Incident Investigation and Near Miss Reporting Protocol

1.0 Policy Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this Incident Investigation and Near Miss Reporting Protocol is to ensure that all workplace incidents, injuries, illnesses, and near misses are promptly reported, thoroughly investigated, and documented to identify root causes and implement corrective actions. This policy applies to all employees, contractors, subcontractors, visitors, and any person working under the direction of the organization at all company-owned, leased, or operated worksites, including remote and field locations. The core objective is to prevent recurrence, reduce liability, and foster a proactive safety culture.

2.0 Regulatory Context & Compliance

This policy is driven by the following legislative requirements:

(a) Workers Compensation Act (WCA), Part 3, Division 3 – Duties of Employers and Workers regarding reporting and investigation;

(b) Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR), Part 3 – Rights and Responsibilities, specifically Sections 3.10 to 3.14 regarding incident investigations;

(c) WorkSafeBC policies and guidelines on incident investigation and reporting;

(d) applicable provincial and territorial OHS legislation where the organization operates; and

(e) internal company standards and industry best practices (e.g., CSA Z1005-17 Incident Investigation). Compliance with these regulations is mandatory and non-negotiable.

3.0 Roles & Responsibilities

Employer/Management:

(a) Ensure a written incident investigation procedure is in place and communicated to all workers;

(b) provide adequate resources and training for investigators;

(c) ensure that all incidents and near misses are reported and investigated in a timely manner;

(d) review investigation reports and approve corrective actions;

(e) ensure that corrective actions are implemented and tracked to completion;

(f) maintain records as required by regulation.

Supervisors: (a) Immediately respond to any reported incident or near miss;

(b) secure the scene and preserve evidence;

(c) ensure injured workers receive appropriate medical attention;

(d) complete the initial incident report within 24 hours;

(e) participate in the investigation as required;

(f) implement interim controls to prevent further harm.

Workers: (a) Report all incidents, injuries, and near misses to their supervisor immediately, no matter how minor;

(b) cooperate fully with the investigation;

(c) provide truthful and complete information;

(d) follow all safety procedures and use required PPE;

(e) participate in corrective action implementation as directed.

4.0 Program Execution & Procedures

The protocol follows these steps:

(1) Immediate Reporting – Any worker who witnesses or is involved in an incident or near miss must report it to their supervisor immediately. For serious incidents, the area must be secured and no equipment moved until authorized.

(2) Initial Response – Supervisor secures scene, provides first aid, and completes the Incident Report Form (IRF) within 24 hours. For serious injuries or fatalities, the supervisor must notify the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) and regulatory authorities as required.

(3) Investigation Team – For incidents resulting in serious injury, fatality, or significant property damage, a formal investigation team is assembled, including management, supervisor, JHSC representative, and a trained investigator.

(4) Investigation Process – The team collects evidence (photos, interviews, documents), analyzes the sequence of events, identifies root causes (using tools like 5 Whys or Fishbone), and determines contributing factors.

(5) Corrective Actions – The team develops a list of corrective actions with assigned responsibilities and deadlines. All actions must address root causes and be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

(6) Report Completion – A formal Incident Investigation Report is completed within 14 days of the incident, signed by the investigation team, and submitted to senior management.

(7) Communication – Findings and corrective actions are communicated to all affected workers via safety meetings, toolbox talks, or bulletin boards.

(8) Follow-up – Management tracks corrective actions to closure and verifies effectiveness through periodic audits.

5.0 Review & Recordkeeping

All incident investigation records, including initial reports, investigation reports, corrective action logs, and related correspondence, must be retained for a minimum of 10 years from the date of the incident, or longer if required by regulatory authorities. Records are maintained by the Health and Safety Department in a secure, confidential manner. The policy and associated procedures shall be reviewed annually by the Joint Health and Safety Committee and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, operational changes, or lessons learned from investigations. Training on this protocol shall be provided to all employees upon hire and annually thereafter.