



HAZARD, NEAR MISS, INCIDENT AND INVESTIGATIONS POLICY

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Policy Type:	Organisation
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Responsible Officer:	Manager People & Culture
Owner:	People and Culture
Responsible Director:	Corporate Performance
Relevant Legislation/Authority:	Occupation Health and Safety Act 2004 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 Environmental Protection Act 2017 Environmental Protection Regulations 2021 Victorian Accident Compensation Act 1985 Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 WorkSafe Victoria: Guide to Incident Notification 2008 AS/NZS ISO 45001:2018 Occupational health and safety AS/NZS ISO 14001:2016 Environmental management systems Equipment (Public Safety) Act 1994 Equipment (Public Safety) Regulations 2017 The Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Dangerous Goods Act 1985 Dangerous Goods (Explosives) Regulations 2011 Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2012 WorkSafe Victoria: Dangerous Goods Incident Reporting, December 2012
DOCSETID:	3471048

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:



- 1.1 Provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without Risk to health.
- 1.2 To outline the requirements that Employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety.
- 1.3 To outline that Employees must co-operate with the employer on any action the employer needs to take to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

The City is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment. In the context of this policy, this commitment is demonstrated through:

- Providing an across-organisation process for recording, reporting and investigating work-related Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the City's Employees (permanent, temporary and casual), volunteers, students and contractors and covers OHS:

- Hazards, Near Misses, and Incidents
- Incidents, Injuries, and Illnesses
- Consultation and Reporting
- Investigations

3. DEFINITIONS

City means the Greater Bendigo City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).

DWGs mean Designed Work Groups

Elumina means database for logging, maintenance and reporting of OHS Hazards, Near Misses, Incidents and Investigations

Employees means the City's employees (permanent, temporary and casual), volunteers, students and contractors

EMT means Executive Management Team



Hazard means any item, process or situation that poses a potential Risk to health and safety, environmental damage, plant or equipment damage.

Hazard Control means the process of implementing measures to reduce the Risk associated with a Hazard

HSC means Health and Safety Committee

HSR means Health and Safety Representative

Illness means any Work-related Injury, including psychological distress

Incident means an occurrence that results in Injury, disease, plant or property damage, environmental damage, theft and includes a Near Miss

Injury means physical and psychological damage or harm to a person, including work-related Illness

Investigation means a thorough, complete, detailed and documented review of an Incident to determine the root cause(s)

Near Miss means an Incident where under different circumstances, an Injury and /or property or environmental damage could have occurred

OHS means Occupational Health and Safety

People Manager means People who manage any Employees (e.g. Coordinators, Team Leaders, Foreperson, and/or Supervisors)

Psychosocial means an exposure to a worker through a Hazard or Incident that may cause psychological harm, i.e. harm to a person's mental health

Risk means the likelihood of Injury, Illness or damage to the environment, plant or property arising from the exposure to any Hazard

Risk Assessment means the process of determining the likelihood of any negative consequences, such as Injury, Illness or damage to plant or property or reputation

Work-related Injury means any physical or psychological Injury sustained by a worker in the course of their employment

4. POLICY

The City will:

- 4.1 Provide a mechanism for reporting Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents, and Work-related Injuries;
- 4.2 Investigate Incidents to determine the root cause, with the objective of preventing recurrence;
- 4.3 Obtain statistical information about Incidents for trend analysis to enable focussed prevention programs; and



4.4 Meet its legislative requirements for reporting Incidents.

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the City's Managing Underperformance Procedure and/or Managing Misconduct Procedure.

5. SUPPORT

The Work Health & Safety (WHS) Team within the People & Culture Unit can provide advice on this policy and will facilitate training specific to this policy where required. Further advice or clarification is available from People Managers.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Employees' responsibilities

- 6.1.1 Cooperate and abide by agreed systems of work and procedures in place to minimise harm to self, others, the environment and property.
- 6.1.2 Undertake work in a manner that minimises the negative impact of environmental factors
- 6.1.3 Attend relevant training as offered to assist in meeting their obligations under this policy
- 6.1.4 Report all Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents within 48 hours to their People Manager and via the Elumina system (see Section 7.1)
- 6.1.5 Contribute to continuous improvement initiatives and review of work practices and documentation
- 6.1.6 Participate and complete relevant Risk Assessments and other OHS documentation as required

6.2 People Managers' responsibilities

- 6.2.1 Lead by example and model positive and constructive behaviour
- 6.2.2 Plan work in a manner that minimises the negative impact of environmental factors
- 6.2.3 Provide information, instruction, training and/or supervision as is necessary to enable Employees to perform their work in a way that is safe and without a Risk to health. Where required, ensure that Employees are inducted to relevant work instructions by having read, understood and signed off on them.
- 6.2.4 Develop unit procedures in consultation with HSRs and/or Employees
- 6.2.5 Actively monitor their workgroups and intervene if they become aware of any potential or actual unsafe work practice/breach in the workplace



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- 6.2.6 Consult with HSRs and/or Employees regarding Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents and implementation of controls where necessary to eliminate the Hazard so far as is reasonably practicable
- 6.2.7 Within 48 hours of email notification of Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents, review and provide actions into the Elumina system (see Section 7.1), and comply with the Treatment and Reporting Requirements described in the City's Risk Management Framework (DOCSETID 4249023) – see Table 1
- 6.2.8 If Incident meets the WorkSafe or EPA criteria of Notifiable Incident (see Section 7.2), contact Occupational Health and Safety Business Partner and relevant Director immediately
- 6.2.9 Ensure the requirement to report all Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents is communicated to all Employees
- 6.2.10 Lead Investigations into safety Near Misses and Incidents where required, using Elumina for data and document processing and storage
- 6.2.11 Ensure that all the City's Employees attend training organised to assist them to meet their obligations under this policy
- 6.2.12 Review scheduled summaries from Elumina and discuss trends and Incidents with HSRs and work teams
- 6.2.13 Conduct an Investigation if directed by the WHS Team
- 6.2.14 Address breaches of this policy



Table 1. Treatment and reporting options: Risk Management Framework

Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls outside the City's risk appetite. The impact of this risk occurring would be so severe that the related activity would need to cease immediately, unless approval via EMT to proceed. • Extreme risks need immediate mitigation strategies to be implemented. • Active monitoring of risk and risk treatments • Risk must be integrated into business planning processes • Accountability and responsibility to be managed by EMT • Reporting to EMT and ARC at least quarterly
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May fall outside the City's risk appetite. Treatment strategies aimed at reducing the risk level should be developed and implemented as soon as possible. • Regular monitoring of risk and risk treatment • Risk must be integrated into business planning processes • Accountability and responsibility to be managed by relevant Director/ Manager • Risks reported at least quarterly to EMT
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls within the City's risk appetite. It may be managed or accepted without further treatment, provided that the current controls are monitored 6 monthly, with re-evaluation undertaken based on factors that may increase consequence or likelihood • Accountability and responsibility to be managed at the senior management level • Risk owner to monitor the risk at least quarterly
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls well within the City's risk appetite. This level of risk can be accepted if there are no treatment strategies that can be easily and economically implemented. The risk and current controls must be regularly monitored to ensure that any change in circumstances is detected and acted upon appropriately. • Accountability to be managed by the appropriate risk owner • Risk owner to monitor the risk at an appropriate frequency



6.3 EMT's responsibilities

- 6.3.1 Ensure that so far as is practicable, there are adequate budgetary provisions for the implementation and maintenance of this policy
- 6.3.2 Ensure that this policy is adequately communicated to all Employees
- 6.3.3 Ensure that appropriate Individual responsibilities are communicated and fulfilled to as outlined under the OHS Act 2004.
- 6.3.4 Comply with the Treatment and Reporting Requirements described in the City's Risk Management Framework (DOCSETID 4249023) – see Table 1

6.4 HSRs' responsibilities

- 6.4.1 Understand their powers and responsibilities in the workplace pursuant to the OHS Act 2004
- 6.4.2 Be actively engaged in the representation of their DWGs, including regular meetings with DWGs and People Managers and communication of relevant information to the Health and Safety Committee
- 6.4.3 Report outcomes of Issue Resolution to the Health and Safety Committee, pursuant to Part 2.2 of the OHS Regulations 2017
- 6.4.4 Encourage members of their DWGs to report Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents to HSRs and the People Manager within 48 hours
- 6.4.5 Review scheduled summaries from Elumina and discuss trends and Incidents with DWGs
- 6.4.6 Conduct regular site inspections to identify Hazards and confirm efficacy of implemented control measures
- 6.4.7 Assist People Managers with Incident Investigations where required
- 6.4.8 During site entries by WorkSafe, HSRs will be requested to meet with the inspector. Entry Reports and Improvement Notices issued to HSRs must be forwarded to the Occupational Health and Safety Business Partner

6.5 WHS Team's responsibilities

- 6.5.1 Provide training and support resources to Employees on OHS legislation, Compliance Codes and Australian Standards, best safety practices and the elements of an effective safety management system email: safetysupport@Bendigo.vic.gov.au
- 6.5.2 Assist with Risk Assessments, control implementation and Investigations where required



- 6.5.3 Maintain documents and data relating to the reporting of Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents
- 6.5.4 Support the continuation of the Health and Safety Committee
- 6.5.5 Encourage communication and consultation between HSRs, their DWGs and People Managers
- 6.5.6 Maintain the Elumina recording and reporting system
- 6.5.7 Encourage reporting of Hazards, Incidents and Near Misses into Elumina
- 6.5.8 Provide scheduled Hazard and Incident summaries, where required, to the HSC and EMT

7 REPORTING

7.1 Internal Reporting

For the purpose of reporting, all Employees must:

- 7.1.1 Follow the reporting process as outlined in Appendix 1
- 7.1.2 Ensure that Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents are reported within 48 hours to ensure corrective actions are put into place and that relevant stakeholders are informed, excluding a serious or notifiable incident or an incident involving a member of the public for which Employees must notify their People Manager immediately.
- 7.1.3 Hazards, Near Misses and Incidents are to be logged into Elumina, where staff notify the relevant people manager for follow-up, Investigation and treatment where required
- 7.1.4 Contact the Occupational Health and Safety Business Partner and relevant Director immediately where an Incident meets the WorkSafe or EPA criteria of Notifiable Incident (see Section 7.2)
- 7.1.5 All associated Incident documentation, including photographs and Investigation reports, must be added to the Elumina system by the People Manager or designated administrator.
- 7.1.6 In the event of a Hazard/Incident perceived as Psychosocial, the Hazard/Incident reporting process described herein may be used. Further information and guidance on additional reporting options for these types of incidents are available in the Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy (DOCSETID 1822685).
- 7.1.7 In the event of an Incident of Sexual Harassment, the Hazard/Incident reporting process described herein may be used (Note: Person reporting has 'anonymous' and 'sensitive' field options to hide identity). There are a range of additional options in responding to and/or reporting incidence of sexual harassment; further information and guidance is available in the Responding to and/or Reporting Sexual Harassment Procedure (DOCSETID 4579208).



7.2 Reporting to external authorities

For the purpose of reporting, all People Managers must:

- 7.2.1 Notify WorkSafe in the event of a Notifiable Incident (see criteria: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/report-incident-criteria-notifiable-incidents>)
- 7.2.2 Notify EPA in the event of a pollution incident that causes or threatens to cause 'material harm' to human health or the environment. See criteria: <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/new-laws-and-your-business/reporting-a-notifiable-incident>
- 7.2.3 Notify their relevant director of either 7.2.1 or 7.2.2

8 INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

- 8.1 To identify the root cause and organisational factors contributing to an Incident, the People Manager must conduct the Incident Investigation in collaboration with the HSR and external stakeholders (e.g. contractors) and authorities (e.g. WorkSafe, EPA) where applicable
- 8.2 A member of the WHS Team may be engaged as an Employer Representative to assist with Issue Resolution pursuant to Part 2.2 of the OHS Regulations 2017, including Investigation approach, legislative requirements and best practice
- 8.3 All Investigation information must be entered into the Elumina system with the respective Hazard, Near Miss or Incident.

9 COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Quarterly reports are provided by WHS to specific departments with regard to health and safety performance and Incident reporting trends.
- 9.2 Employees subject to a serious Injury are consulted on the outcomes of Investigations and, where appropriate, remedial action.
- 9.3 The original reporter and/or Health and Safety Representative will be provided with the outcomes of an Investigation into a Hazard, Near Miss or Incident.

10 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Employees are encouraged to access the related internal documents which are available on the intranet and/or external resources which are available as per the below.

These include:



- Asbestos Management Policy (DOCSETID 3428289)
- Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy (DOCSETID 1822685)
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Policy (DOCSETID 4579152)
- Responding to/or Reporting Sexual Harassment Procedure (DOCSETID 4579208)
- Employee Code of Conduct (DOCSETID 3480851)
- Fraud and Corruption Policy (DOCSETID 2514232)
- Health and Safety Policy (DOCSETID 3157309)
- Risk Management Policy (DOCSETID 947782)
- Risk Management Framework (DOCSETID 4249023)
- TP 9057 Incident Investigation (DOCSETID 2858897)

Further information or advice on this policy should be directed to the People & Culture Unit.

11 HUMAN RIGHTS COMPATIBILITY

The implications of this policy have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights of Responsibilities Charter.

12 ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Business Unit, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be made through consultation with the Consultative Committee and with the approval of EMT or where required, resolution of Council.

13 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date Approved	Author	Unit	Change Type	Version	Review Date
Oct 2016	P&P (Risk)	People & Performance	Initial (Hazard, Near Miss and Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure)	5	Oct 2017
Nov 2022	P&C (WHS)	People & Culture	Review as policy only, in line with Policy Framework and Hazard / Incident reporting via Elumina	6	Nov 2026



Appendix 1
Summary flow chart for reporting Near Misses and Incidents,
and conducting Investigations

