

GUIDELINE

# Accident and incident reporting

Second edition



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Mines and Petroleum  
Resources Safety



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## Guidelines

A guideline is an explanatory document that provides more information on the requirements of legislation, details good practice, and may explain means of compliance with standards prescribed in the legislation. The government, unions or employer groups may issue guidance material.

Compliance with guidelines is not mandatory but they could have legal standing if it were demonstrated that the guideline is the industry norm.

## Who should use this guideline?

This guideline should be used by anyone engaged in mining operations in Western Australia. All parties have responsibilities for health and safety at work. This includes employers, employees and other workers, self-employed persons and others such as people who design and construct buildings or manufacture and supply plant or substances.

## Foreword

This guideline is issued by Resources Safety under the *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994*, and has been endorsed by the Mining Industry Advisory Committee.

### The Act

The *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994* (the Act) sets objectives to promote and improve occupational safety and health standards within the minerals industry.

The Act sets out broad duties, and is supported by regulations, together with codes of practice and guidelines.

### Regulations

The Mines Safety and Inspection Regulations 1995 (the regulations) provide more specific requirements for a range of activities. Like the Act, regulations are enforceable and breaches may result in prosecution, fines, or directions to cease operations and undertake remedial action.

### Application

The provisions of this guideline apply to all mines as defined in section 4(1) of the Act.

# 1 Introduction

The information presented in this guideline is intended to assist employers and employees to understand their reporting duties for:

- accidents involving injury to persons; and
- occurrences (see Section 4.1 of this guideline), which are commonly referred to as incidents.

The guideline details who is responsible for reporting these events, how and when they must be reported, and the requirements for written reports.

Specific legislative requirements regarding accidents and occurrences are listed in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 summarises Resources Safety's reporting requirements.

The reports are entered directly into Resources Safety's Safety Regulation System (SRS).

SRS is used to record and retrieve information about lost time and disabling injuries resulting from accidents in the workplace. Resources Safety uses it as a tool for identifying:

- those work practices causing frequent injury;
- the predominant types of accidents in particular occupational groups and workplaces;
- the frequency of injury to particular parts of the body;
- the frequency of particular types of injury; and
- the activities being pursued at the time accidents occur.

SRS is also used to record and retrieve information about incidents in the workplace, and provides a useful tool for identifying trends in reported incidents and for assessing risk. A version of this database (with identifying information removed) is accessible online at [www.dmp.wa.gov.au/11312.aspx](http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/11312.aspx)

In this guideline, unless otherwise specified, the term 'manager' refers to the registered manager for an operating mine or the exploration manager for an exploration lease.

## 2 Accidents

### 2.1 Reportable injury

The Act requires that an accident on a mining operation must be reported if it causes an injury that prevents a person from returning to his or her duties as they were being performed at the time of the accident. Such reports should cover situations where the person would be unable to return to those duties the following day, regardless of whether or not the person is rostered to work that day. The reporting requirement includes injuries to company employees, self-employed persons and contractors. It applies where the person injured has lost time from work, been assigned to alternate or light duties, or been put on restricted hours.

All reportable injuries that are not serious (see Section 2.2) are classified as minor).

### 2.2 Serious injury

A serious injury is defined as an injury that:

- results in the injured person being disabled from following his or her ordinary occupation for a period of two weeks or more;
- involves unconsciousness arising from inhalation of fumes or poisonous gases, or asphyxiation due to lack of oxygen or displacement of oxygen by an inert gas; or
- results from an accident, including fuming, arising from the use of explosives or blasting agents.

### 2.3 Accident site not to be disturbed

Where an accident at a mine has resulted in a death or serious injury, the place where the accident happened must not be disturbed unless:

- it is necessary to save a person's life or prevent injury to anyone else;
- if there has been a serious injury, a District Inspector has given permission; or
- if there has been a fatal accident, the coroner has given permission.

## **2.4 Examination of accident site by trade union representative**

If any employee involved in an accident at a mine is a member of a trade union, then a representative of that trade union is entitled to examine the place where the accident occurred.

## **2.5 Investigation of an accident by a safety and health representative**

A safety and health representative may carry out an appropriate investigation if an accident affects the employees that he or she is elected to represent.



## 3 Accident reporting requirements

### 3.1 Notification

Where a person suffers an injury as a result of an accident at a mine, and is unable to perform the work being done at the time of the accident, the manager must notify:

- the District Inspector for the region in which the mine is situated; and
- if requested by the injured person, the secretary or local representative of a trade union of which the person is a member.

Note that accident reports for exploration activities on a mine site should be submitted by the manager of the mine site and included in the site's figures.

Reports for exploration activities not on a mine site (i.e. an exploration lease) should be submitted by the exploration manager.

#### Fatality

The reporting requirements for a fatal accident are the same as those for a serious injury (see below).

#### Serious injury

Where the injury appears to be serious, the District Inspector should be notified by telephone as soon as possible.

Determining the seriousness of an injury may require a judgement by the manager, but if there is any doubt about whether the injured person will be disabled for two weeks or more, a report should be made without delay.

Where the District Inspector cannot be contacted directly, a direct verbal report should be made to the regional inspectorate office during office hours or, outside office hours, to any serving inspector for the region.

## **Notification by occurrence report**

Although the immediate notification is by telephone, the details should be confirmed in writing as soon as practicable via an SRS occurrence report.

## **Subsequent confirmation by mining injury report**

At the end of the month following a serious injury, the manager must send a completed mining injury report via SRS confirming the information reported in the occurrence report.

## **Minor injury**

Where the injury does not appear to be serious, but is still reportable as defined in Section 2.1 of this guideline, a direct verbal report or occurrence report are not required, and the notification should be given at the end of the month in a mining injury report.

## **Monthly status report**

The manager must submit a monthly status report for each calendar month. This must be submitted via SRS as soon as practicable after the end of each month (usually within two weeks). The report must be submitted whether or not there has been a reportable accident during the month.

The report includes details of any time lost or changes of work status because of injuries from previous months, and company and contractor employee statistics.

Specific reporting requirements include:

- the names of employees who have been injured in previous months and are still off work, or have not returned to their duties (as they were being performed at the time of the accident) by the start of the month being reported;
- the number of days lost for each employee and his or her work status;
- the average number of company and contractor employees and total hours worked by company and contractor employees that month; and
- hours worked as per the Mines Safety and Inspection Levy Regulations 2010.



The information in the report provides data for analysis by Resources Safety, and is used to generate industry performance indicators.

### **3.2 Availability and submission of forms**

- Accident reports, incident reports and monthly status reports are only available via SRS.
- A company administrator must register for SRS access before reports can be submitted to Resources Safety. Refer to [www.dmp.wa.gov.au/4737.aspx](http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/4737.aspx) for registration information.
- It is important for the uniformity and reliability of data that people completing the report forms are familiar with the procedures.
- The manager will be notified if there are changes to the site identification number.

### **3.3 Accident log book**

The manager must keep an accident log book of the type approved by the State Mining Engineer (Appendix 3). The manager must also ensure that any accident that occurs at the mine is recorded in the accident log book without delay.

The log book must be available for inspection at all reasonable times. Persons authorised by the Act to inspect the accident log book are:

- an inspector;
- a safety and health representative for the mine;
- a representative of a trade union that has members employed at the mine; and
- anyone else authorised by the State Mining Engineer.

# 4 Occurrences

## 4.1 Description

Occurrences are unplanned incidents that do not necessarily result in injury to a person or damage to property.

The following events are listed under the Act as occurrences to be reported:

- any extensive subsidence, settlement or fall of ground or any major collapse of any part of the operations of a mine, or any earth movement caused by a seismic event;
- any outbreak of fire above or below ground in any mine;
- any breakage of a rope, cable, chain or other gear by which persons are raised or lowered;
- any inrush of water from old underground operations or other source;
- any accidental ignition of dust below ground, the discovery of the presence of potentially harmful or asphyxiant gas, or an outburst of such gas in any part of a mine;
- any accidental ignition or detonation of explosives, or any delayed or fast ignition of explosives;
- any explosion or bursting of compressed air receivers, boilers, or pressure vessels;
- every electric shock or burn to a person and every dangerous occurrence involving electricity;
- any incidence of a person being affected by poisoning or exposure to toxic gas or fumes; and
- any loss of control of heavy earth-moving equipment, including failure of braking or steering.

## 4.2 Reporting requirements

The manager must immediately notify the District Inspector for the region in which the mine or exploration lease is situated if any of the events listed above occurs. Notification should be submitted in an occurrence report via SRS but, if the manager considers that the occurrence is serious, the written notification should be preceded by a telephone call.

Notice must be given whether or not anyone was injured, and whether or not there was any damage to property.



## 4.3 Recording requirements

The manager must also record, without delay, the particulars of the occurrence in the mine record book.

# 5 Potentially serious occurrences

## 5.1 Description

A potentially serious occurrence is any event at a mine or exploration site that the manager considers had the potential to cause serious injury or harm to health, even though no injury or harm has in fact occurred, but it is not included in the circumstances listed in Section 4.1 as an occurrence.

## 5.2 Reporting requirements

The manager must report all potentially serious occurrences to the District Inspector for the region in which the mine or exploration lease is situated, as soon as is practicable after the facts are known, and submit an occurrence report form. If requested to do so by the District Inspector, the manager must also provide a detailed written report of the incident.





# Appendix 1 – Legislative provisions

Listed below are the sections of the *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994* and Mines Safety and Inspection Regulations 1995 that are relevant to this guideline.

## **Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994**

### **Functions of safety and health representatives**

#### **s. 53**

- (1) The functions of a safety and health representative are, in the interests of safety and health at the mine for which the representative was elected — ...
  - (b) in the event of an accident, a dangerous occurrence, or a risk of imminent and serious injury to, or imminent and serious harm to the health of, any person, immediately to carry out an appropriate investigation in respect of the matter ...

### **Notice of accident to be given**

#### **s. 76**

- (1) Where a person suffers injury in an accident at a mine and is disabled by that accident from performing his or her duties of employment as they were being performed at the time the accident occurred, the manager must cause notice of the accident to be given —
  - (a) in accordance with the regulations, to the district inspector for the region in which the mine is situated; and
  - (b) if the injured person so requests, to the secretary or local representative of a trade union of which that person is a member.



- (2) The notice required to be given under subsection (1) must —
  - (a) if the injury appears to be serious, be given by the fastest practicable method of communication as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so, and must subsequently be confirmed in writing; and
  - (b) if the injury appears not to be serious, be given in writing at the end of the month.
- (3) A manager who —
  - (a) omits to give a notice required to be given by subsection (1); or
  - (b) fails without reasonable excuse to give a notice required to be given by subsection (1) in accordance with subsection (2),commits an offence, unless the required notice was given by the principal employer at the mine.
- (4) An injury is a serious injury for the purposes of this section if the injury —
  - (a) results in the injured person being disabled from following his or her ordinary occupation for a period of 2 weeks or more; or
  - (b) involves unconsciousness arising from inhalation of fumes or poisonous gases or asphyxiation due to lack of oxygen or displacement of oxygen by an inert gas; or
  - (c) results from an accident, including fuming, arising out of the use of explosives or blasting agents.

### **Recording of accidents in accident log book**

#### **s. 77**

- (1) The manager must cause to be kept at the mine a book of a type approved by the State mining engineer and called the accident log book, and must after the occurrence of any accident cause a record of the accident to be entered without delay in the book.
- (2) The manager must ensure that the accident log book is kept open at all reasonable times to the examination of an inspector, an assistant inspector, a safety and health representative for the mine, a representative of a trade union any member of which is employed at the mine, and of any other person authorised by the State mining engineer.

- (3) In subsection (2) safety and health representative for the mine includes a safety and health representative elected for a group of employees pursuant to a scheme under section 55A if any member of the group works at the mine.

A person who contravenes subsections (1) or (2) commits an offence.

### Recording of occurrences in the record book

#### s. 78

- (1) The manager must immediately give notice to the district inspector for the region in which the mine is situated of an occurrence to which this section applies, whether or not any bodily injury to any person or damage to property has resulted from the occurrence, and must give to the district inspector such particulars in respect of the occurrence as the inspector may require.
- (2) The manager must without delay record particulars of an occurrence to which this section applies in the record book
- (3) This section applies to an occurrence of —
- (a) any extensive subsidence, settlement or fall of ground or any major collapse of any part of the operations of a mine, or any earth movement caused by a seismic event; or
  - (b) any outbreak of fire above or below ground in any mine; or
  - (c) any breakage of a rope, cable, chain or other gear by which persons are raised or lowered; or
  - (d) any inrush of water from old underground operations or other source; or
  - (e) any accidental ignition of dust below ground or the discovery of the presence of potentially harmful or asphyxiant gas or an outburst of such gas in any part of a mine; or
  - (f) any accidental ignition or detonation of explosives, or any delayed or fast ignition of explosives; or
  - (g) any explosion or bursting of compressed air receivers, boilers, or pressure vessels; or

- (h) every electric shock or burn to a person and every dangerous occurrence involving electricity; or
- (i) any incidence of a person being affected by poisoning or exposure to toxic gas or fumes; or
- (j) any loss of control of heavy earth moving equipment, including failure of braking or steering.

A person who contravenes subsections (1) or (2) commits an offence.

### **Manager to report potentially serious occurrences**

#### **s. 79**

- (1) The manager must inform the district inspector for the region in which the mine is situated of any occurrence at the mine which in the manager's opinion had the potential to cause serious injury or harm to health (other than an occurrence referred to in section 78) although no injury or harm in fact happened.
- (2) The manager must inform the district inspector as required by subsection (1) as soon as practicable after the manager has ascertained the facts and circumstances of the occurrence and, if required by the district inspector, must provide a written report on that occurrence.

### **Examination of accident location by trade union representatives**

#### **s. 80**

Where an accident has occurred at a mine and any employee involved in that accident is a member of a trade union, a representative of that trade union is entitled to examine the place where the accident occurred.

### **Place of accident not to be disturbed**

#### **s. 81**

A person must not disturb a place at a mine where an accident causing death or serious injury has occurred except with —

- (a) a view to saving life or preventing injury to any person; or
- (b) the permission of an inspector or, in the case of a fatal accident, the permission of a coroner.

A person who contravenes this section commits an offence.

## Mines Safety and Inspection Regulations 1995

### Requirements if notice in writing

#### r. 3.41

For the purposes of section 76 of the Act, when notice of an accident is given, or confirmed, in writing, the notice must be in the form approved for that purpose by the State mining engineer.

### Monthly status form

#### r. 3.42

The manager of a mine must ensure that a report is provided to the district inspector in a form approved for that purpose by the State mining engineer as soon as is practicable after the end of each month relating to the status of all employees who have been injured by accidents at the mine, (whether during that month or otherwise), and including the total hours worked by employees and the number of employees.

A person who contravenes this section commits an offence.

### Reporting of incidents affecting registered plant

#### r. 6.36

- (1) If an incident causes or is suspected of causing breakage, distortion, damage or failure of registered classified plant the person who was operating or in charge of the plant at the time of the incident must immediately give particulars in writing of the incident
  - (a) if the person is an employee, to the person's employer;
  - or
  - (b) in any other case, to the State mining engineer.

A person who contravenes this section commits an offence.



- (2) An employer who has been given particulars of the incident under subregulation (1)(a) must immediately give particulars in writing of the incident to the State mining engineer.

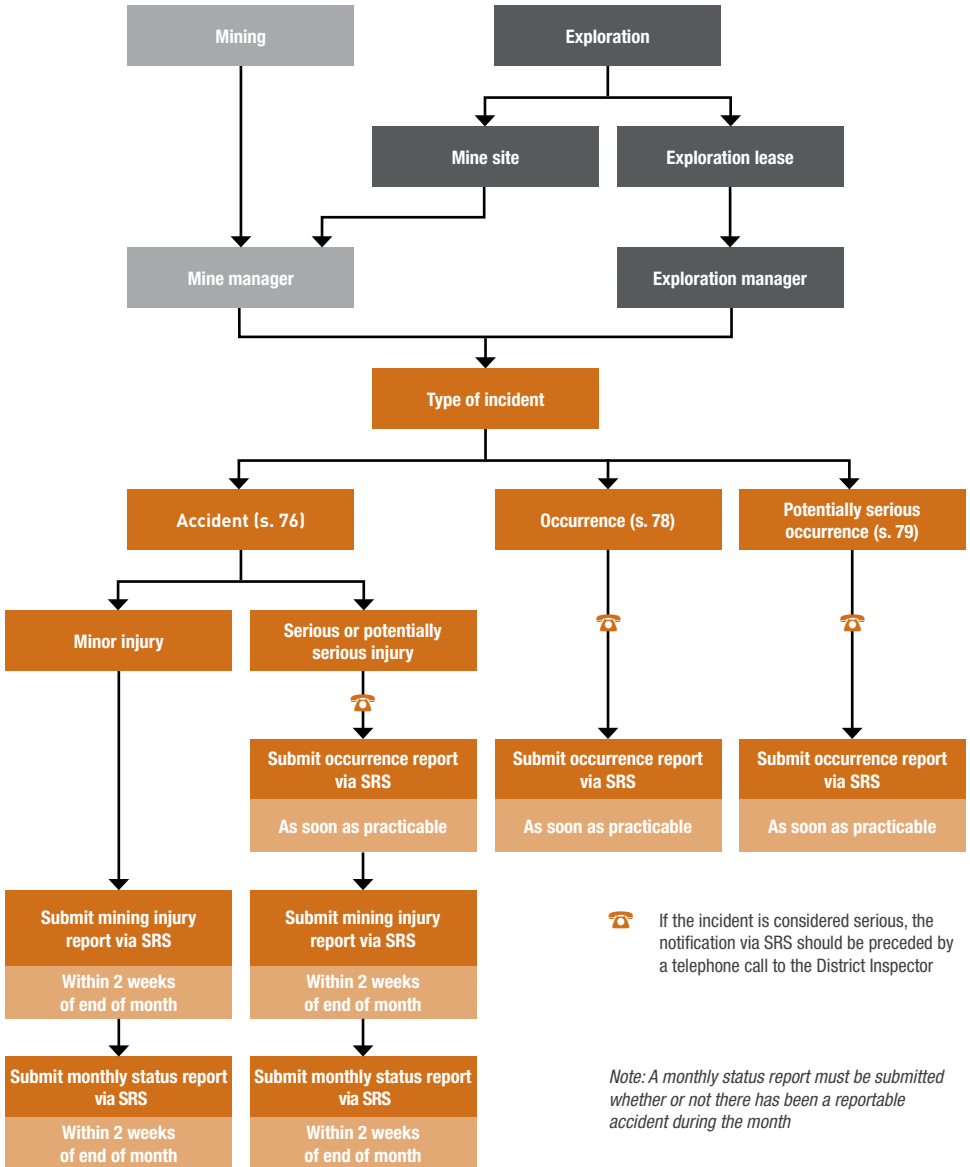
A person who contravenes this section commits an offence.

- (3) The principal employer at, or the manager of, a mine upon becoming aware that breakage, distortion, damage or failure of any registered classified plant at the mine has been, or is suspected of having been, caused must ensure that it is not used until it has been found to conform, or made to conform, with the design for the plant that was accepted by the State mining engineer.

A person who contravenes this section commits an offence.

*Note: The only authorised versions of the Act and regulations are those available from the State Law Publisher ([www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)), the official publisher of Western Australian legislation and statutory information.*

# Appendix 2 – Reporting requirements



## Appendix 3 – Accident log book

### Format of log book and entries

The accident log book required by s. 77 of the Act is a bound, hard-covered book with ruled pages and the pages numbered throughout. The size of the book is normally A4 or foolscap, generally with at least 150 pages.

Every entry in the log book must be made in ink. The term ‘made in ink’ allows various writing media that are not erasable — such as biros, fountain pens and felt-tipped pens. It is also acceptable to securely affix typewritten or computer printouts into the log book — for example, where data entry and management is by electronic means.

All entries must be dated and signed, with the name of the person making the entry clearly identified.

### Electronic data records

Because the accident log book is used to record information that may be stored in an electronic database, the information may be kept in electronic format provided a printed copy of each entry is available for immediate reference in the hardcopy accident log book described above.

If it is found that data entered in an electronic database are erroneous, incomplete or inadequate, and these are corrected or updated, then an addendum dated and signed by the person authorised to make the data entry must be securely affixed to the hardcopy accident log book.

Access to electronic data records, particularly accident data, must be restricted and, for personnel other than those authorised by the manager, must be available on a read-only basis so that no unauthorised alterations, deletions or additions may be made to any existing information.

## Integrity of record keeping

It is essential to maintain the integrity of the accident log book. Any interference with or deletion of information from such documents is an offence under section 101 of the Act, which relates to false or misleading information.

Electronic data entry should only be made by persons who are authorised by the manager, and who have individual access codes, and each entry must carry the name of the officer making the entry and be dated.

## Safekeeping and long-term storage

The accident log book for an operating mine is to be kept by the registered manager at the mine site. For exploration operations not at an operating mine, the record book is to be kept at the office of the exploration manager.

The manager must ensure that the book is kept safely in good order and condition.

The principal employer for the mine is responsible for all record and log books — including accident log books — that have been kept under the Act in respect of the mine for so long as mining operations continue at that mine. If mining operations are abandoned or suspended, the principal employer at the mine at that time must keep all such books for a period of six years from the time of abandonment or suspension; and if the principal employer appears likely to go into liquidation or receivership must take steps to ensure that such books are safely kept for that period.









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