

Risk A/T® Work

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Benjamin Franklin 1736



We are pleased to introduce the next edition of **Risk A/T® Work**, a forum dedicated to sharing safety and loss control tips with our brokers and insureds.

Risk A/T® is our proprietary risk management approach which promotes informed risk analysis based on two behavioral factors — **Aptitude** and **Tolerance**.

ABOUT US

Sompo International Insurance works through a global distribution network of retail and wholesale brokers and MGUs to provide high-quality and responsive services to a broad range of clients from large multinationals to small businesses. We offer diverse specialty capabilities across a broad range of products and industry verticals.

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Incident Investigations Basics - They Are Important in Your Safety Program Efforts

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Incident Investigations are a best practice element of a safety management program. Completed effectively, they help identify unsafe acts and conditions that lead to injuries or illnesses, property damage and point to training deficiencies. Conducting timely, effective incident investigations also assist in complying with Federal and State OSHA regulations.

Incident investigations are more than a simple report of an incident. They serve as a critical analysis of events that did or may have had an impact on employees, operations and assets. Incident investigations are also helpful in determining process and task improvement needs, where training efforts should be enhanced, and, in some cases, are directly connected to Human Resource efforts such as disciplinary actions.

Considerations and Key Take-Aways of Incident Investigations

Based on the nature of the incident investigations, it may be complex, while others less so. Certain aspects of incident investigations apply universally, regardless of severity, including near misses. It is essential not to minimize the importance of conducting and completing an incident investigation in a timely manner.

Following are several high – level considerations of incident investigations and key take-aways:

- Incident investigations should be completed by supervisory or management personnel that understand operations, equipment being used, an employee's responsibilities and required safety procedures.
- Incident investigations should be completed as quickly as possible (preferably the same day, the same shift or within 24 hours). Doing so helps reduce critical incident information being lost or recalled ineffectively. This also helps to reduce the potential for evidence to be destroyed or misplaced.
- Building an investigation tool kit is strongly recommended – relevant Job Hazard Analysis (JHAs), diagrams, pictures, and tools, such as tape measures and similar resources, are helpful in completing a meaningful investigation.
- Incident investigations should include a root cause analysis – getting to the root cause, that which is proximal to the incident occurrence is critical.
- Corrective action and follow-up are key elements of an effective investigation – assign corrective action responsibilities and timeframes as part of the incident investigation.
- Incident investigations may identify the need to modify current training and/or additional training needs. Incident investigations should review safety training and determine its timeliness, focus on proper staff and effectiveness; where gaps exist, they become part of the corrective action efforts.

Potential pitfalls of the Incident Investigation Process

Incident investigations are often confused with incident reporting. Incident reporting should initiate responses that restore operations, addresses harms to individuals, and, in some cases, satisfy OSHA or regulatory reporting obligations. While this is extremely important, it is not the same as a thorough incident investigation which seeks to uncover “why” the event occurred, thereby helping to prevent a rush to judgment. It is sometimes very easy to point to the last event in the chain, the one just before the incident occurred and say, “that’s why this happened” often resulting in blaming someone, blaming something or jumping (incorrectly) to a conclusion.

Well done incident investigations are sound safety program tools where root causes of incidents are identified. This level of “due diligence” helps facilitate and prioritize any corrective actions, processes improvements and employee training refinements. Successful organizations conduct investigations timely and thoroughly and you should as well.

If you have any questions about conducting incident investigations, please reach out to your Sompo International Risk Control Specialist for additional guidance and information at: GRSRiskControlQuestions@sompo-intl.com