



RISK

MANAGEMENT

SUPPLEMENT TO MODULE 1
SPECIFIC PARISH INCIDENT
NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

MAXIMISING MINISTRY BY MINIMISING HARM

RISK MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This is the first module in the risk management series. It needs to be read and applied in the light of the previous introductory sections 'A Risk Management Program for Parishes' and 'Developing a Risk Management Plan'. These introductory sections contain a high level outline of the obligations applicable under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW) and introduces some of the terminology used in this and other Modules of the Program.

This is a supplement to Module 1- People Movement, Emergency Evacuation and Fire and covers the process for notification of incidents involving a fatality, injury, illness or dangerous incidents that may occur on parish sites. It needs to be read and applied in the light of the previous introductory sections – 'A Risk Management Program for Parishes' (Overview) and 'Developing a Risk Management Plan' (Plan).

Reminder: A parish has a duty to care for all of its people. According to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 a person conducting a business or undertaking (**PCBU**) must, so far as is reasonably practicable (refer to page 6 of the module Program for Parishes), ensure the health and safety of all workers (including volunteers) while working for your parish and the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out at the workplace. A workplace is any place where activities are carried out for your parish and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while working for you. A worker must take reasonable care for their own health and safety, take reasonable care so that their acts and omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others, and comply with instructions, policies and procedures relating to work health and safety.

REPORTING NOTIFIABLE INCIDENTS

All parishes (as occupiers and controllers of premises and/or employers) are required under section 38 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, to notify WorkCover NSW and/or their workers compensation insurer when a 'notifiable' incident occurs on a parish site.

Parishes must ensure that WorkCover NSW is notified immediately after becoming aware that a notifiable incident arising out of the conduct of the business or undertaking has occurred.

The notice must be given by the fastest possible means and - by telephone, or in writing.

A person giving notice by telephone must:

- give the details of the incident requested by the regulator, and
- if required by the regulator, give a written notice of the incident within 48 hours of that requirement being made.

A written notice must be in a form, or contain the details, approved by the regulator.

A PCBU must keep a record of each notifiable incident for at least 5 years from the day that notice of the incident is given to WorkCover NSW.

THE DIOCESAN PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING NOTIFIABLE INCIDENTS

To assist parishes and parish office bearers, a Diocesan procedure has been established to facilitate notifications to WorkCover, where required.

This means that parishes will have access to an expert in the field of WorkCover notification at a time when urgent advice and assistance may be required.

Parishes will need to contact their workers' compensation insurers where notification to the insurer is necessary (e.g., injuries to employees).

PLEASE NOTE: In the event of an incident, provide immediate assistance as required (e.g. first aid) and call emergency services if necessary.

The procedure is for the representative of the parish (usually a warden) to ring **1300 302 442**, where detailed instructions will be given by a recorded message before being put through to a Diocesan representative who can provide advice and assistance.

The procedure allows the Diocese to assist the parish to manage the incident in a professional way as there will be certain actions that will need to take place, such as:

- Notifying WorkCover;
- Notification to the Property Trust as owners of the property;
- Notification to the Diocesan Insurers;
- Immediate engagement of workplace incident investigators, as necessary;
- Notifying senior clergy; and
- Liaising with WorkCover investigators, the police and/or various media outlets, as necessary.

The Diocesan procedure complies with WorkCover NSW regulations for notifiable incidents.

IMPORTANT: Parish personnel should not make any comment either verbally or written (particularly to media organisations) without first seeking advice from a Diocesan representative.

NOTIFIABLE INCIDENTS

The dedicated number, 1300 302 442, must be called in the event of any notifiable incident occurring on parish sites, as described below.

The wardens must be involved in any incident notification and ideally the wardens should call the 1300 number in the first instance. If the wardens are unavailable, do not wait – call the number immediately.

“The wardens must be involved in any incident notification...”

1. What is a notifiable incident?

A notifiable incident is:

- the death of a person;
- a serious injury or illness of a person;
- a dangerous incident.

A serious injury or illness means an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

- immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital;
- immediate treatment for;
- the amputation of any part of his or her body;
- a serious head injury;
- a serious eye injury;
- a serious burn;
- the separation of his or her skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping);
- a spinal injury;
- the loss of a bodily function;
- serious lacerations;
- medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance, and includes any other injury or illness prescribed by the regulations but does not include an illness or injury of a prescribed kind.
- A serious illness includes any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor.

A dangerous incident means an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance;
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire;
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam;

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- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance;
- electric shock;
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing;
- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations;
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure;
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation;
- the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel;
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel;
- any other event prescribed by the regulations; but does not include an incident of a prescribed kind.'

Please note: According to section 39 Work Health and Safety Act 2011, the person with management or control of a workplace at which a notifiable incident has occurred must ensure so far as reasonably practicable, that the site where the incident occurred is not disturbed until the inspector arrives at the site or any earlier time that an inspector directs. The only exceptions to this is to assist an injured person, remove a deceased person, to make the site safe or to minimise the risk of a further notifiable incident, a police investigation or if WorkCover or an inspector has given permission. When the necessary investigations have been carried out, a representative of the Diocese or WorkCover will give clearance to access the area.

“All Notifiable Incidents involving persons employed by the parish... must be reported to the parish’s workers’ compensation insurer within 48 hours.”

2. Other incidents involving injury or illness where workers compensation is payable

For other incidents involving and injury or illness where workers compensation is payable or may be payable such as for lost time and/or medical expenses, you must notify your Scheme Agent or insurer within 48 hours.

There is no need to notify WorkCover as the Scheme Agent or insurer advises WorkCover of these incidents.

This procedure does not apply to ordained ministry staff (e.g., rectors).

In addition to the Incident Report, a Register of Injuries must be kept for all injuries to workers of the parish for workers’ compensation purposes. Please refer to the Employment Relations Guidelines for Parishes issued by SDS for further information about workers’ compensation.

Remember that in addition to the above, all incidents must be recorded by the parish via the *‘Incident Report’* and a copy in the prescribed form sent to the Diocesan Insurance Officer (refer to Module 1).

Certain other incidents that occur are also notifiable, although they are not immediately notifiable if they DO NOT present as an immediate risk to life. Call 1300 302 442 the same or next business day for incidents of this type, and follow the prompts.

Examples of other incidents requiring notification are:

- an injury or illness to a person that results in the person being unfit for their usual work for a continuous period of at least 7 days (supported by a medical certificate);
- damage to any plant, equipment, building or structure or other thing that impedes safe operation;
- an uncontrolled explosion or fire, escape of gas, dangerous goods or steam;
- a spill or incident resulting in exposure or potential exposure of a person to a notifiable or prohibited carcinogenic substance;
- removal of workers from work involving significant risks of high lead levels in the blood due to those levels being excessive;
- exposure to bodily fluids that presents a risk of transmission of blood-borne diseases;

- the use or threatened use of a weapon that involves a risk of serious injury to, or illness of, a person;
- a robbery that involves a risk of serious injury to, or illness of, a person;
- electric shock that involves a risk of serious injury to a person;
- any incident that involves a risk of one of the above occurring and/or serious injury or illness or substantial property damage.

Please note: These lists are not exhaustive of the particular incidents required to be notified. If an incident occurs and you are unsure of whether you have an obligation to notify, it is best to assume that you do have to notify unless and until you are advised otherwise by a competent person.

NOTIFIABLE INCIDENTS THAT OCCUR ON NON-PARISH OWNED SITES

If a “serious” or “other” incident occurs ‘off site’ (e.g., a camping site, rented premises or in a public place), call 1300 302 442 for instructions. Also, immediately advise the owners of the premises.

“If in doubt as to whether the incident is notifiable or immediately notifiable, call 1300 302 442 straight away for further instructions.”

SUMMARY

When an incident occurs:

- **Call emergency services on ‘000’**
- Administer first aid, if possible.
- Notify the wardens and rector.
- Is the incident a notifiable incident? If so, call 1300 302 442 straight away. If that number is not working call 13 10 50 immediately.
- If not immediately notifiable, call 1300 302 442 the same day or at the beginning of the next business day.
- If there is any injury to an employee, notify your scheme agent or insurer within 48 hours.
- If in doubt as to whether the incident is notifiable or immediately notifiable, call 1300 302 442 straight away for further instructions.
- Ideally a warden should call the 1300 number. If no warden is available, another responsible person must call.

PLEASE PLACE THE INCIDENT NOTIFICATION WALL CHART IN A PROMINENT POSITION IN THE CHURCH OFFICE OR ANOTHER APPROPRIATE AREA



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