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# Clarity

Business and IT Solutions

## ▼ CASE STUDY

This brief Case Study outlines the key steps for the initial management of a WHS incident. How did a small, manufacturing firm cope when a notifiable incident occurred in their workplace?

"Having someone there to take us through it step by step provided a level of reassurance that I'm not sure we could have achieved on our own. You always hope you are not going to need this stuff but it makes an incredible difference when the right information and help is available when required!" *Jan, Director, ABC Manufacturing*

How would your team go if an incident were to occur at your workplace?

**\*\*The names of the Director & Company have been changed to protect the Commercial & Privacy interests of those involved.**

ABC Manufacturing is a locally based manufacturer. They have a team of about 15 staff and provide essential supplies to data and communications projects.

The Managing Director of ABC Manufacturers, Jan, was concerned that the business might be exposed with the new harmonised WHS laws. She knew they had parts of a WHS system in place but nothing structured was holding it all together. Clarity was engaged initially to implement a formal safety management system and then provided ongoing monthly support to ensure that risk assessments were being completed, work instructions were being developed, documentation was being kept up to date and the focus on record keeping was maintained. This support enabled Jan to keep a focus on continual improvement, for a third of the cost of an additional resource.

There was a general improvement in the level of focus on safety with many innovative risk control measures being put into place to create a safer workplace. All was going brilliantly until that one day when something happened.....

Jan was overseas on a buying trip and Trevor, her Production Manager, (who is also the primary HSE Officer) had called in sick. Jan and Trevor were rarely away at the same time and usually one of these two resources would have been available to provide guidance and leadership for any WHS Incident.



***It was just Murphy's Law that something should happen whilst both the Safety Manager and I were away from the workplace!***

***Jan, Managing Director, ABC Manufacturing***

Unfortunately whilst both Jan and Trevor were absent from the workplace, a notifiable incident occurred in the production workshop. The worker received immediate First Aid treatment from the First Aid Officer on site and then sought medical attention. The production engineer, Brett, was the most senior member of the management team on site. Although he had a general awareness of the safety system in place, he had not had any occasion to use it to date. Even though Brett had followed the incident management procedure within their safety management system, he was worried about whether or not he had managed the situation correctly.



He gave Clarity a call on our helpline and as part of the ABC Manufacturing support service, one of our WHS consultants calmly talked him through the process of managing the incident & provided Brett with reassurance that he was following the correct procedures. Clarity kept in regular contact over the following days and worked together with the Managing Director & Production supervisor upon their return to record the learnings from the incident.

Clarity was also engaged by Jan, to conduct an independent incident investigation which identified corrective actions that would prevent the incident from recurring.

***"It's critical in the immediate time following the incident to cover off on some essential details.***

- ***Make the area safe & ensure the worker receives the appropriate level of care & medical attention***
- ***Take photos of the scene & be sure to keep all of the related equipment & material***
- ***As soon as possible take a statement from the worker (if able), work colleagues and witnesses. The sooner you record the information the more accurate it will be for any required investigations***
- ***For notifiable incidents, ensure authorities are informed within required reporting timeframes & keep all records of any correspondence, emails, discussions, statements in a secure file***
- ***Consider using an objective third party to conduct an internal investigation to ascertain what happened & what could be improved. Treat any incident or near miss as a learning opportunity."***  
**Christine, WHS Consultant, Clarity**

Because ABC Manufacturing had an active safety system in place, there had been strong management support for safety and because the business had undertaken an objective internal investigation, WorkCover decided that there was not a requirement for any further investigation to occur.

This case demonstrates that a WHS compliant system that is easy to use, coupled with available support on hand, delivers real value to the Directors, the management team and the workers of a business.

***"Having our safety system and help to guide us saved the business a lot of stress, time & money. In manufacturing, productivity is the lifeblood of the business. We remained productive and improved the safety of our workplace. That's gold"! Jan, Managing Director, ABC Manufacturing***

How would your team go if an incident were to occur at your workplace? If you are not sure and would like to find out more about how Clarity can provide advice and guidance for incident management, please give us a call on 1300 827 537 or visit our website – [www.claritybiz.com.au](http://www.claritybiz.com.au)

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