

Guideline for reporting prescribed incidents

Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate

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Purpose

This guideline explains the requirements under Queensland law for reporting petroleum and gas incidents.

These requirements focus on serious incidents, ensuring timely and clear reporting, and establishing a consistent approach to reporting.

Reporting incidents helps the government and industry to work together to identify causes and prevent similar incidents.

Reporting requirements

The *Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004* (the Act) requires the reporting of prescribed incidents to the Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) including:

- incidents happening at an operating plant
- incidents relating to a gas related device.

Operating plant is defined in the Act and further explained in the [Guideline to what is Operating Plant under the Petroleum and Gas Production and Safety Act 2004 and interaction with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.](#)

A gas related device means any of the following:

- a gas device
- a gas fitting
- a gas system
- a container of fuel gas
- a device used to transfer fuel gas from one container to another.

What is a prescribed incident?

The Petroleum and Gas (Safety) Regulation 2018 defines prescribed incidents as:

- The death of a person
- The serious injury or illness of a person
- A dangerous incident
- Critical loss of supply in a fuel gas network.

These prescribed incidents are explained in the following sections.

Death of a person

This includes the death of a person at operating plant or caused by a gas related device.

It does not include murder or death resulting from self-harm.

Serious injury or illness of a person

A serious injury or illness of a person is an injury or illness that requires the person to have:

- Immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital
- Immediate treatment for a serious injury or illness
- Medical treatment by a doctor within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

A serious injury or illness must be reported whether or not immediate treatment was able to be provided (e.g. it could not be provided due to location or availability) or the treatment was refused by the injured person.

What is ‘immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital’?

Immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital includes admission to a hospital as an in-patient for any duration, even if the stay is not overnight or longer.

It does not include out-patient treatment provided by the emergency section of a hospital and immediate discharge or subsequent corrective surgery which does not follow the injury (e.g. treatment for non-serious illness or injury such as a minor cut, a cold, a sprain etc.).

What is ‘immediate treatment’ for a serious injury or illness?

Immediate treatment a serious injury or illness includes emergency treatment by a paramedic, registered nurse or a doctor for a serious injury or illness listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Serious injuries or illnesses that must be reported

Serious injury or illness	What is included	What is not included
Amputation	It includes amputation of a limb such as arm or leg, body part such as hand, foot or the tip of a finger, toe, nose or ear.	It does not include bruising or minor abrasion or laceration to the skin.
Serious head injury	It includes a fractured skull, loss of consciousness, blood clot or bleeding in the brain, damage to the skull to the extent that it is likely to affect organ/face function, and head injuries resulting in temporary or permanent amnesia.	It does not include a bump to the head resulting in a minor contusion or headache.
Serious eye injury	It includes an injury that results in or is likely to result in the loss of the eye or total or partial loss of vision, an injury that involves an object penetrating the eye (for example metal fragment, wood chip) or exposure of the eye to a substance that poses a risk of serious eye damage.	It does not include eye exposure to a substance that merely causes irritation.
Serious burn	It includes a burn requiring intensive care or critical care that could require compression garment or a skin graft.	It does not include a minor burn that merely requires washing the wound and applying a dressing.
Skin separation	It includes separation of skin from an underlying tissue such that tendon, bone or muscles are exposed (for example, degloving or scalping).	It does not include minor cuts or lacerations.
Spinal injury	It includes injury to the cervical, thoracic, lumbar or sacral vertebrae including the discs and spinal cord.	It does not include acute back pain.
Loss of bodily	It includes loss of consciousness, loss of movement of a limb or loss of	It does not include fainting, a sprain,

Serious injury or illness	What is included	What is not included
function	the sense of smell, taste, sight or hearing, or loss of function of an internal organ.	strain or fracture.
Serious laceration	It includes serious lacerations that cause muscle, tendon, nerve or blood vessel damage or permanent impairment, or deep or extensive cuts, or tears or wounds to the flesh or tissues. This may include stitching to prevent loss of blood and/or other treatment to prevent loss of bodily function and/or infection.	It does not include minor cuts or lacerations (whether or not glued or sutured) such as a superficial cut of the epidermis that is glued or a cut of the dermis requiring stitches.
Exposure to hazardous or infectious substance	It includes medical treatment for exposure to chemicals, airborne contaminants and exposure to human and/or animal blood (and body substances), or another hazardous or infectious substance.	It does not include medical treatment for minor infections such as the common cold or minor gastroenteritis etc.

What is ‘medical treatment by a doctor within 48 hours of exposure to a substance’?

Medical treatment by a doctor within 48 hours of exposure to a substance includes medical treatment for exposure to chemicals, airborne contaminants and exposure to human and/or animal blood (and body substances), or another hazardous or infectious substance.

It does not include medical treatment for minor infections such as the common cold or minor gastroenteritis etc.

Dangerous incident

A dangerous incident is an incident that puts a person’s health or safety at serious risk because the person is immediately, or may imminently be, exposed to any of the following:

- An uncontrolled gas leak
This includes gas leaks that require time critical intervention to prevent serious harm (e.g. emergency services to intervene or the operator to isolate/make safe). It does not include a controlled escape safely managed under normal operations or other reportable leaks.
- An uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of another substance
- An uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- An uncontrolled release of pressure
- Electric shock
- The fall or release from a height of a substance, plant or other thing
- The collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, plant
- 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
- An uncontrolled movement of plant or another thing.

For most hazards, such as plant or a structure collapsing, a person will need to be in the immediate vicinity to be exposed to the risk of serious injury or illness. But some hazards, such as an

uncontrolled leak of gas or a fire, can imminently expose a person to the risk of serious injury or illness while not being in the immediate vicinity of the source of a hazard.

A dangerous incident can also include a situation where there is an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard but the potential serious illness or injury (consequence) could be latent such as exposure to a radioactive source, respirable fibres or dust, or a hazardous chemical that is a known carcinogen.

Critical loss of supply in a fuel gas network

A critical loss of supply in a fuel gas network is an incident happening at an operating plant that is a fuel gas network that:

- Causes a critical loss of fuel gas supply; or
- Involves serious property damage if the damage could result in a critical loss of fuel gas supply.

A critical loss of supply is a loss of fuel gas supply to consumers if the loss causes a significant disruption to the community including, for example:

- A loss of fuel gas supply to 50 or more residences or places of business; or
- A loss of fuel gas supply to a hospital, power station or major event.

What to do when an incident occurs?

In case of an emergency, call 000 immediately.

If it is safe to do so, take action to save life or prevent further injury.

Reasonable action must then be taken by the operator or person in control of the business or undertaking to restrict access to the site and protect anything at the site from being tampered with until an inspector otherwise directs.

Once these steps have been taken, the prescribed incident must then be reported to the Inspectorate.

Who must report a prescribed incident?

If a prescribed incident happens at an operating plant, the operator of the plant must ensure that the incident is reported.

If a prescribed incident happens at a business other than at an operating plant and the prescribed incident relates to a gas related device, the person carrying on the business must ensure that the incident is reported.

Failure to report a prescribed incident is an offence for which penalties apply.

How to report a prescribed incident

The responsible person must report a prescribed incident immediately by telephone, as soon as it is safe to do so, to the Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate Hotline on 1300 910 933.

The following information must be provided when reporting a prescribed incident:

- The time and date of the incident
- The location of the incident
This includes the common property address and, for remote locations, the latitude and longitude of the site.
- A description of the incident

- The name, contact details and position of the person reporting the incident
- Information about the incident the Chief Inspector (or delegate) asks for and the person knows.

The prescribed incident must also be reported electronically, within 2 business days after the incident, using the online form at www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/resources/safety-health/petroleum-gas/regulation/notifying

Safety investigation

Following a prescribed incident the operator or person carrying on the business should undertake a safety investigation. Safety investigations are essential to identifying the various contextual and systemic factors that contributed to an incident and in determining what can be done to reduce the risk of a recurrence.

Effective safety investigations are focused on the incident, not the people involved.

A good safety investigation is fair, prompt and undertaken by competent people—it seeks various sources of facts and considers multiple perspectives of the circumstances of the incident. Safety investigations should consider local rationality and system complexity, and should not be influenced by hindsight bias or counterfactual reasoning.

The safety investigation should seek to determine the most probable causes of the incident (e.g. when, who, what, how and why the incident occurred) and make reasonable and practicable recommendations to ensure organisational learning and safety improvements.

The outcome of a safety investigation should be communicated and followed-up to ensure organisational learning. A record of the safety investigation should be made for future reference or for providing to the Inspectorate if required.

Contact the Inspectorate

For general enquiries about this guide or other advice email the inspectorate at gassafe@dnrme.qld.gov.au