



Good Practices for the development and implementation of National Notification and Recording Systems

Objectives

A National System for Recording and Notification of Occupational Accidents and Diseases aims at:

- providing comprehensive and reliable data on the incidence of occupational accidents and diseases;
- publishing comparative national statistics and reports, and contribute to international figures;
- informing on preventive OSH measures;
- ensuring appropriate and effective workers' compensation schemes. [1]

Scope and coverage

A National System for Recording and Notification should cover all branches of economic activity, all enterprises and all workers, regardless of their status in employment, and throughout the country as a whole.

Four types of events should be recorded and notified:

1. occupational accident (occurrence arising out of, or in the course of, work which results in fatal or non-fatal injury);
2. occupational disease (any disease contracted as a result of an exposure to risk factors arising from work activity);
3. dangerous occurrence (readily identifiable event as

defined under national laws and regulations, with potential to cause an injury or disease to persons at work or to the public);

4. commuting accident (accident resulting in death or personal injury occurring on the direct way between the place of work and: (i) the worker's principal or secondary residence; or (ii) the place where the worker usually takes a meal; or (iii) the place where the worker usually receives his or her remuneration).

Suspected cases of occupational diseases should be included in the recording and notification system. As experience demonstrates, many occupational diseases have long latency periods (some up to 20 years or more) and it is generally recognized that precautionary action based on suspicions while scientific evidence is being established could save workers from being unnecessarily exposed to risks. Therefore, it is important gathering relevant data on suspected cases of occupational diseases in order to alert those responsible of the possibility that a given disease might have an occupational origin.

National competent authority

The competent authority can be a ministry, government department or other public authority with the power to issue regulations, orders or other instructions having the force of law.

In consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers, the competent authority

is responsible to establish and periodically review requirements and procedures for the reporting, recording and notification of occupational accidents, occupational diseases and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences, commuting accidents and suspected cases of occupational diseases. [2] The competent authority should, in particular:

- a) specify which categories or types of occupational accidents, occupational diseases, commuting accidents, dangerous occurrences and incidents are subject to requirements for reporting, recording and notification;
- b) establish and apply uniform requirements and procedures for employers and workers at the level of the enterprise, physicians, health services and other bodies, as appropriate, regarding reporting and recording of occupational accidents, cases and suspected cases of occupational diseases, commuting accidents, dangerous occurrences and incidents;
- c) establish and apply uniform requirements and procedures for the notification of occupational accidents, occupational diseases, commuting accidents and dangerous occurrences to the competent authority, insurance institutions, labour inspectorates, health services and other authorities and bodies directly concerned, as appropriate;
- d) make appropriate arrangements for the necessary coordination and cooperation between the various authorities and bodies;
- e) make appropriate arrangements for guidance to be provided to employers and workers to help them comply with the legal obligations. [3]

The competent authority is also called to establish adequate arrangements and appropriate systems of investigation, to be carried out by labour inspectorates or by other authorized agencies. Furthermore, it shall ensure the production and publication of annual statistics on occupational accidents and occupational diseases.

National policy

The competent authority, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers, should formulate, implement and periodically review a coherent national policy, aiming at preventing accidents and injury to health arising out of, linked with or occurring in the course of work, by identifying and minimizing the causes of occupational accidents, occupational diseases, dangerous occurrences and incidents in the working environment.

This policy should establish general principles and uniform procedures on:

- a) the recording, notification and investigation of occupational accidents and diseases;
- b) the recording, notification and investigation of commuting accidents, dangerous occurrences and incidents; and
- c) the compilation, analysis and publication of statistics on such accidents, diseases and occurrences.

Requirements and procedures for recording and notification

Member States are required progressively to establish and apply procedures for the notification of occupational accidents and diseases by employers as well as by other entities such as insurance institutions, occupational health services, medical practitioners and other bodies directly concerned. [4]

Uniform requirements and procedures for recording and notification, together with the standardization of the information to be submitted to the different bodies (i.e., competent authority, OSH inspectorate, social security institutions) would help to reduce under-reporting as well as avoid counting the same cases more than once.

The requirements and procedures for **recording** shall determine:

- (a) the **responsibility of employers**:
- (i) to record occupational accidents, occupational diseases and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences, commuting accidents and suspected cases of occupational diseases;
 - (ii) to provide appropriate information to workers and their representatives concerning the recording system;
 - (iii) to ensure appropriate maintenance of these records and their use for the establishment of preventive measures; and
 - (iv) to refrain from instituting retaliatory or disciplinary measures against a worker for reporting an occupational accident, occupational disease, dangerous occurrence, commuting accident or suspected case of occupational disease;
- (b) the **information to be recorded**;
- (c) the **duration** for maintaining these records; and
- (d) measures to ensure the **confidentiality of personal and medical** data in the employer's possession, in accordance with national laws and regulations, conditions and practice.

[Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 \(P 155\), Article 3](#)

The requirements and procedures for the **notification** shall determine:

- (a) the **responsibility of employers**:
- (i) to notify the competent authorities or other designated bodies of occupational accidents, occupational diseases and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences, commuting accidents and suspected cases of occupational diseases; and
 - (ii) to provide appropriate information to workers and their representatives concerning the notified cases;
- (b) where appropriate, arrangements for notification of occupational accidents and occupational diseases by **insurance institutions, occupational health services, medical practitioners and other bodies** directly concerned;
- (c) the criteria according to which occupational accidents, occupational diseases and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences, commuting accidents and suspected cases of occupational diseases are to be notified; and
- (d) the time limits for notification.

[Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 \(P 155\), Article 4](#)

Minimum information required for recording and notification

The information to be included in the recording of occupational accidents and diseases is determined by the purpose of the programme, such as compensation, control measures for workplace health hazards, compliance with requirements for notification to the competent authority, planning and organization of occupational health services, or epidemiological and occupational health studies. Some information is essential, and common to all these purposes.

The notification shall include data on:

- a) the enterprise, establishment and employer;
- b) if applicable, the injured persons and the nature of the injuries or disease; and
- c) the workplace, the circumstances of the accident or the dangerous occurrence and, in the case of an occupational disease, the circumstances of the exposure to health hazards. [2]

National classification systems

A harmonized classification of occupational accidents diseases should be established, reviewed and implemented, taking into account ILO Code of Practice on Recording and Notification of Occupational Accidents and Diseases and the WHO International Classifications of Diseases (ICD).

In addition, a national list of occupational diseases together with a set of diagnostic criteria can facilitate the recognition and compensation of occupational diseases.

Annual national statistics

Each Member shall, based on the notifications and other available information, publish annually statistics that are compiled in such a way as to be representative of the country as a whole, concerning occupational accidents, occupational diseases and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences and commuting accidents, as

The [ILO List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 \(No. 194\)](#) can be used by countries as model for building, developing or strengthening and harmonizing their national systems for recording and notification and for compensation for occupational injuries and diseases. It provides an innovative and simplified procedure for updating the list on a regular basis, through tripartite meetings of experts convened by the Governing Body of the ILO.

The [list of occupational diseases](#) updated in 2010, reflects the latest knowledge on identification and recognition of occupational diseases, and is used by Member States to develop and update their own national lists. This list facilitates identification of suspected occupational diseases and helps countries in preventing, reporting on, recording and compensating affected workers. The “open items” in the list, which provide for recognition of new diseases, rely on an active contribution by hygienists and physicians as well as employers, workers and government authorities.

well as the analyses thereof. [2] The statistics shall be established following classification schemes that are compatible with the latest relevant international schemes established under the auspices of the International Labour Organization or other competent international organizations. [2] All relevant classifications are annexed to the resolution concerning statistics of occupational injuries (resulting from occupational accidents) adopted by the 16th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1998). The statistics of occupational accidents, occupational diseases and dangerous occurrences should include the frequency rate, incidence rate and severity rate. Statistical data should be computed for major divisions of economic activity, occupation, age, sex and other specific groups, when available.

Use and application of data on occupational accidents and diseases

Analysing the features of work-related fatalities, as well as of non-fatal occupational accidents and diseases, is critical to define priorities and design effective preventive strategies on OSH.

Accurate, good-quality data on occupational accidents and diseases provides a sound floor to:

- describe the health status of the working population by industry and socio-economic group;
- make sound OSH decisions;
- identify priority areas for OSH policies and strategies;
- implement prevention and control measures at the enterprise, industry and national levels;
- plan compensation and rehabilitation strategies and programmes;
- provide tailor-made and targeted compliance assistance;
- stimulate occupational epidemiological studies;
- design relevant training and education programmes;
- raise awareness and draw the attention of the media and the public to the key challenges in OSH.

References

[1] [National System for Recording and Notification of Occupational Diseases – Practical guide](#). ILO, Geneva, 2013.

[2] [Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 \(P 155\)](#).

[3] [Recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases. An ILO code of practice](#). ILO, Geneva, 1996.

[4] [Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 \(No. 155\)](#)