

Topic Sheet No. 23

Accident and incident reporting



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SAFETY AND HEALTH TOPIC SHEET NO. 23: ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING

A safety and health 'topic sheet' aimed at raising awareness of hazards in the rope access industry. The series may be of use as a toolbox talk.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Workplace health and safety regulators are committed to preventing work-related deaths and injuries. Apart from being a legal requirement, notifying the regulator of “reportable accidents” can help identify the underlying causes and prevent similar occurrences in the future, including in your own workplace.
- 1.2 Each country has its own legal requirements and all IRATA member companies should have a procedure for the reporting of accidents, etc. (as appropriate). The reporting of accidents and dangerous occurrences is also a requirement of IRATA membership.
- 1.3 In broad terms, a “reportable accident” is:
 - the death of a person;
 - a serious injury, e.g. a fracture, loss of consciousness, etc.;
 - incapacitation, e.g. injured and away from work for over 7-days;
 - some occupational diseases, e.g. hand arm vibration syndrome; or
 - certain dangerous occurrences.
- 1.4 A reportable accident may relate to any person; whether an employee, contractor or member of the public.
- 1.5 Your company’s ‘responsible person’ must notify the enforcing authority without delay, in accordance with local reporting requirements. Sometimes, this may be done online. Alternatively, in particular for fatal accidents or serious injuries, a contact number is normally available. Typically, the company is required to report an accident within 10 days of its occurrence.
- 1.6 It is essential also that work and safety statistics be completed and submitted to IRATA International quarterly. This should be undertaken promptly and is an auditable item.
- 1.7 All accidents and incidents (including dangerous occurrences) should be reported to IRATA within 7 days (Form 021).

NOTE:
For a ‘serious incidents’ – a fatality, major injury or over 7-day injury - see MP-255ENG, Serious incident procedure.
- 1.8 The statistics gathered from this information are used in the annual IRATA International ‘Work and Safety Analysis’ (WASA) to highlight the industry’s safety record and opportunities for continual improvement.

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2 WHAT CAN GO WRONG ...

- 2.1 Accidents and incidents can reoccur if nothing is done to change the circumstances and/or equipment that led to the event.
- 2.2 Near misses can escalate to become accidents and incidents.
- 2.3 Injuries or illness may manifest at a later date, resulting in loss of support or compensation to the injured person (e.g. Workers Compensation Insurance Australia).
- 2.4 Incidents not reported may lead to damage to the reputation of the company involved and the wider rope access industry.

3 WHY THINGS CAN GO WRONG ...

- 3.1 Not reporting accidents may occur for a number of reasons:
 - Lack of awareness;
 - Complacency;
 - Poor safety culture.
- 3.2 If they are not recorded (and reported, where necessary):
 - Lessons are not learned;
 - Evidence of the cause can be lost.
- 3.3 The consequence is that:
 - Further accidents or incidents or may occur;
 - Near misses can escalate to become accidents;
 - Injuries can become worse over time;
 - Companies and/or persons may be prosecuted.

4 WHAT YOU CAN DO ...

- 4.1 Report all accidents, incidents or near misses.
- 4.2 Know and follow your company's reporting procedure.
- 4.3 Support and encourage fellow workers to report all accidents, incidents or near misses, no matter how seemingly insignificant.
- 4.4 If you are not sure, speak to your line manager.

“... If you see a risk that others take, that puts their health or life at stake. The question asked, or thing you say, could help them live another day ...”

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5 HOW YOU CAN DO IT ...

5.1 You can:

- Speak up;
- Follow company procedures;
- Report immediately after the incident or near miss.

6 ACTION

6.1 Review your management system's procedures for accident and incident reporting.

7 REFERENCES

7.1 Further information can be found in:

- (a) IRATA International code of practice for industrial rope access (Third edition, September 2016)¹:
 - Part 2, 2.11.12, Reporting of incidents and accidents
 - Part 4, 4.2.11, Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (UK)
- (b) Training, Assessment and Certification Scheme (TACS) for personnel engaged in industrial rope access methods (Edition 3.1, October 2015)²:
 - 6.2.2, Legal framework

7.2 For a list of current (and past) 'safety communications' by IRATA, see www.irata.org

8 RECORD FORM

8.1 An example *Safety and Health Topic Sheet: Record Form* is given below. Members may have their own procedure(s) for recording briefings to technicians and others.

9 FURTHER READING

Reporting accidents and incidents at work, A brief guide to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)³

The model Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations, Australia⁴

WorkSafe Western Australia, Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulation⁵

WorkSafe Victoria Occupational Health and Safety Act/Regulation⁶

1 <https://irata.org/downloads/2055>

2 <https://irata.org/downloads/2059>

3 <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg453.pdf>

4 <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation/model-whs-laws>

5 <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/occupational-safety-and-health-act-1984>

6 <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/laws/ohs>

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I chose to look the other way

I could have saved a life that day,
But I chose to look the other way.
It wasn't that I didn't care,
I had the time, and I was there.
But I didn't want to seem a fool,
Or argue over a safety rule.

I knew he'd done the job before,
If I spoke up, he might get sore.
The chances didn't seem that bad,
I'd done the same, He knew I had.
So I shook my head and walked on by,
He knew the risks as well as I.

He took the chance, I closed an eye,
And with that act, I let him die.
I could have saved a life that day,
But I chose to look the other way.
Now every time I see his wife,
I'll know, I should have saved his life.

That guilt is something I must bear,
But it isn't something you need share.
If you see a risk that others take,
That puts their health or life at stake.
The question asked, or thing you say,
Could help them live another day.

If you see a risk and walk away,
Then hope you never have to say,
I could have saved a life that day,
But I chose, to look the other way.

Don Merrell

Message from Don Merrell:

Thank you for your interest in my poem. I appreciate hearing that it is being used to help keep people safe. Feel free to use the poem in any way to promote safety and to share it with anyone who might find it of interest or use. I ask only that the poem stay intact and my name and contact information remain with it.

Don Merrell, J.R. Simplot Co.
P.O. Box 912, Pocatello, Idaho, 83204

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IRATA SAFETY AND HEALTH TOPIC SHEET – RECORD FORM			
Site:			
Date:			
Topic(s) for discussion:		Topic Sheet No. 23: Accident and incident reporting (003)	
Reason for talk:			
Start time:		Finish time:	
Attended by <i>Please sign to verify understanding of briefing</i>			
Print name:		Signature:	
<i>Continue overleaf (where necessary)</i>			
Matters raised by employees:		Action taken as a result:	
<i>Continue overleaf (where necessary)</i>			
Briefing leader <i>I confirm I have delivered this briefing and have questioned those attending on the topic discussed.</i>			
Print name:		Signature:	
			Date:
Comments:			