

Health & Safety Unit



HEDDLU GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES POLICE

PGN 209

Reporting of Near-Miss Incidents

Information and Guidance

Management Information

Guidance Note File Reference: PGN 209

Owner : Force H&S Advisor

Date Procedure Issued : June 2008

Procedure Review

As part of the arrangements to ensure the operation of the force Safety, Health & Welfare Policy, the procedure owner must ensure that this procedure is reviewed at intervals of no greater than 12 months.

Review Record

Date	Reason	Initials
June 2008	Initial Issue	MW
March 2010	General review R1	MW
March 2013	General review R2	AR

Associated Documents

HS1 Near-Miss report

Guidance Notes on the Reporting of Near Miss Incidents

Near Misses is perhaps the wrong terminology and really they should be referred to as `near-hits` because they were so nearly accidents or the causes of accidents.

Near misses are often overlooked by staff and managers because there is no injury, loss or damage.

However, organisations are more likely to improve and prevent more serious accidents if they learn from near misses.

The obvious reason is that there are many more near miss incidents than those which cause injury or property damage. Near misses are therefore a very valuable monitoring tool, with the information being obtained without anyone being hurt. As such, they should be considered as important as more serious accidents when monitoring health and safety.

Near miss reports can also help highlight problems that may be shared by others across all areas of the force.

Background

Whereas an **“accident”** is often defined as “an unplanned and uncontrolled event that results in loss of some kind — injury, ill health, property damage, etc”, a **“near miss”** is often defined as “an unplanned and uncontrolled event that could have resulted in loss of some kind” – but has not.

In essence, it is often only a matter of luck as to whether or not the untoward event resulted in loss or not and, where it did, as to the seriousness of the loss. Unfortunately, luck is not an easy property to control. Therefore in the health and safety field it is considered more prudent to attempt to control the untoward event before the injury or near miss occurs.

According to a past study of 1,750,000 accidents in 21 industries, there is a ratio of 600 near misses to each serious injury. Obviously this is only an average guide and varies greatly proportionate to the risks involved in a particular job. For instance the ratio will be much higher for a fire fighter than for an accountant, due to the nature of the work.

What is not in dispute however, is that *we can learn from the ‘near misses’* and hopefully prevent more serious incidents occurring.

NWP Reporting Procedure for Near Miss Incidents

Anyone who observes or witnesses a near miss situation should:

- If it is possible or practical, without compromising your own safety, remove or make the hazard safe, but still report it.
- Isolate the hazard and clearly identify it to prevent harm to others.
- Report it to their supervisor/line manager.
- Complete a HS1 Near Miss Reporting Form, which can be found on the Northgate portal. Just click on the Health and Safety tab and then select HS1 in the drop down list.

Once you submit this, then the process of investigation, corrective/preventative action and learning outcomes will commence.

HS1 reports are discussed at local Staff Consultation Meetings and can where applicable lead to a review of associated risk assessments and/or safe systems of work.

All HS1 reports are reviewed by the Force Health & Safety unit to ensure action and to identify learning opportunities that can be communicated to others.

What Can You Report?

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of situations/ occurrences that you can report as there are so many possibilities.

It is better to report what you consider to be a near miss situation than to ignore it because you think you might be wrong to do so or that you think someone else may do. You may well be the difference in preventing an accident or harm occurring to others. You will not be criticised for incorrect reporting. **Always report – never walk on by and ignore the obvious.**

Some Issues that would warrant a report:

- Damaged footpaths or walk ways
- Damage car park surfaces
- Blocked fire escape routes
- Slip, trip and fall hazards
- Blocked access to fire extinguishers
- Incidents with vehicles
- Insufficient lighting in dark time
- Potential electrical hazards
- Chemical incidents – fumes, etc
- Falling objects
- Temperature issues
- Damage to buildings that may cause harm
- Damage to force property that may cause harm
- Biological hazards
- Unguarded machinery or equipment
- Noise – what you feel is excessive
- The presence of dusts, substances or bacteria
- Hazards caused by contractors
- Electrical hazards
- Faulty Equipment
- Fire hazards
- Manual handling hazards
- Etc, Etc

DON'T IGNORE IT – REPORT IT – PLEASE!

