

Safety Meeting Template – February 2018

As part of our commitment to our clients, JOPL has developed a series of monthly safety alerts, which may be used as the basis of safety/toolbox meetings. These alerts may be used to initiate conversation and consultation on a key safety topic, and they should link directly to your company's safety management system.

As a trial, we will be sharing these safety alerts for free for the next six months with all our current and past clients. If you wish to continue to receive these alerts after the trial period ends, please contact JOPL to discuss our cost arrangements/packages.

For more information, or to discuss how we may support you and your business navigate safety, environment, quality, and risk management, please contact us.

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Topic 1: Incidents – From Near-Miss to Serious

Instructions: Read out the questions to prompt discussions. Read out the answers provided to structure discussion and prompt further thinking.

Q. What is an incident?

A. An incident can describe anything from a near miss (where someone just misses being badly injured), to a workplace death.

Q. Why is it important to report incidents?

A. We have a legal duty to report serious incidents, and there is a potential \$50,000 fine from SafeWork NSW for not reporting. We also must report all injuries to our workers compensation insurer when medical treatment is required, or else risk a penalty. First aid injuries need to be recorded in our first aid / injury register, to comply with the *Workers Compensation Regulations (NSW) 2016*.

Near misses are important to report because if we don't know about them, we don't know what to fix. A near miss today might be a serious injury tomorrow.

Q. What is a serious, notifiable incident?

A. Section 36 of the WHS Act defines a serious incident. They can include:

- A death; or
- Immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, or
- Immediate treatment for:
 - The amputation of any part of the body, or
 - A serious head injury, or
 - A serious eye injury, or
 - A serious burn, or
 - The separation of skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping), or
 - A spinal injury, or
 - The loss of a bodily function, or
 - Serious lacerations, or
- Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

This is a very broad list, and it is subjective. The best rule to follow is, if you have to call an ambulance, report it to SafeWork NSW (or the regulatory authority in your state or territory).

Q. What to do after a serious incident?

A. It is very simple:

1. Call 000 and manage the situation to keep everyone safe (first aid etc.).
2. Protect the incident site. Turn off machinery and isolate the site of the incident until SafeWork NSW (or the relevant regulator) tells you it is ok to continue work.
3. Report the incident to senior management, who will inform SafeWork NSW (or the equivalent regulator).
4. Inform JOPL. We can support you in managing the incident and the aftermath.
5. Look after yourself. Traumatic workplace events can be very stressful and may affect your health. Talk to your colleagues and talk to your manager if you feel you need additional support.

A Case Study:

A worker trips on some uneven ground. She gets back up, is not injured, and keeps on walking. No incident report is completed, nothing is reported.

It happens again the next day to a different worker. Same thing. No injury, no report.

A week later, a worker trips at the same spot and instinctively puts her hand out to stop the fall. She would have been fine, but this week, someone has placed a large pile of metal offcuts near the walk-way, ready for the next rubbish collection. The worker accidentally grabs a sharp piece of metal. Her hand is cut, and she screams.

A colleague runs over, sees how serious the cut is, and calls an ambulance.

The worker's hand is repaired in surgery. She is off work for 2 months due to infections and rehabilitation. She never gets full movement back in her hand, which was her dominant writing hand.

Analysis:

This was a real incident, and mirrors incidents occurring every day in Australian workplaces. We learn to live with issues and annoyances. We accept the uneven floor. However, one day, that minor issue might become a major problem.

This doesn't mean that every potential hazard will hurt someone. We cannot fix everything or make everything perfectly safe! But if we start to see patterns emerging: if everyone is tripping on that same bit of the floor; if three people bumped their head on the doorframe – that's when we need to make some changes.

The lesson: Report near misses. If people are almost getting hurt, someone will get hurt.

You can report near miss incidents in a variety of ways. You may establish a WHS diary, an email address, a special form, or simply use your incident form.

One option is to keep a record like this:

Date	Hazard / Incident / Issue	Action Taken	By Whom
1/1/18	XXXX tripped at YYYYY	Checked area – no trip hazard visible	BB
6/8/18	Driver slipped getting out of truck	Reviewed 3-point contact with all drivers at Toolbox on 8/8/18	DD
8/1/18	ZZZZZ tripped at YYYYYY	As second time, investigation conducted – see Incident Report	CC

Safety / Toolbox Meeting Minutes

DATE: _____

COMPANY/SITE _____

MEETING FACILITATOR: _____

Discussion Topic: (review/read the topic above). Are there any questions? Record comments raised, or issues identified.

Safety Review: Are there any issues or concerns to raise about our workplace?

Incident Review: What has happened since the last meeting? What can we learn?

Resolving previous issues: What was discussed in the last meeting or identified in previous site inspections/incidents? Have issues been resolved?

Corrective Actions (If Required):	Action By:	Completed?	
		Sign	Date
1.			
2.			
3.			

