

SAFETY MATTERS

MARCH 2016

SAFETY MATTERS EVEN MORE!

Welcome to our new updated news bulletin service for the University community.

For many years Safety Matters has been produced on an ad hoc basis to provide information on key topics. This issue marks the launch of our new regular quarterly bulletin format. It will provide information, updates and advice on safety matters across the University including

- Accident reporting
- Training updates
- Hot topics
- Celebrating good practice
- Fire reporting
- Seasonal advice
- Campus news

We hope that these regular updates will give you a better understanding of the work we do, increase engagement with the team and help us towards our common goal of Continual Improvement in Health and Safety performance.

We welcome your feedback and topic suggestions for future bulletins – just contact safety@reading.ac.uk

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN

All incidents that occur on University property, or on University business, that affect staff, students or property must be reported to Health and Safety Services.

Incidents include accidents resulting in injury, cases of occupational disease, work-related ill health, fires, damage to property or the environment, near misses, and physical or verbal assault at work. Road traffic accidents that occur on campus or during work-related travel off campus, are also included.

Online reporting

Staff, students and visitors can report incidents by completing the University on-line reporting form which is available on Health & Safety Services' web site at:

[Report an incident online](#)

All incidents should be reported (excluding everyday trivial events that would normally never result in a more significant injury). It is particularly important that you tell us about Near Misses even though it did not result in injury or damage.

A near miss is an event which had the potential to cause injury, property or environmental damage, but

actual harm or damage did not occur.

Full guidance on how to use the system can be found in

[Safety Code of Practice 09: Part 1 - Incident Reporting](#)

What happens next?

Heads of Schools/Services and line managers / Academic Supervisors (or equivalent, such as Fieldwork Supervisors) are responsible for ensuring that each incident in their area is investigated. Normally the investigation will be undertaken by the Area Health & Safety Co-ordinator. Health & Safety Services, Occupational Health staff, technical staff, suppliers or engineers may be involved,

Investigating incidents is good management practice and a University requirement, for the following reasons:

- To identify both the immediate and underlying causes (there is rarely a single cause)
- To learn from mistakes and put measures in place to prevent a recurrence
- To reappraise existing risk assessments
- To review the effectiveness of risk control measures

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- To identify activities or jobs causing the greatest number of incidents
 - To satisfy legal requirements for accident reporting and recording
 - To satisfy the expectation of the public and injured parties, who expect action following a serious incident
 - To obtain details which might be needed if the incident later becomes subject to an insurance claim or legal action
- Slips, trips and falls - 20 (11)
 - Contact with sharps - 13 (11)
 - Exposure to hazardous agents – 3 (5)
 - Sport related injuries – 20 (17)
 - Near misses* – 5 (3)
 - Manual handling – 2 (4)
 - Illness, not work related – 11 (9)
 - Other – 20 (12)

In future issues we will explore the incident categories in more detail.

Full guidance on accident investigation can found in

[Safety Code of Practice 09 – Part 2 - Accident investigation](#)

Learning lessons

Each quarter we will provide a summary of accidents, incidents and near misses reported to H&SS, drawing attention to significant trends or risks

In the last quarter we had 94 reports made compared to only 72 in the corresponding period in 2015. Don't be alarmed! In fact the increase is good news. Previous audit findings have highlighted under reporting of incidents so we have been working hard to raise awareness of the reporting system. Hopefully the increase in reports is a reflection of improved awareness not decreased safety measures. We use the statistics to spot trends. This quarter incidents fell into the following categories (previous year in brackets)

EXPLORING OUR SAFETY CULTURE

In the latter half of last year more than 200 colleagues from Estates and Facilities completed a Safety Culture survey.

The survey looked at training, peer group attitude to safety, management commitment, accident reporting, procedures and risk assessments, communication and consultation.

The results were reassuring with more than 90 per cent of staff reporting that they felt health and safety is taken seriously by both management and their peers in E&F. Of course the survey highlighted some areas for improvement including incident reporting and investigation, procedures and risk assessment. Over the next quarter we will be running a series of focus groups to help

us fully understand the issues behind some of the data and staff comments.

On completion we intend to review the effectiveness and value of the overall exercise. We may then seek to roll the survey out to other Schools across the university although this is unlikely to be until the last quarter of 2016

THANKS FOR THE IDEAS!

Evi Konstantinidou asked our Building Managers and Area Health Safety Coordinators how we could improve the online incident reporting system.

And now we have a list! A long list to be honest. Evi has sorted the suggestions into "must have, nice to have and probably not going to get!" We have already started to talk to IT Services to enact the changes that we simply must do and will work towards those that would be nice to have.

We are also in the process of reviewing our website and layout. We will be asking for more help and feedback on how to make our information as accessible as possible.

BM's and AHSC's often undertake their duties on a voluntary basis and the drive, commitment and ideas they bring are greatly valued by the Health and Safety team. This commitment has been unwavering over recent times despite the inevitable uncertainty during the ongoing PAS exercise. Thank you.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Two serious accidents while travelling overseas last year reminds us all that when things go wrong, people abroad and at home need support and information as quickly as possible. The University is committed to offering support to staff and students wherever they venture on its business. Please help us by ensuring we know where that may be.

If you are travelling overseas on the 'business of the University' or undertaking research or teaching, which is within your contract of employment and with the authority of your School or Service, then you must let the University know; please complete [this form](#) before you travel.

If your intended destination is to a country on the FCO's Advisory List you will automatically be prompted by the system to seek the express permission of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor to undertake your trip. The FCO's advice is usually quite specific and often regional. **Permission isn't required to visit non-affected areas of a country.**

Where permission needs to be obtained you should provide the VCs office with full details including an appropriate risk assessment and business case setting out the justification for the travel. More guidance can be found from the [Insurance Office](#) and in Safety Code of

Practice No 38 - [Overseas Travel](#)

FORTHCOMING TRAINING

Please take a look at the training opportunities available over the next quarter

[Accident/Incident Investigation](#) - 23rd March

[Area Health & Safety Co-ordinator and Management Workshop](#) – 4th May

[Asbestos Awareness](#) - 5th May

[COSHH Risk Assessments - Non-Laboratory Work](#) – 10th March

[Cryogenic Liquid Decanting](#) – 9th March

[Evacuation Chair Operator Training](#) – 18th May

[Fire Evacuation Officer Training](#) – 11th May 2016

[Fire Wardens Training](#) - 28th April

[Fire Precautions and Fire Fighting Training for Nominated Personnel](#) – 23rd March

[Fire Precautions Training](#) – 10th May

[Laboratory Health and Safety](#) – 27th April

[Managing Health and Safety in Research](#) – 23rd March, 20th April or 25th May

[Manual Handling training](#) – 2nd June

[General Risk Assessment](#) – 11th May 2016

If you would like to attend any of the above courses please use [Employee self service](#) booking system and search for the course using the Learning Activity Search button in the Learning area. If you have any problems with this booking method, or if you are a postgraduate student, please contact us to book a place, email safety@reading.ac.uk or call 0118 378 8888 (Internal 8888).

CONTACT THE TEAM

For help and advice please contact the appropriate team member

[Moira Simpson – Health and Safety Services - Director](#)

[Sean Callaghan – Asbestos Coordinator](#)

[Jonathan Crabb – Health and Safety Adviser](#)

[Gretta Roberts – Biological and Scientific Safety Adviser](#)

[Peter Lawther – Fire Safety Adviser](#)

[Larry Woodley – Health and Safety Adviser](#)

[Evi Konstantinidou – Assistant Health and Safety Adviser](#)

[Jude Brindley - Administrator](#)

Health and Safety Services are committed to continuously improving the service we offer to the University. Please spend a few moments to share your thoughts on our performance using the link below

https://reading.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/hss_stakeholder_feedback