

# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES 2016

**Issued by:** Director, Human Resources  
**Current approver:** Vice-Chancellor and Principal  
**Date:** 2 May 2016  
**Last amended:** 27 April 2018 (administrative amendment only)  
21 February 2024 (administrative amendment only)  
23 April 2024 (administrative amendments)  
**Name:** John Dixon

---

## 1 Purpose and application

- (1) These procedures are to give effect to the [Work Health and Safety Policy](#) (“the policy”).
- (2) These procedures specify:
  - (a) the requirements for each of the University’s safety management standards; and
  - (b) the common processes that support the implementation of the safety management system.
- (3) These procedures apply to:
  - (a) Fellows, members of Senate committees, staff, students, affiliates (including volunteers and contractors) and visitors; and
  - (b) all activities conducted by or on behalf of the University.

## 2 Commencement

These procedures commence on 2 May 2016.

## 3 Interpretation

- (1) Words and phrases used in these procedures and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the policy.  
**Note:** See **clause 6** of the policy.
- (2) In these procedures the following terms have the meanings set out below.

<b>current risk</b>	means the level of risk associated with a current activity or situation, taking account of existing risk controls
<b>dangerous incident</b>	has the meaning given to it in section 37 of the <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Act 2011</a> . As at the date of these procedures, that definition is as set out in the schedule to these procedures.
<b>documented risk assessment</b>	means a completed WHS risk assessment form or equivalent.
<b>HDR</b>	means higher degree by research.
<b>health and safety representative</b>	means a worker elected by their fellow workers to represent the health and safety interests of their work group, in accordance with <b>subclauses 6(4) to 6(8)</b> of these procedures.
<b>local safety committee</b>	means a committee established as a forum for discussion and promotion of local work health and safety issues within faculties or administrative units or sub-units of these.
<b>inherent risk</b>	means the level of risk associated with an activity or situation without risk controls.
<b>notifiable incident</b>	means the death of a person, a serious injury or illness of a person, or a dangerous incident.
<b>residual risk</b>	means the level of risk associated with an activity or situation following the implementation of risk controls.
<b>RiskWare</b>	means the University's software application for the recording and management of incidents and hazards.
<b>serious injury or illness</b>	has the meaning given to it in section 36 of the <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)</a> . As at the date of these procedures this is as set out in Schedule 2.
<b>University WHS Risk Matrix</b>	means the matrix for determining risk, as set out in Schedule 1.
<b>work group</b>	means a grouping of workers that is largely aligned to an organisational unit, determined by the SEG WHS Committee in consultation with workers, and listed as such on the <a href="#">work and health and safety website</a> .

#### **4 Active and visible leadership**

- (1) Senior managers and supervisors must demonstrate active and visible safety leadership by:
  - (a) including work health and safety as the standing first agenda item for all general management and team meetings and allowing time for discussion;
  - (b) actively engaging in risk management processes;
  - (c) regularly walking through work areas to observe work practices; and

- (d) taking time to have informal health safety and wellbeing conversations with workers.

## 5 Safety planning

- (1) The executive of each organisational unit must plan and monitor implementation of the safety management system. The local safety plan must:
  - (a) take into consideration the unit's risk profile and resources and identify:
    - (i) priority work health and safety issues; and
    - (ii) the actions planned to address these, specific to the unit.
  - (b) monitor compliance with:
    - (i) each of the safety management standards; and
    - (ii) any applicable minimum safety performance standards for specific operational activities, e.g. working with chemicals, conducting fieldwork.
  - (c) be monitored at least quarterly and reviewed annually.

**Note:** The [WHS Action Plan](#) is a tool that can be used to document a local safety plan. Further guidance is available on the safety health and wellbeing website.

## 6 Consultation and participation

- (1) The primary mechanism for consultation on health and safety matters is direct dialogue between supervisors and the workers under their direction.
- (2) Workers must be consulted whenever:
  - (a) identifying hazards and assessing risks to health and safety;
  - (b) deciding ways to eliminate or minimise those risks;
  - (c) deciding on the adequacy of facilities for workers' welfare;
  - (d) proposing changes that may affect workers' health and safety; or
  - (e) when making decisions about the procedures for:
    - (i) consulting with workers;
    - (ii) resolving work health and safety issues at the workplace;
    - (iii) monitoring workers' health;
    - (iv) monitoring the conditions at any workplace under the management or control of the University; or
    - (v) providing information and training for workers.
- (3) Consultation requires that:
  - (a) relevant work health and safety information is shared with workers;
  - (b) workers are given a reasonable opportunity to express their views and to raise health or safety issues;
  - (c) workers are given a reasonable opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process relating to a health and safety matter;
  - (d) the views of workers are taken into account; and

- (e) workers are advised of the outcome of any consultation in a timely manner.
- (4) As a secondary mechanism for consultation, workers may elect a health and safety representative to represent the health and safety interests of their work group.
- (5) Work groups for health and safety representatives will be:
  - (a) determined by the University Executive Work Health and Safety Committee, with consideration to:
    - (i) the number of workers;
    - (ii) the number of work locations; and
    - (iii) the work health and safety risk profile; and
  - (b) specified on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#).
- (6) The election and training of health and safety representatives will be organised by the Safety Health & Wellbeing unit once every three years.
- (7) Health and safety representatives:
  - (a) must be invited to attend management meetings for their work group to monitor work health and safety management and compliance;
  - (b) must refer work health and safety matters brought to their attention to the relevant supervisor or manager for corrective action; and
  - (c) may assist in reviewing, investigating and resolving work health and safety matters for their work group, including complaints from members of the work group that cannot be adequately resolved through the usual line of management.
- (8) One health and safety representative from the faculties and one from the professional service units may be nominated by their fellow health and safety representatives to participate in meetings of the University Executive Work Health and Safety Committee.

## 7 Risk management

- (1) Each organisational unit must identify its top five work health and safety risks and the actions planned to address these within the local safety plan. These priorities may be adjusted as the risks are appropriately controlled. Other lower priority work health and safety risks should also be addressed.
- (2) Supervisors must apply the risk management steps set out in **subclause 7(3)** to manage local hazards and hazardous activities within their control;
- (3) The risk management steps are as follows.
  - (a) Identify workplace hazards and hazardous activities.
  - (b) Assign priorities based on an initial assessment of the current risk, with reference to the University WHS Risk Matrix in Schedule 1 and giving consideration to:
    - (i) the likelihood of exposure, including how many people are or may be exposed, the frequency, duration and intensity; and
    - (ii) the potential consequences of exposure, that is, whether serious injuries or illness may result.
  - (c) Assess the risk
    - (i) Where the current risk of an activity is assessed as 'high' or 'very high' a documented [risk assessment](#) is required.



- (ii) A documented risk assessment must identify the specific hazards, potential harm, the existing or proposed risk controls and an assessment of the residual risk.
    - (iii) Whenever assessing the risk associated with an activity or task, various risk factors must be considered including the nature of the hazard itself, the work environment, the physical activities required to complete the task, the psychological demands of the task and the individual workers involved in the activity.
  - (d) Control the risks
    - (i) Risks to work health and safety must be eliminated whenever reasonably practicable.
    - (ii) Where it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, suitable risk controls must be adopted to minimise the risk as far as possible.
    - (iii) Risk controls must be adopted with reference to the hierarchy of risk controls.  
**Note:** Refer to Schedule 1 for the hierarchy of risk controls.
  - (e) Review control measures
    - (i) The adopted risk controls should be monitored regularly to validate their effectiveness. As a minimum, risk controls should be reviewed annually.
    - (ii) In addition, a review is required whenever there is an incident, a significant change in the work process or new information about the hazard or activity becomes available.
  - (f) If an activity is assessed as having a residual risk rating of 'high' the supervisor must:
    - (i) review available risk controls; and
    - (ii) submit a documented risk assessment to the relevant head of school or head of administrative unit for approval  
**Note:** See forms available on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#)
  - (g) If an activity is assessed as having a residual risk rating of 'very high' the supervisor must:
    - (i) suspend the activity until further notice;
    - (ii) review available risk controls;
    - (iii) determine if the risk outweighs the potential benefits;
    - (iv) submit a documented risk assessment and risk/benefit analysis to the head of school or head of administrative unit for review and endorsement; and
    - (v) obtain approval to undertake the activity from the relevant dean or director.  
**Note:** See forms available on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#)
- (4) The risk management steps and approval processes for some specific operational activities may vary and are detailed in the relevant performance standards for specific operational risk.  
**Note:** Refer to the [safety health and wellbeing website](#).

## 8 Training and instruction

- (1) All staff and HDR students must complete the University online work health and safety induction.  
**Note:** Refer to the training page on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#)
- (2) Supervisors must provide workers with a relevant local work health and safety induction in the workplace.  
**Note:** See the [local Work Health and Safety \(WHS\) Induction Checklist](#)
- (3) Staff who supervise other workers must complete work health and safety training for supervisors.
- (4) Safe work procedures must be documented and used as a training resource for tasks and activities that require administrative actions to minimise the risk of injury or illness.  
**Note:** See forms available on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#).
- (5) The relevant supervisor must be satisfied that workers are competent prior to approving unsupervised work.
- (6) Local training and assessment of competence should include:
  - (a) providing relevant information;
  - (b) demonstrating of the task to be performed;
  - (c) observing the worker complete the task; and
  - (d) observing the worker explain and demonstrate the task.
- (7) Supervisors must regularly assess the training needs of the workers under their direction and plan for the provision of additional task and role specific training.  
**Note:** A training needs analysis (TNA) tool is provided on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#).

## 9 Emergency management

- (1) All workers must:
  - (a) be familiar with the University's [standard emergency response procedures](#);
  - (b) respond independently to emergencies; and
  - (c) follow the reasonable instructions of Emergency Wardens, Campus Security Officers and the Emergency Services.
- (2) During classes, teaching staff are responsible for ensuring a safe initial response to an incident or emergency.
- (3) Heads of schools and heads of administrative areas must:
  - (a) promote the University's standard emergency response procedures;
  - (b) appoint local staff to emergency roles, in accordance with **clause 12** of these procedures;
  - (c) allocate sufficient time and resources for the implementation of building emergency procedures in the buildings occupied by their workers;
  - (d) monitor the planning and implementation of building emergency procedures within the local safety plan.

**Note:** Further guidelines on emergency management are available on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#).

**Note:** In situations where staff or students are accommodated in another organisation's facilities they must comply with the host organisation's emergency procedures.

## 10 Incident and hazard reporting

- (1) Where a worker observes an incident or hazard they must:
  - (a) report it to the relevant supervisor as soon as possible after it occurs or is observed; and
  - (b) record it in [RiskWare](#) within 24 hours.
- (2) The relevant supervisor must:
  - (a) take action to make the area or situation safe pending further investigation;
  - (b) immediately notify the Safety Health & Wellbeing unit of a notifiable incident;
  - (c) record the matter in RiskWare, if this has not already been done, within 24 hours;
  - (d) promptly investigate all incidents and hazards to identify root causes;
  - (e) submit an action plan in RiskWare within seven days of the initial report; and
  - (f) implement, or arrange for the relevant organisational unit to implement corrective actions within reasonable timeframes.

**Note:** Corrective action may include building alterations, maintenance or repairs. Requests for building or grounds work must be submitted to Campus Infrastructure Services using [Campus Assist Online](#).
- (3) Campus Infrastructure Services, or any other organisational unit responsible for undertaking corrective actions, must:
  - (a) liaise with the relevant supervisor, and where necessary the Safety Health & Wellbeing unit, to investigate and agree on corrective actions;
  - (b) promptly notify the relevant supervisor of:
    - (i) details of the proposed corrective actions;
    - (ii) the estimated time frame for completion;
    - (iii) the reasons for any delays; and
  - (c) complete agreed actions within a reasonable time.
- (4) The Safety Health & Wellbeing unit must:
  - (a) report notifiable incidents to SafeWork NSW on behalf of the University;
  - (b) review all incidents and hazards recorded in RiskWare;
  - (c) notify relevant senior managers of incidents and hazards with 'major' or 'severe' actual or potential consequences;

**Note:** Refer to the University WHS Risk Matrix in Schedule 1.

  - (d) arrange for incidents and hazards with 'major' or 'severe' actual or potential consequences to be investigated and report investigation findings and recommendations to the:
    - (i) responsible dean or director; and

- (ii) Provost and the Vice-Principal (Operations); and
  - (e) review any notification received under **subclause 10(3)** and, in appropriate circumstances, liaise with the relevant organisational unit to facilitate prompt completion of corrective actions.
- (5) If a corrective action is not:
  - (a) completed within a reasonable time; or
  - (b) completed to the satisfaction of the relevant supervisor or the Safety Health and Wellbeing unit,

the relevant supervisor or the Director, Safety Health and Wellbeing must notify the Provost or Vice-Principal (Operations).

## 11 Suppliers, contractors and purchasing controls

- (1) Reasonable attempts must be made to purchase the safest available products and services.
- (2) Service contracts should include safety specifications and performance requirements.
- (3) Contractors must:
  - (a) be appropriately qualified and licensed; and
  - (b) provide the relevant University supervisor with a safe work procedure for potentially hazardous work before commencing such work.
- (4) The relevant University supervisor must:
  - (a) review contractor safe work procedures and satisfy themselves that they set out a reasonable approach for protecting the safety of the contractor and the University community;
  - (b) inform contractors of University hazards;
  - (c) consult contractors on decisions that affect their health and safety; and
  - (d) provide either:
    - (i) supervision of contractors while on University sites; or
    - (ii) local work health and safety induction for contractors prior to their carrying out unsupervised work.
- (5) Incidents involving contractors must be reported in accordance with **clause 10**.

## 12 Local safety appointees

- (1) A head of school or head of administrative area may, by agreement with the nominated workers, appoint workers to fill the following local safety roles.
- (2) **Local safety officer**, whose role involves:
  - (a) assisting the relevant head of school or head of administrative area to implement the safety management system;
  - (b) advising on work health and safety issues, or obtaining advice from the Safety Health & Wellbeing unit;
  - (c) bringing unresolved or urgent work health and safety issues to the attention of the relevant head of school or head of administrative area;



- (d) assisting to investigate significant incidents; and
  - (e) helping to resolve issues according to the policy and these procedures.
- (3) **Local safety committee members** may be appointed to serve on a local safety committee. Where established, local safety committees provide a forum for discussion and promotion of local work health and safety issues.
- Note:** A local safety committee does not replace the primary and secondary consultation mechanisms established under **clause 6** of these procedures. Refer to the [safety health and wellbeing website](#) for further information.
- (4) **Chief warden**, who will be responsible for developing and maintaining local emergency procedures for a particular building.
- (a) In buildings that have multiple tenants, the chief warden will generally be appointed by the head of school or head of administrative area with the largest number of building occupants, in consultation with other heads whose workers occupy the same building.
- (5) **Emergency wardens**, who are responsible for responding to emergencies within a particular part of a building in accordance with building emergency procedures.
- Note:** Further guidelines on emergency management are available on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#).
- (6) **Nominated first aid officers**, who are responsible for administering general first aid for the University community and members of the public within a particular building or part of the University, as determined by the Safety Health & Wellbeing unit.
- (7) **Appointed first aiders**, who will be responsible for administering first aid in support of a specific operational activity.

### 13 Resolving work health and safety issues

- (1) Individuals should directly approach other workers they observe engaging in unsafe activities or behaving in a way that impacts the health and safety of others, and ask them to stop the activity or behaviour.
- (2) **Minor work health and safety issues**
- (a) When an identified work health and safety issue (including an incident or hazard) can be safely resolved with minimal effort or disruption, individuals are encouraged to take action themselves.
  - (b) Recurring minor work health and safety issues should be referred to the relevant supervisor in charge of the person, activity or area.
- (3) **Other work health and safety issues**
- (a) If an issue is not resolved using the process in **subclauses 13(1)** and **13(2)**, or these processes have not been followed, an individual must inform all affected stakeholders:
    - (i) that there is an issue to be resolved; and
    - (ii) the nature and scope of the issue.
  - (b) The relevant supervisor must record the issue in RiskWare.
  - (c) All stakeholders must, as soon as possible, discuss how to resolve the issue with regard to all relevant matters, including:



- (i) the degree and immediacy of risk to workers or other persons affected;
    - (ii) the number and location of people affected;
    - (iii) the actions that can be taken to resolve the issue (immediately, short-term and long-term); and
    - (iv) who will be responsible for implementing the agreed action.
  - (d) An individual may be assisted or represented by a person nominated by them.
  - (e) If the issue is resolved, details of the issue and its resolution must be provided to all relevant stakeholders and recorded in RiskWare.
  - (f) Where a work health and safety issue is unresolved after following this procedure, or where it is inappropriate to raise the issue with the supervisor who is directly responsible, assistance to resolve the issue may be sought from:
    - (i) a dean or director;
    - (ii) local safety officer (where appointed);
    - (iii) head of school or head of administrative unit;
    - (iv) health and safety representative (where elected); or
    - (v) the Safety Health & Wellbeing unit.
  - (g) If an issue remains unresolved after following **subclause 13(3)(f)**, it may be referred to the Provost or Vice-Principal (Operations).
- (4) Issues affecting a large proportion of the University
- (a) If, in the opinion of the Director, Safety Health & Wellbeing, a work health and safety issue affects a large proportion of the University community or requires consideration at a University level, the Director, Safety Health & Wellbeing must refer it to the University Executive Work Health and Safety Committee for consideration.
  - (b) This subclause does not apply to incomplete corrective actions to which **subclause 10(5)** of these procedures applies.
- (5) **Referral to SafeWork NSW**
- (a) If an issue is not resolved after reasonable efforts to do so in accordance with this clause, any stakeholder may refer it to [SafeWork NSW](#) to seek their assistance in resolving it.
- Note:** Guidelines on a wide range of work health and safety issues are available on the [safety health and wellbeing website](#).

## 14 Recordkeeping

The [Recordkeeping Policy](#) applies to all work health and safety records.

**Note:** Detailed guidance on recordkeeping matters is available in the [University Recordkeeping Manual](#).

## 15 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the *Work Health and Safety Procedures 2012* which commenced on 19 December 2012 and which is rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document.

## NOTES

### Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016

Date adopted:	2 May 2016
Date registered:	5 May 2016
Date commenced:	2 May 2016
Date amended:	28 October 2016 (administrative amendments only) 6 June 2017 (administrative amendments only) 29 August 2017 (administrative amendments only) 27 April 2018 (administrative amendments only) 24 February 2024 (administrative amendments only) 23 April 2024 (administrative amendments)
Original Administrator:	Chief Human Resources Officer
Current document owner:	Chief Safety Officer
Review date:	2 May 2021
Related documents:	

[\*Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)\*](#)

[\*Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(NSW\)\*](#)

[\*How to manage work health and safety risks: Code of Practice \(SafeWork NSW\)\*](#)

[\*The University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement 2023-2026\*](#)

[\*University of Sydney \(Delegations of Authority\) Rule\*](#)

[\*Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct\*](#)

[\*Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy\*](#)

[\*Chief Warden Performance Bonus Policy\*](#)

[\*Injury and Illness Management Policy\*](#)

[\*Procurement Policy\*](#)

[Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy](#)

[Smoke-Free Environment Policy](#)

[Recordkeeping Manual](#)

[Workforce Engagements and Payments Policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety Policy](#)

---

## AMENDMENT HISTORY

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
6(5)(a); 6(8); 13(4(a))	References to Senior Executive Group (SEG) Work Health and Safety Committee changed to University Executive (UE) Work Health and Safety Committee	28 October 2016
Related documents	Updating reference to the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2016	6 June 2017
9(3); 12(1); 12(2); 12(4)	Amendments relating to organisational design changes.	6 June 2017
3(2); Related Documents	Amended link to Work Health and Safety Act 2011	29 August 2017
Related Documents	Updated Director, Human Resources title to Chief Human Resources Officer.	29 August 2017
Related Documents	Updated reference to The University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021	27 April 2018
Related documents	Replaced 'Enterprise Agreement 2018 – 2021' with 'Enterprise Agreement 2023 – 2026'	21 February 2024
Related documents	Replaced 'University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016' with 'University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2020	21 February 2024
Related documents	Replaced 'Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates' with 'Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021'	21 February 2024
Related documents	Replaced 'Injury and Illness Management Policy 2015' with 'Injury and Illness Management Policy 2024'	21 February 2024

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
Related documents	Replaced 'Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013' with 'Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy 2020'	21 February 2024
Throughout	Administrative amendments to remove the year in policy references.	23 April 2024

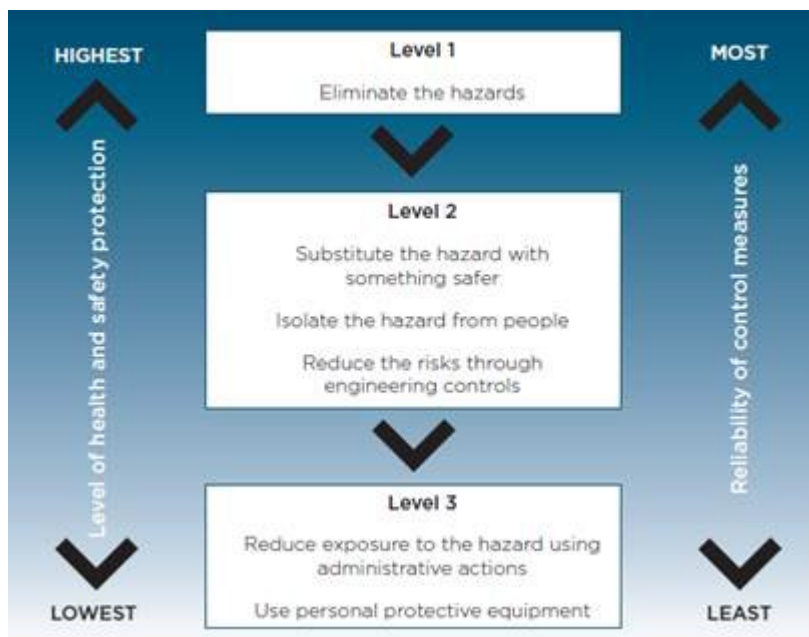
## Schedule 1

### University Risk Matrix

			Potential Consequences				
			L6	L5	L4	L3	L2
			Minor injuries or discomfort. No medical treatment or measureable physical effects.	Injuries or illness requiring medical treatment. Temporary impairment.	Injuries or illness requiring hospital admission.	Injury or illness resulting in permanent impairment.	Fatality
			Not Significant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Likelihood	Expected to occur regularly under normal circumstances	Almost Certain	Medium	High	Very High	Very High	Very High
	Expected to occur at some time	Likely	Medium	High	High	Very High	Very High
	May occur at some time	Possible	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
	Not likely to occur in normal circumstances	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Could happen, but probably never will	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

### Hierarchy of risk controls

Extract from the SafeWork NSW Code of Practice: How to manage work health and safety risks.



## Schedule 2

### Extracts from Work Health and Safety Act 2011

#### 36 What is a “serious injury or illness”

In this Part, serious injury or illness of a person means an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

- (a) immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, or
- (b) immediate treatment for:
  - (i) the amputation of any part of his or her body, or
  - (ii) a serious head injury, or
  - (iii) a serious eye injury, or
  - (iv) a serious burn, or
  - (v) the separation of his or her skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping), or
  - (vi) a spinal injury, or
  - (vii) the loss of a bodily function, or
  - (viii) serious lacerations, or
- (c) 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.

#### 37 What is a “dangerous incident”

In this Part, 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:

- (a) an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance; or
- (b) an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire; or
- (c) an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam; or
- (d) an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance; or
- (e) electric shock; or
- (f) the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing; or
- (g) 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; or
- (h) the collapse or partial collapse of a structure; or
- (i) the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation; or
- (j) the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel; or
- (k) the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel; or
- (l) any other event prescribed by the regulations;

but does not include an incident of a prescribed kind.