

1. INTRODUCTION

An accident can be broadly defined as an unplanned event which interrupts normal activity.

There are three basic types of accidents:

1. Minor accidents, such as small cuts or the dropping of objects;
2. More serious accidents that cause injury and/or damage, such as someone falling from a scaffold/ladder, or a forklift dropping a load &
3. Accidents that occur over an extended time frame, such as an illness resulting from an exposure to a hazardous substance.

These types of accidents are best addressed by on-going accident investigation and prevention programmes that include risk assessments and the implementation of appropriate safe working procedures.

In the second type (the more serious accidents); this is clearly the main group that should be fully investigated. However it should be remembered that very often there is only a fine line between a minor accident and a major accident; therefore all accidents, incidents and near misses should be investigated to prevent any re-occurrences.

Note: The definition of 'accident' includes acts of violence done to persons at work, e.g. an assault by an employee on a supervisor (or vice versa) over a work-related matter. Violence resulting from arguments over personal issues is not reportable.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR):

RIDDOR is the law that requires employers and other people in control of work premises, to report and keep records of:

- Work-related accidents which cause death;
- Work-related accidents which cause certain serious injuries (reportable injuries);
- Diagnosed cases of certain industrial diseases; and
- Certain "dangerous occurrences" (incidents with the potential to cause harm).

2. INJURIES

A report must be made on any injury, arising out of or in connection with work, which results in:

Death	All deaths to workers and non-workers must be reported if they arise from a work-related accident, including an act of physical violence to a worker. Suicides are not reportable, as the death does not result from a work-related accident.
Specified injuries to workers	The list of 'specified injuries' in RIDDOR 2013 (regulation 4) includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fracture, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes; • Amputation of an arm, hand, finger, thumb, leg, foot or toe; • Permanent loss of sight or reduction of sight; • Crush injuries leading to internal organ damage; • Serious burns (covering more than 10% of the body, or damaging the eyes, Respiratory system or other vital organs); • Scalpings (separation of skin from the head) which require hospital treatment; • Unconsciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia; • Any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space, which leads to hypothermia, heat-induced illness or requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
Over-seven-day injuries to workers	This is where an employee, or self-employed person, is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than seven consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident but including any weekends or other rest days).
Injuries to non-workers	Work-related accidents involving members of the public or people who are not at work must be reported if a person is injured, and is taken from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment to that injury.
Reportable occupational diseases	Employers and self-employed people must report diagnoses of certain occupational diseases, where these are likely to have been caused or made worse by their work. These diseases include (regulations 8 and 9): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carpal tunnel syndrome; • Severe cramp of the hand or forearm; • Occupational dermatitis; • Hand-arm vibration syndrome; • Occupational asthma; • Tendonitis or tenosynovitis of the hand or forearm; • Any occupational cancer; • Any disease attributed to an occupational exposure to a biological agent.

3. REPORTABLE DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES

Dangerous occurrences are certain, specified 'near-miss' events (incidents with the potential to cause harm.) Not all such events require reporting. There are 27 categories of dangerous occurrences that are relevant to most workplaces. Potential dangerous occurrences relating to the scaffolding industry are summarised below:

Lifting	The collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment.
Electricity	Plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines.
Scaffolding	The complete or partial collapse (including falling, buckling or overturning) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A substantial part of any scaffold more than 5 metres in height; • Any supporting part of any slung or suspended scaffold which causes a working platform to fall (whether or not in use); or • Any part of any scaffold in circumstances such that there would be a significant risk of drowning to a person falling from the scaffold.

4. RECORDING REQUIREMENTS

Records of incidents covered by RIDDOR are also important. They ensure that you collect sufficient information to allow you to properly manage health and safety risks. This information is a valuable management tool that can be used as an aid to risk assessment, helping to develop solutions to potential risks. In this way, records also help to prevent injuries and ill health, and control costs from accidental loss.

You must keep a record of:

- Any accident, occupational disease or dangerous occurrence which requires reporting under RIDDOR; and
- Any other occupational accident causing injuries that result in a worker being away from work or incapacitated for more than three consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident but including any weekends or other rest days). You do not have to report over-three-day injuries, unless the incapacitation period goes on to exceed seven days (not counting the day of the accident but including any weekends or other rest days).

If you are an employer who has to keep an accident book, the record you make in this will be enough.

You must produce RIDDOR records when asked by HSE, local authority or ORR inspectors.

5. HOW TO REPORT

Online

Go to www.hse.gov.uk/riddor and complete the appropriate online report form. The form will then be submitted directly to the RIDDOR database. You will receive a copy for your records.

Telephone

All incidents can be reported online, but a telephone service remains for reporting **fatal and specified injuries only**. Call the Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 9923 (opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5 pm).

Reporting out of hours

HSE has an out-of-hours duty officer. Circumstances where HSE may need to respond out of hours include:

- A work-related death or situation where there is a strong likelihood of death following an incident at, or connected with work;
- A serious accident at a workplace so that HSE can gather details of physical evidence that would be lost with time; and
- Following a major incident at a workplace where the severity of the incident, or the degree of public concern, requires an immediate public statement from either HSE or government ministers.

If you want to report less serious incidents out of normal working hours, you should complete an online form at www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm#online.

You can find more information about contacting HSE out of hours at: www.hse.gov.uk/contact/outofhours.htm.

It is advisable to keep a note of telephone notifications, including the time, the name of the caller and what details were given of the event being notified.

6. RECORDS

The responsible person must keep the following minimum records relating to reportable injuries, dangerous occurrences and diseases:

Deaths, reportable injuries and dangerous occurrences

1. Date and time of the accident / incident;
2. For an accident suffered by a person at work: full name, occupation and nature of injury;
3. For an accident suffered by a person not at work: full name, (where this can be ascertained), status (e.g. visitor etc.), nature of injury;
4. Place where accident / incident occurred;
5. Brief description of the circumstances in which the accident / incident happened.

Diseases

1. Date of diagnosis of the disease;
2. Name and occupation of person affected;
3. Name and nature of the disease;
4. Date disease first reported to the enforcing authority.

No form is specified for keeping these records and information may be stored on computer, provided details can be retrieved and printed out.

For example, to record reportable events or an over-seven-day injury, an employer could choose:

- In the case of accidents and diseases, to print out and keep copies of completed report forms in a file or folder. One advantage of this could be that a good deal more detailed information may be kept than otherwise might be the case and the design of the form may provide a useful basis for the analysis of the collected data; or
- To store the information about each accident and reported case of disease on a computer, this would be acceptable provided that details could be retrieved and printed out readily when required; or
- In the case of accidents, to use the B1510 Accident Book: this must be kept by certain employers under the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations. In this case, they should identify which of the accidents recorded in the book are reportable, or must be recorded under RIDDOR.

Records must be kept for at least 3 years and must be made available to the enforcing authority if requested.

Further RIDDOR guidance is available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg453.htm>

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