes any space wholly or partly enclosed, to the extent that there is a significantly increased risk to the health and safety of a person in that space by virtue of its enclosed nature. This includes any confined space as defined by the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997, and additionally similar spaces where there is a foreseeable risk of hypothermia (e.g. a cold store).

NB: Hypothermia is not a specified risk in the Confined Spaces Regulations. Hypothermia and heat-induced illness includes situations where a person has an adverse reaction (the physical injury) to intense heat or cold acting on the body, so they need help from someone else.

- What to do when the extent of an injury is unclear

In some cases, employers and self-employed workers may not be in a position to know the full extent of an injury, e.g. when a prognosis has not yet been established in relation to an eye injury, or when efforts are being made to treat an injured limb which may ultimately require surgical amputation. In such situations, there is no requirement to make 2.7precautionary reports of specified injuries. It is likely that the accident will in any case require reporting due to the injured person being incapacitated for more than seven days. The enforcing authority should be notified or updated as soon as a specified injury has been confirmed.

### **2.3.3 Over seven-day Injuries to workers**

This is where an employee, or self-employed person, is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than seven consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident).

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. Reporting must be made within 15 days of the accident.

### **2.4 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

- 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.

## 2.5 Dangerous Occurrences

Dangerous occurrences are defined as certain, specified ‘near-miss’ events (incidents with the potential to cause harm.) However, not all such events require reporting. Examples of reportable dangerous occurrences are:

- the collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment;
- plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines;
- explosions or fires causing work to be stopped for more than 24 hours.

## 2.6 Record keeping 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.

### How to report

- Online - Go to [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor) and complete the appropriate online report form. The form will then be submitted directly to the RIDDOR database. You will receive a copy for your records.
- Telephone - All incidents can be reported online but a telephone service remains for reporting fatal and specified injuries only. Call the Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 9923 (opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5 pm).

### **Reporting out of hours** (where the HSE may need to respond urgently)

The HSE has an out-of-hours duty officer. Circumstances where HSE may need to respond out of hours include:

- work-related death or situation where there is a strong likelihood of death following an incident at, or connected with, work;
- a serious accident at a workplace so that HSE can gather details of physical evidence that would be lost with time; and
- following a major incident at a workplace where the severity of the incident, or the degree of public concern, requires an immediate public statement from either HSE or government ministers.

You can find additional information about how to contact the HSE out of hours at [www.hse.gov.uk/contact/outofhours.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/outofhours.htm).