

## Near Miss Reporting Program

OSHA defines a near miss as “an incident in which no property was damaged and no personal injury was sustained, but where, given a slight shift in time or position, damage or injury easily could have occurred” (Howard, 2012). Incidents occur every day at the workplace that could result in injury or damage. The key to preventing future incidents is to ensure your organization harbors a culture of safety that allows for open communication and reporting of close calls and accident precursors.

Including a comprehensive Near Miss Reporting Program with your existing Safety and Accident Committee functions can help reduce the number of reportable incidents. This bulletin outlines some program components to consider when developing a Near Miss Reporting Program for your organization.

### Culture of Safety

Culture is important in all organizations because it becomes contagious and affects each member of the organization. A culture of safety must be established through a commitment of each representative involved, starting from the administrative levels, and then cascading down. Once that path is established, the culture can then flow back upward and eventually a steady stream of new objectives, changing mindsets, mutual goals, and organization accomplishments can be realized up and down the chain of command. The responsibility for operational safety lives in the hands of each member of the organization regardless of status or tenure.

### Program Components

A comprehensive Near Miss Reporting Program is one excellent way to achieve this desired culture. Consider including the following components in your Near Miss Reporting Program.

#### Development Considerations

- Leadership must establish a reporting culture reinforcing that every opportunity to identify and control hazards, reduce the risk, and prevent harmful incidents must be acted on
- The reporting system needs to be non-punitive and anonymous
- Investigate near miss incidents to identify the root cause and the weakness in the system that resulted in the circumstances that lead to the near miss
- Use investigation results to improve safety systems, hazard control, risk reduction, policy revisions and lessons learned
- Share all results and information with each member of the organization so that ownership is realized and benefits of learning are maximized

## ESO Administration Considerations

- Consider the scope of the program (Will it include vehicle incidents, workers compensation, scene operations, patient care concerns or all operations?)
- Create clear and concise guidelines for the program
- Promote reporting with the assistance of all managers and supervisors
- Train all employees why this program is necessary
- Incentivize goals and milestones

### Summary

A fully implemented Near Miss Reporting Program allows for each member of the organization to take ownership in growing the culture of safety by reporting near miss incidents. A pro-active approach like a Near Miss Reporting Program eliminates repeat incidents and mitigates new incidents to a measurable and tangible level.

### Additional Resources

The following resources may assist you in the development and implementation of a Near Miss Reporting Program.

National Safety Council | [www.nsc.org/work-safety/tools-resources/near-miss-reporting](http://www.nsc.org/work-safety/tools-resources/near-miss-reporting)

Firefighter Near Miss | [www.firefighternearmiss.com](http://www.firefighternearmiss.com)

EMS Voluntary Event Notification Tool | [www.event.clirems.org/](http://www.event.clirems.org/)

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### References

Howard, K. (2012). *Everybody gets to go home in one piece*. National Safety Council. Retrieved from <https://www.safelyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/6843--articles-6843-everybody-gets-to-go-home-in-one-piece>

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