



Guideline for reporting prescribed incidents

Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate

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Document history

Version	Date of publication	Date of effect	Key changes
5	1 September 2018	1 September 2018	
6	27 September 2021	27 September 2021	<p>Transition to RSHQ template</p> <p>Requirements clarified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incident notification where later information changes type or whether a matter is a prescribed incident • all deaths to be notified as a prescribed incident • obligations to restrict access to incident site until an Inspector directs otherwise <p>Information about dangerous incidents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interaction with the <i>Code of Practice for Leak Detection, Management and Reporting for Petroleum Operating Plant</i> clarified • confirms notification of 'near misses' where a person has an immediate or imminent exposure to a defined hazard

1.0 Purpose

As Queensland's petroleum and gas safety and health regulator, Resources Safety and Health Queensland (RSHQ) is committed to preventing serious harm in the resources sector. Reporting and analysis of incidents helps RSHQ work with industry to identify causes and prevent similar incidents.

The Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) is a division of RSHQ. The Inspectorate is responsible for the administration of safety regulation for operating plant and gas related devices at other businesses.

[Section 706](#) of the *Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004* ([the PG Act](#)) establishes obligations for reporting 'prescribed incidents' at operating plant and businesses with gas related devices.¹

This guideline explains requirements under the PG Act for reporting prescribed incidents. These requirements may be additional to reporting requirements [for notifiable incidents under Queensland's Work Health and Safety legislation](#).

2.0 Scope of prescribed incidents

Section 706 of the PG Act requires the reporting of prescribed incidents to the Chief Inspector for incidents at operating plant and incidents involving a gas related device at a business (other than operating plant). Section 706 also provides for a regulation to prescribe the types of incidents to be reported and the way in which prescribed incidents must be reported.

Operating plant is a legislative label used to identify petroleum and gas facilities and activities regulated by the Inspectorate under the PG Act. [Section 670 of the PG Act](#) defines what is operating plant.

A gas related device is defined in schedule 2 of the PG Act as meaning any of the following:

¹ Section 705D of the PG Act establishes additional reporting requirements for operating plant (other than a coal mining-CSG operating plant) operating in the area of a coal or oil shale mining lease. Section 705D requires the operator of this type of operating plant to report particular accidents and prescribed high potential incidents to the site senior executive under the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* for the coal mine lease and to the Chief Inspector, Petroleum and Gas.

- 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.

3.0 What is a prescribed incident?

Section 10(1) of the PG Regulation defines **prescribed incidents** as:

- the death of a person
- the serious injury or illness of a person
- a dangerous incident
- an incident at an operating plant that is a fuel gas network that causes a critical loss of supply or involves serious property damage if the damage could result in a critical loss of supply

These prescribed incidents are explained in the following sections.

Death of a person

Any death of a person at operating plant, or involving a gas related device at a business that is not operating plant, is to be reported immediately to the Inspectorate.

Serious injury or illness of a person

Section 7 of the PG Regulation defines *serious injury or illness of a person* as an injury or illness that requires the person to have:

- A. immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital; or
- B. immediate treatment for the matters listed in Table 1, Column 1 (see following table); or
- C. treatment by a doctor within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

A. Immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital

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

B. Immediate treatment for a serious injury or illness

Immediate treatment for a serious injury or illness means emergency treatment by a registered medical practitioner, a paramedic or registered nurse for matters listed in Table 1, Column 1.

Table 1: Serious injuries or illnesses that must be reported

1 Serious injury or illness ²	2 What is included	3 What is not included
The amputation of any part of the person's body	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bruising or minor abrasion or laceration to the skin
Serious head injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• Head injuries resulting in temporary or permanent amnesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bump to the head resulting in a minor contusion or headache
Serious eye injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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)• Exposure of the eye to a substance that poses a risk of serious eye damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eye exposure to a substance that merely causes irritation.

² See section 7(b) of the PG Regulation

1 Serious injury or illness ²	2 What is included	3 What is not included
Serious burn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A burn requiring intensive care or critical care that could require compression garment or a skin graft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minor burn that merely requires washing the wound and applying a dressing.
Separation of the person's skin from underlying tissue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degloving or scalping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor cuts or lacerations
Spinal injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury to the cervical, thoracic, lumbar or sacral vertebrae including the discs and spinal cord 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute back pain
Loss of a bodily function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of consciousness • Loss of movement of a limb including leg or arm fracture • Loss of the sense of smell, taste, sight or hearing • Loss of function of an internal organ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fainting, a sprain or strain • A fracture to a toe or finger
Serious laceration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep or extensive cuts that cause muscle, tendon, nerve or blood vessel damage or permanent impairment • Deep puncture wounds • Tears 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor cuts or lacerations (whether or not glued or sutured), e.g. a superficial cut of the epidermis that is glued or requires stitches

C. Treatment by a doctor within 48 hours for exposure to a substance

Treatment by a doctor within 48 hours where the person has had exposure to chemicals, airborne contaminants, and exposure to human and/or animal blood (and body substances), or another hazardous or infectious substance.

Dangerous incidents including near misses

Section 8 of the PG Regulation defines a dangerous incident as 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 matters listed in Table 2.

A dangerous incident can also include a situation where there is an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard, but the potential consequence could be latent – such as exposure to a radioactive source, respirable fibres or dust, or a hazardous chemical that is a known carcinogen. 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 even if they are not in the immediate vicinity of the source of a hazard.

Table 2: Dangerous incidents³

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An uncontrolled gas leak⁴ Loss of gas containment that poses risk to health and safety of a person and requires time critical intervention of emergency services or intervention by the operator to eliminate or control the risk.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of another substance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An uncontrolled release of pressure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electric shock
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fall or release from a height of a substance, plant or other thing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, plant (including vehicles)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The collapse or partial collapse of a structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The inrush of water, mud or gas in workings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An uncontrolled movement of plant or another thing.

³ See section 8, PG Regulation 2018

⁴ For petroleum operating plant, section 3.6.1 Reportable leaks of the *Code of Practice for Leak Detection, Management and Reporting for Petroleum Operating Plant* imposes additional leak reporting obligations

Critical loss of supply in a fuel gas network

For fuel gas network operating plant, a further prescribed incident relates to critical loss of supply.

Fuel gas network operating plant are obliged to report incidents that cause a critical loss of fuel gas supply to their customers or incidents involving serious property damage that could result in a critical loss of fuel gas supply to their customers.

A critical loss of supply is defined in section 9 of the PG Regulation as 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.

A major event is any event that has the potential to draw large crowds, generate significant noise, or likely to disrupt normal traffic and transport arrangements.

4.0 Reporting prescribed incidents

The PG Act and the Petroleum and Gas (Safety) Regulation 2018 ([PG Regulation](#)) specify the following requirements for prescribed incidents.

- **Report** a prescribed incident to the Chief Inspector by phone [**1300 910 933**] immediately after it has happened – section 10(2)(a) of the PG Regulation
- **Restrict access** to a prescribed incident site until an Inspector directs otherwise – section 707 of the PG Act
- **Provide an [online report](#)** within 2 business days of the incident – section 10(2)(b) of the PG Regulation

Provisions for keeping resulting records – sections 678A(g) and 678A(h) of the PG Act – also apply to prescribed incidents.

Note it is an offence to:

- not report a prescribed incident – section 706 of the PG Act; and
- not take reasonable steps to secure an incident site – section 707 of the PG Act.

What to do when a prescribed incident occurs?

1. In case of an emergency, call 000 immediately.
 - a. If it is safe to do so, take action to save life or prevent further injury.
2. Reasonable action must then be taken by the operator or person in control of the business to restrict access to the site and protect anything at the site from being tampered with until an Inspector directs otherwise.
3. Report the prescribed incident to the Inspectorate.

Who is responsible for reporting a prescribed incident?

Section 707 of the PG Act states who is the responsible person for reporting prescribed incidents.

- For operating plant, it is the operating plant 'operator'. 'Operator' is defined in section 673 of the PG Act as the person responsible for managing and ensuring the safe operation of the plant.
- For a business other than an operating plant, it is the person carrying on the business.

How to report a prescribed incident?

The responsible person (this can be an individual representing the responsible person) must report a prescribed incident immediately by telephoning **1300 910 933** (Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate hotline).

Section 10(3) of the PG Regulation provides that the requirement to immediately telephone the Chief Inspector is achieved by using the Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate hotline and providing the following information:

1. the time and date of the incident (*When the incident happened?*)
2. the location of the incident location (*Property address or the site's latitude and longitude for remote locations*)
3. a description of the incident (*What happened?*)
4. the person's name, contact details and position (*Who is reporting?*)
5. information about the incident the Chief Inspector asks for and the person knows.

For item 5, this includes information such as:

- details about any injured person including how and where they are being treated

- the name of the operator or the business
- any action taken or intended to be taken and related timeframe for taking action.

Section 10(2)(b) of the PG Regulation requires the prescribed incident also be reported electronically, within 2 business days after the incident. This is to be done using the [online form](#).

Relevant information about an incident that becomes available after the telephone and online form notification, should be provided to the Inspectorate. For example, information that confirms the incident is a different type of prescribed incident than that notified, or where the notified incident is NOT a prescribed incident. This will ensure accurate records of prescribed incidents for the petroleum and gas sector.

Can work continue where the incident occurred?

Section 707 of the PG Act requires the responsible person to take action reasonably necessary to restrict access to the site and to protect anything at the site from being tampered with, for example erecting barriers or signs prohibiting unauthorised persons from entering the site, until an Inspector directs otherwise.

In the case of an emergency, priority is to be given to actions that:

- assist an injured person
- save life or prevent injury
- make the site safe or to reduce the risk of a further notifiable incident, or
- facilitate a police investigation.

Requirements to restrict access and tampering of incident sites only apply to the area, equipment, or activity where the incident occurred and not the whole workplace.

If unsure about what is needed for specific incident circumstances, advice can be sought from the Inspectorate including advice about whether restricted access is required.

An Inspector may continue site security after an initial inspection, if it is considered that the incident site should remain undisturbed to facilitate an investigation.

Penalties apply (section 707 of the PG Act) if the responsible person fails to restrict access to a site and if further directions by an Inspector to restrict access and protect sites from being

tampered with are not complied with.

Record keeping for operating plant⁵

Section 678(1) of the PG Act requires the operator of an operating plant to ensure records for the safety management system are made and kept for 7 years and to have copies of these resulting records available for inspection. Resulting records relevant to prescribed incidents include:

- records of investigating and reviewing incidents at the plant - section 678A(2)(g) of the PG Act
- records about the implementation of recommendations from an investigation or review of an incident at the plant – section 678A(2)(h) of the PG Act

It is also recommended that records relating to prescribed incident notifications be kept, including for example, confirmation of the notification by the Inspectorate and any directions or authorisations given by an Inspector at the time of notification.

Enquiries about prescribed incident reporting

For enquiries about prescribed incident reporting, email the Inspectorate at gassafe@rshq.qld.gov.au

5.0 References

- [PG Act](#)
- [PG Reg](#)
- [Prescribed incident online form](#)
- [Prescribed incident poster](#)

⁵ NOTE: While provisions of section 678 of the PG Act for resulting records about incidents apply to prescribed incidents, their application is much broader than just keeping information about ‘prescribed incidents’