1. **Purpose:**

   The hazard/incident reporting and investigation procedure provides guidance for the identification of potential hazards, and reporting and investigation of incidents by Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) employees to encourage early reporting and corrective action.

2. **Scope:**

   This procedure applies to all DEECD workplaces including schools and central and regional offices.

3. **References:**

   - *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
   - *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*
   - *Victorian Accident Compensation Act 1985*
   - *WorkSafe Victoria: Guide to Incident Notification 2008*
   - *School Policy Advisory Guide*

4. **Definitions:**

   - **Deputy Health and Safety Representative:** An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a Designated Work Group (DWG) on matters relating to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the absence of the Health and Safety Representative (HSR).
   - **Designated Work Group (DWG):** A group of employees in the workplace who share similar workplace health and safety concerns and conditions.
   - **eduSafe:** The DEECD online hazard and incident reporting and management application, accessible on the intranet. Employees log on using their employee number and password.
   - **Hazard:** Anything with the potential to cause harm, injury, illness or loss.
   - **Health and Safety Representative (HSR):** An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a DWG on matters relating to OHS.
   - **Incident:** An event that has led to or could have led to an injury. Incidents include near misses, accidents and injuries.
   - **Injury:** Physical damage or harm to a person (includes work-related illness).
   - **Management OHS Nominee:** A position nominated by the Workplace Manager to oversee the operational aspects of implementing health, safety and wellbeing initiatives, policies and procedures.
   - **Medical Treatment:** Is defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* as treatment by a registered medical practitioner. ‘Treatment’ does not include diagnostic testing or first aid even if this has been provided by a medical practitioner.
Near Miss: A near miss is defined as any occurrence that might have led to an injury or illness to people, danger to health and/or damage to property or the environment.

Notifiable Incident: Incidents at a workplace which require notification to WorkSafe Victoria (WorkSafe) as per Section 6.2.1.4 of this procedure.

OHS Committee: A cooperative forum for employers and employees to work together on OHS issues.

Risk control: Measures that eliminate or reduce the risks associated with hazards using the ‘hierarchy of controls’, where elimination of the hazard will be the first strategy considered.

Workplace Manager: The Manager or Principal responsible for the school, central office, regional office or other DEECD workplace.

5. Responsibility:

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee are responsible for:

- communicating to all employees, the requirement to report hazards and incidents onto eduSafe;
- providing instruction to employees to enable the effective use of eduSafe to report hazards and incidents;
- managing all workplace hazards and incidents by assessing risks associated with all reported hazards and incidents and implementing appropriate controls to address these and prevent a recurrence;
- initiating an incident investigation using the Incident Investigation Template as required;
- complying with the requirements for reporting notifiable incidents to WorkSafe;
- reporting serious incidents to DEECD’s Security Services Unit;
- disseminating incident investigation findings and preventative control measures to employees;
- updating the OHS Risk Register to reflect changes to hazards, risk ratings and risk controls.

Health and Safety Representative (HSR):

The functions of the HSR can include:

- participating in the incident investigation process in consultation with the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee;
- disseminating preventative control measures to their DWG in response to incident investigation findings.

Employees are responsible for:

- reporting all workplace hazards, incidents and near misses within 24 hours via eduSafe;
- co-operating with incident investigations;
- implementing risk controls and reporting back on the suitability of these in reducing risk;
- following safe work procedures and instructions.

Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors are responsible for:

- reporting hazards and/or incidents to their site contact (who should then enter the incident or hazard onto eduSafe);
6. Procedure:

6.1 Hazard Management

6.1.1 Hazard Reporting

When an employee identifies a hazard, they are required to log in to eduSafe (using their employee id number and password) and report it. The employee is to complete all required fields of the online form. Once the hazard report is completed, the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee will receive an email notification that a hazard has been recorded on eduSafe.

When the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee receive an email notification, they must login to eduSafe, open the report and action it.

Examples of hazards that may be reported include:

- trip or slip hazards;
- storage and/or use of chemicals;
- noise associated with the operation of plant and equipment;
- blind corners / uncontrolled traffic intersections.

6.1.2 Risk Assessment

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must, in consultation with the HSR and relevant employees, complete a hazard assessment to determine the risk associated with the hazard.

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee should refer to the OHS Risk Management Procedure for guidance on the hazard assessment process (specifically Section 6.5.2).

6.1.3 Hazard Control

To control a hazard, the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee, in consultation with the HSR and relevant employees, must develop a control strategy. This control strategy is to be entered into eduSafe against the corresponding hazard report number. The control strategy is to be developed in accordance with the ‘hierarchy of controls’ outlined in the OHS Risk Management Procedure (specifically Section 6.5.4).

6.1.4 Review of Controls

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee, in consultation with the HSR and employees, are responsible for verifying the effectiveness of the implemented risk controls.

6.2 Incident Management
6.2.1 Incident Reporting

The Workplace Manager and/or Management Nominee must ensure that all incidents and injuries that occur in DEECD workplaces are reported in accordance with the following requirements.

6.2.1.1 Security Services Unit (SSU)

All serious incidents should be reported to the SSU on 03 9589 6266.

SSU advises that:

- Incidents including criminal activity, where the safety of employees, contractors, students or visitors is at risk, or threats to property or the environment should firstly be reported to the appropriate emergency services and then immediately reported to SSU.

- If the reporting person is not the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee, the employee should contact their Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee as soon as possible informing them of the incident.

- Workplaces should report all serious incidents to SSU including:
  - fatality including suicide and suicide attempts;
  - serious injuries (those that involve visiting a GP, transport by ambulance or hospitalisation);
  - transport accidents;
  - assault, threat of assault or offensive behaviour;
  - firearms, weapons or bomb threats;
  - siege, hostage, disappearance or removal of a student;
  - outbreak or incidence of disease;
  - fires, floods, major disasters or natural events;
  - chemical, biological or radiological spillage or contamination;
  - criminal acts (violence, theft, arson, vandalism, graffiti);
  - sexual assault or allegations involving inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

- SSU will, on the school’s behalf, contact appropriate areas within DEECD and arrange for immediate advice and support to be provided to the workplace. For example, SSU will immediately notify:
  - Regional offices about injuries and other incidents that for which employees and students may need counselling support;
  - Infrastructure and Sustainability Division for major fires or structural damage;
  - Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit for incidents involving allegations of a sexual nature.

6.2.1.2 Injuries to Employees, Contractors or Visitors

In addition to the requirements of 6.2.1.1, all injuries (either physical or psychological) including fatalities to employees, contractors, volunteers or visitors that occur in DEECD workplaces must be reported immediately onto eduSafe under ‘incidents’.

Where an injury occurs to DEECD employees while not on DEECD premises, it must be reported immediately to the Workplace Manager and/or Management Nominee. The injury details must be entered onto eduSafe.

All injuries that involve contractors, volunteers or visitors are to be reported by the contractor, volunteer or visitor to their designated DEECD contact. The DEECD contact is responsible for...
entering the incident on eduSafe. When an injury has been reported on eduSafe, the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee is notified by email. The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must develop an action plan. They should also review the OHS Risk Register, in consultation with the HSR and relevant employees, to determine whether the injury was caused by an existing hazard. If so, the documented risk controls should be reviewed to determine their effectiveness and any additional controls identified and implemented. This should be documented on the OHS Risk Register.

If the reported injury is caused by a hazard that is not on the OHS Risk Register, the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee should update the OHS Risk Register to include the identified hazard. The level of risk associated with the hazard, any existing risk controls and additional risk controls required should be recorded on the OHS Risk Register.

This information should also be recorded as part of the action plan in eduSafe.

### 6.2.1.3 Injuries to students

All injuries to students that occur at a DEECD workplace, camp or excursion must also be recorded on the Injury Management System on CASES/CASES21.

### 6.2.1.4 Notifiable Incidents

DEECD is also required under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, to report any incident of a serious nature or dangerous occurrence to WorkSafe Victoria (WorkSafe). The types of incidents that are notifiable are detailed in the Notifiable Incidents to WorkSafe Flowchart. Schools and workplaces should contact WorkSafe on 13 23 60 to notify the incident and obtain a reference number. Following initial phone contact, a WorkSafe Incident Notification Form must be completed and sent to WorkSafe within 48 hours (online/mail/fax) of the incident occurring. The WorkSafe Notifiable Incident Form can be completed in eduSafe while the incident is being logged.

For further information on incident notification contact DEECD’s OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715.

### 6.2.1.5 Site Preservation

The site of the notifiable incident must not be disturbed until a WorkSafe inspector arrives or directs otherwise at the time of notification, unless there is a need to:

- protect the health and safety of a person;
- aid an injured person involved in an incident;
- take essential action to make the site safe or to prevent any recurrence of an incident.

### 6.2.2 Incident Investigation

For all notifiable incidents, the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must commence a formal investigation in consultation with the affected person (if possible) within 24 hours of the incident. The incident investigation is to be recorded using the Incident Investigation Template. The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee should notify the OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715 Any relevant/additional documentation should be appended to
the *Incident Investigation Template*.

Non-notifiable incidents should be managed in accordance with 6.2.1.2 of this procedure.

### 6.2.2.1 Incident Investigation Team

The size and composition of the investigation team will depend on the seriousness and/or complexity of the incident. The team usually involves the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee, supervising employee for the area concerned, HSR and any other relevant employee/s.

### 6.2.2.2 Investigation Process

The aim of the incident investigation process is to identify the hazards that contributed to the incident. It is important that the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee review the OHS Risk Register to ensure that all known hazards are considered as part of the investigation process.

The incident investigation process should be conducted with reference to the OHS Risk Management Procedure.

The purpose of the investigation process is to:

- Gather facts by:
  - determining exactly what happened by talking to eye witnesses and circumstantial witnesses;
  - establishing the sequence of events;
  - separating facts from opinion.

- Identify hazards and causation factors by:
  - analysing the differences between what actually happened and what should have happened;
  - determining whether any existing controls failed e.g. was equipment guarded, were chemicals stored correctly, was correct procedure followed etc.

- Determine corrective actions by:
  - identifying new or improving the existing corrective actions to be implemented to prevent the incident from occurring again;
  - identifying the person/s responsible for carrying out corrective actions and an appropriate time frame;
  - distributing findings of the investigation to employees and other relevant persons

Once the incident investigation is completed the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must complete the *Incident Investigation Template*.

### 6.2.3 Investigation Outcomes

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must ensure that any hazards identified as a result of the investigation are dealt with as outlined in Section 6.1 of this procedure and the OHS Risk Management Procedure.
6.2.4 Review of Controls

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee, in consultation with the HSR and employees, are responsible for verifying the effectiveness of the implemented risk controls.

Any changes to controls must be recorded on the OHS Risk Register by the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee.

6.3 Record Keeping

Workplace Managers must maintain copies of all documentation used as part of the hazard and incident investigation and control process. Where required, documents should be attached electronically to the hazard or incident report on eduSafe.

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must keep a copy of all records and documentation associated with incidents for at least seven years.

7. Related Documentation:

- OHS Risk Management Procedure
- OHS Risk Register
- Notifiable Incidents to WorkSafe Flowchart
- eduSafe
- Incident Investigation Template

8. Version Control

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<td>6.2.1 and 6.2.1.2</td>
<td>Deleted the requirement to display the Incident Notification to WorkSafe Flowchart on the health and safety noticeboard</td>
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<td>Minor wording and formatting changes</td>
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