

MAY 2025

Work Health and Safety Hazard and Incident Reporting Procedure

Table of Contents

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| | | |
|------|---|----------|
| 1 | Purpose | 3 |
| 2 | Overview..... | 3 |
| 3 | Roles and responsibilities | 4 |
| 4 | Process..... | 5 |
| 4.1 | Incident response..... | 5 |
| 4.2 | Workers' compensation..... | 5 |
| 4.3 | Reporting | 5 |
| 4.4 | What to put in an SRS report | 7 |
| 4.5 | Excluded from reporting on the SRS | 7 |
| 4.6 | Incidents with sensitive or confidential information | 8 |
| 4.7 | Notifiable incidents..... | 8 |
| 4.8 | Reviewing and closing reports | 9 |
| 4.9 | Visibility of reports on the SRS..... | 10 |
| 4.10 | Requests to reopen reports on the SRS..... | 10 |
| 4.11 | Requesting access to an SRS report | 10 |
| 5 | Related policies | 10 |
| 6 | Related procedures..... | 11 |
| 7 | Supporting information/tools | 11 |
| 8 | Definitions..... | 11 |
| 9 | Legislation | 15 |
| | Figure 1: Flowchart for what to report on the Safety Reporting System..... | 8 |

1 Purpose

This procedure applies to all workers within the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) and sets out a consistent process for reporting, mandatory notification, reviewing and closing out of work health and safety (WHS) hazards and incidents (including near-misses). Workers include employees, contractors, subcontractors, work experience students and volunteers. This procedure is consistent with the Work Health and Safety Policy which sets out DECYP's commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for all workers, visitors, children and young people.

2 Overview

DECYP is committed to complying with all relevant work health and safety legislation and codes of practice, including the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas) (the WHS Act) and the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022 (Tas), and ensuring appropriate processes are in place to report and record incidents, identify and address WHS risks, and ensure timely and effective resolution of WHS matters.

DECYP has a duty under the WHS Act and the WHS Regulations to ensure the health and safety of all workers, visitors and young people so far as is reasonably practicable, including eliminating or minimising risks to health and safety. To help achieve this, reporting hazards and incidents (including near-misses) is essential. Reporting offers valuable insights to manage risks effectively and identify appropriate control measures for continuous improvement. DECYP workers also have a duty to contribute to a safe workplace by taking reasonable care of their own and others health and safety, which includes reporting hazards and incidents.

DECYP also has a duty under the Education Act 2016 (Tas), for the principal of a school to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the safety and welfare of students and staff while on the premises of the school or attending school activities elsewhere. DECYP has a duty under the Youth Justice Act 1997 (Tas) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who are in contact with the youth justice system. DECYP must promote and safeguard the safety and wellbeing of children in accordance with the Children Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (Tas).

In the case of a serious injury or illness, verbal reporting to the principal/manager must be undertaken immediately to ensure immediate action is taken to treat the injured person and to ensure no further harm or loss occurs.

Operational business units across DECYP may have additional procedures and protocols that are to be considered in conjunction with this procedure. For example, notification to Learning Service Operations or Business Operations in the case of a serious injury or illness.

This procedure does not cover the response to Security and Emergency Management incidents. Refer to the Security and Emergency Management Procedures (SEMP) and site-specific plans for these arrangements. Refer to the Critical Incident Response Procedure Document for the response to critical incidents, which are defined as an incident, or series of incidents, in which there is a high likelihood of traumatic effects.

This Procedure supports the the department's implementation of Tasmania's *Child and Youth Safe Standards*, as contained in the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tas), specifically:

- Standard 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
- Standard 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
- Standard 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

3 Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Executive Board

The Executive Board (Officers of the Agency) are responsible for endorsing, supporting and enforcing this procedure. The Secretary and Board Members hold the duties of an Officer under WHS Act.

3.2 Principals/managers

Principals/managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring work-related hazards and incidents (including near-misses) are reported through the [Safety Reporting System](#) (SRS). Certain incidents are excluded from this requirement as outlined in [Section 4.5](#).
- Reviewing and closing out SRS reports that have been assigned to them.
- Providing resources and support to manage any hazards and incidents, including developing appropriate control measures.
- Organising and participating in incident investigations where appropriate.
- If required, seeking advice by submitting a request to Organisational Safety via the [Service and Help Centre](#).
- Reporting [Notifiable Incidents](#) to WorkSafe Tasmania.
- Reporting notifiable incidents to their line manager and Director (Operations Director, Learning Services in the case of schools and Child and Family Learning Centres) or Deputy Secretary.
- Monitoring and reviewing effectiveness of control measures and ensuring ongoing risk control is appropriate.
- Advising workers with a work-related injury or illness of their right to make a workers' compensation claim.

3.3 Workers

Workers (includes principals/managers) are responsible for:

- Reporting all work-related hazards and incidents (including near-misses) through the SRS when becoming aware of the hazard or the incident occurring. Certain incidents are excluded from this requirement as outlined in [Section 4.5](#).
- Taking actions that are reasonable and practical to protect their own safety and the safety of other persons in an incident or unsafe situation.
- Participating in any incident investigations and contributing to the development of control measures as required.

- If required, seeking advice and when providing feedback by submitting a request to Organisational Safety via the Service and Help Centre.

3.4 Organisational Safety team

The Organisational Safety team is responsible for:

- Monitoring the SRS and, where applicable, assisting clients with making or managing a report.
- Reviewing hazard and incident reports and making an assessment whether to conduct an investigation.
- Providing advice on:
 - hazard and incident reporting
 - notification to WorkSafe Tasmania
 - recommendations for control measures
- Ensuring the Organisational Safety Director and WHS Manager or Assistant Manager WHS are notified of significant and notifiable incidents.

4 Process

4.1 Incident response

Refer to the Security and Emergency Management Procedures for incident responses depending on the type of incident.

In the case of an actual or suspected serious injury or illness, verbal reporting to the principal/manager must be undertaken immediately to ensure immediate action is taken to treat the injured or ill person and to ensure no further harm or loss occurs.

Where possible and appropriate, the rights of the child are to be upheld by involving them in decisions and protecting them from further harm.

4.2 Workers' compensation

The Injury Management Unit is responsible for the management of all workers compensation claims. Workers must follow the lodgement process outlined on the Injury Management Intranet page.

When a worker sustains a work-related injury and has reported the incident on the SRS, the worker's nominated manager or supervisor receives information via email and is responsible for providing a notice of right to make a workers' compensation claim to workers within 10 business days of a reported incident.

4.3 Reporting

Work-related hazards and incidents (including near-misses) must be reported on the SRS within 48 hours of the event. Hazards and incidents that do not need to be reported on the SRS are outlined in section 4.5.

It is recommended that a report is entered in the SRS by an affected person (such as a worker directly involved in the incident). However, a report can be entered in the system by another employee on behalf of the person/s affected where necessary. An affected person could be an employee, student, young person, volunteer, contractor, visitor or the public.

Hazards and incidents reported on the SRS must be work-related. For example, the following incidents do not need to be reported on the SRS as they are not considered work-related:

- A student sent home with severe toothache unless the toothache was caused by an event that happened at school.
- A person driving to work is injured in a car accident (where driving is not part of their work).
- A person with epilepsy has a seizure at work.
- A worker or another person suffers a heart attack while at work which is unrelated to the work.

The SRS is not integrated and does not replace other reporting systems, so additional reporting may be necessary. For instance, following the [guidance for incidents of child abuse](#).

Examples of what to report in the SRS:

4.3.1 Hazards

A **hazard** is a situation or thing that has the potential to cause harm to a person and includes:

- Biological hazards (for example, used syringes, urine and saliva).
- Buildings, machinery (plant) and equipment.
- Ergonomic and manual handling.
- Hazardous materials and chemicals.
- Management of work, social factors and work design (for example, high job demands and isolated work).
- Physical work environment (for example, emergency or security related, noise and traffic).
- Violence, aggression and verbal abuse.

4.3.2 Incidents

An **incident** is an unplanned event that causes or could cause harm (illness, injury, damage) to persons, plant or material. This includes near-miss events where the incident could have resulted in harm but did not. Incidents include:

- Work-related injuries and illnesses (excluded injuries outlined in [section 4.5](#)).
- Near-misses (an event with the potential for injury/illness).

Incident causes can include:

- Accidental contact with, or being hit by objects, machinery and others.
- Contact with chemicals or other substances.
- Emergency and security related incidents.
- Heat, fire, electricity, noise or other environmental factors.

- Poor management of work (i.e. fatigue, low job control, poor support, lack of role clarity).
- Poor work design (i.e. high or low job demands, isolated work, traumatic events or content).
- Slips, trips, falls and muscular pain.
- Social factors and emotional distress (i.e. bullying, poor workplace relationships).
- Vehicle, machine or equipment incidents.
- Violence, aggression and verbal abuse (including those that can be attributed to a child or young person's dysregulation or disability).

The supervisor or manager assigned in the report in SRS (who may be a principal/manager or another nominated person) is responsible for reviewing and closing out the report (or appropriately delegating the report). They can request further assistance with this process from Organisational Safety via the [Service and Help Centre](#).

4.4 What to put in an SRS report

The SRS prompts reporters for key information to include in their report. This includes:

- Description of the hazard or incident
- Date and time of the incident
- Business Unit/School
- Location
- Incident cause
- If the reporter is submitting the report on behalf of the person/s affected by the incident
- Injury/Illness
- Treatment
- If it is 'notifiable' to WorkSafe Tasmania and TasNetworks
- Witnesses
- Who has already been notified
- Supervisor/manager to receive and resolve the report
- Other user to receive notification of report

The 'Description' must be used to outline briefly what happened and who was involved, including before and after the event (i.e. treatment received for an injury) and if there was any particular task or equipment being used. The 'Description' box must *not* be used to write 'refer to attachment or another system'.

4.5 Excluded from reporting on the SRS

The incidents listed below are not required to be reported on the SRS. However, individuals have the discretion to report them if they choose to do so.

1. **Children or young people** (not including workers and visitors) under DECYP duty of care **that receive negligible or minor injuries or illnesses** and all the following apply:
 - On-site first aid treatment is sufficient (such as an ice pack or band-aid), and the child or young person is assessed as well enough to return to class or normal duties, and

- Other local processes or systems are used to record these events, such as but not limited to, a first aid register, Student Support System (SSS) and YJPLUS/ YJIS/ AIIMS.
2. **Issues that need simple maintenance to fix** and there is no imminent hazard (for example, a drain requiring unclogging).
 3. **Non-work-related incidents.**

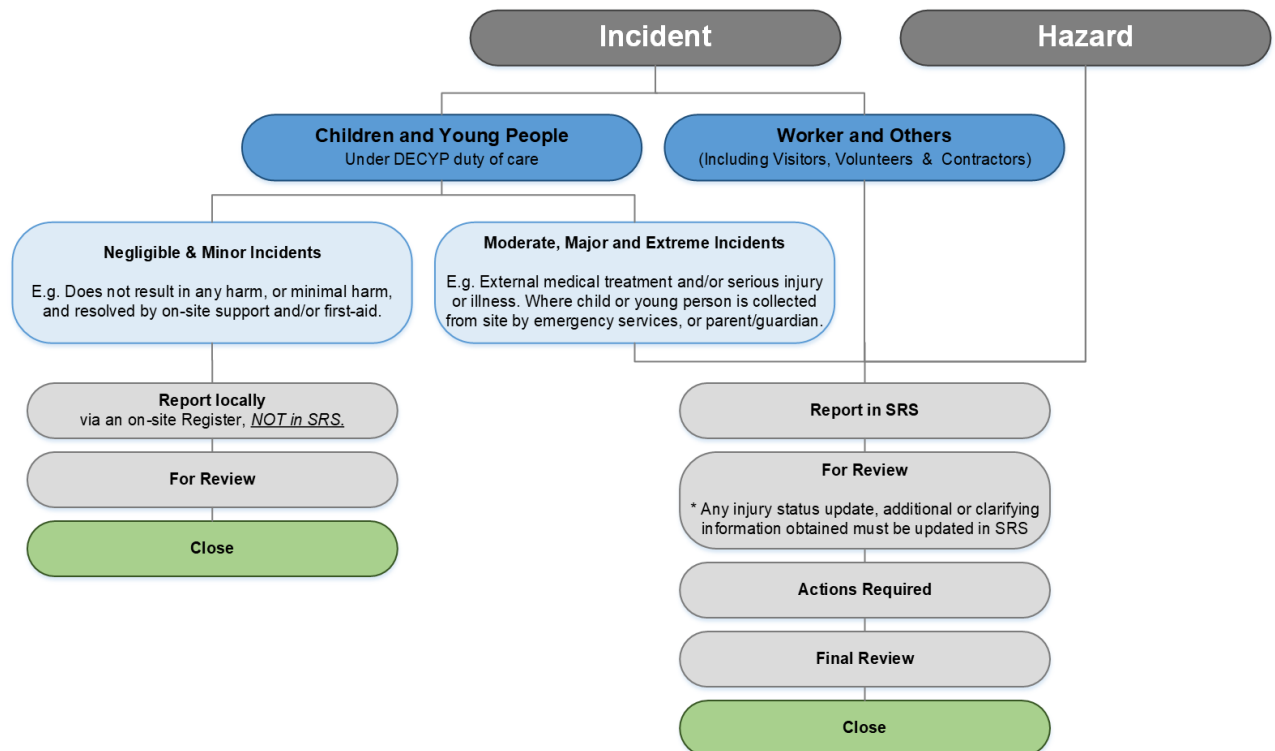


Figure 1: Flowchart for what to report on the Safety Reporting System

4.6 Incidents with sensitive or confidential information

Refer to the instructions on the [Safety Reporting System \(SRS\) Support](#) Intranet page for guidance on submitting a sensitive or confidential hazard or incident.

4.7 Notifiable incidents

It is a legislated requirement that certain incidents (including some near-misses) must be reported to WorkSafe Tasmania. These are classed as '[Notifiable Incidents](#)' and the criteria are defined in the WHS Act. An incident is not notifiable just because it happens at or near a workplace. To be notifiable, an incident must arise out of the conduct of the business or undertaking.

If the incident is likely to be notifiable to WorkSafe:

1. Secure the site with barriers and signs. Certain situations are exempt from this requirement, such as helping an injured person or making the site safe to stop more incidents.
2. Tell the principal or site manager immediately.
3. Report the incident on the [SRS \(Safety Reporting System\)](#).

4. If the incident is notifiable to WorkSafe, call WorkSafe immediately on 1300 366 322. Follow this up by filling out the [WorkSafe online form](#) within 48 hours.
 - Electrocutation and electric shocks must be reported to both WorkSafe Tasmania and TasNetworks via the TasNetworks Helpline 132 004.
 - If you're not sure if it needs to be reported, call WorkSafe and give them the details. Write down the name of the WorkSafe employee you spoke to and their advice in the SRS incident report.
5. **If it is a notifiable incident**, the person reporting must write down the WorkSafe Tasmania Reference Number and attach the Confirmation of Incident Notification Form in the SRS incident report.
 - Principals/managers must follow WorkSafe's directions, including keeping evidence of the hazard or incident. Get advice for handling hazardous substances or materials from WorkSafe or Organisational Safety via the [Service and Help Centre](#).
 - Any evidence given to WorkSafe, including what it is and when it was given, should be uploaded to the SRS incident report and must be kept locally for at least five years. Best practice would be to keep the document in an electronic form, for example, in Microsoft Teams.

4.7.1 WorkSafe investigations

Where WorkSafe advise principals/managers they will investigate a hazard or incident or they request a voluntary statement from the principal/manager, principals/managers are to contact Organisational Safety via the [Service and Help Centre](#) and email legal.services@decyp.tas.gov.au first for guidance.

4.8 Reviewing and closing reports

All hazards and incidents (including near-misses) logged in the SRS must be reviewed and a brief investigation undertaken by the principal/manager nominated in the report.

To review and close out the report, the nominated principal/manager is to:

1. **Read all the details** and documents provided by the reporter.
2. Ensure WorkSafe is notified, if required.
3. **Gather information about the hazard or incident.** Discuss the report with involved people and inspect the hazard or incident site if possible. Record any discussions, photos and relevant documentation in the 'Comments and Tasks' section. Noting that photographing of children or young people's uncovered bodies is not permitted.
4. **Consider causes and contributing factors** and **identify any control measures** that reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable (refer to Section 8 for definition).
5. The principal/manager nominated in the report or delegate (if chosen) is responsible for filling in a **Resolution Summary and closing the report**. The Resolution Summary explains what steps have been taken to resolve the report. The reporter is emailed the Resolution Summary when the report is closed. The principal/manager nominated in the report has an overarching responsibility to ensure that the report is reviewed and closed.
6. It is recommended that reports are closed within 10 business days where possible.

The principal/manager or other nominated person may decide to notify other Business Units such as Facilities Services, Staff Wellbeing, HR Policy, Injury Management, Legal Services, Office of Safeguarding, Learning Services, Child and Youth Wellbeing, Curriculum Services, Security and Emergency Management (within Organisational Safety) or the Inclusive Practice Team to assist with identifying control measures or to notify them of the incident.

4.9 Visibility of reports on the SRS

Reports on the SRS can be viewed by:

- Reporter.
- Nominated supervisor/manager for the hazard or incident.
- Delegated manager in the report (if chosen).
- Organisational Safety team (as applicable to role).
- Line managers within the Business Unit selected in the report can view the report description via the [Analytics Dashboard](#). This may include managers gathering data for internal reports to present to executive leadership.
- Another manager can get a copy of the SRS report via email if nominated by the reporter.

4.10 Requests to reopen reports on the SRS

If a reporter does not believe their report has been effectively dealt with, the following processes must be undertaken:

1. The reporter must discuss their concerns with their principal/manager to reach a resolution.
2. If a resolution cannot be reached, the process outlined in the [WHS Issue Resolution Flowchart](#) must be followed.

4.11 Requesting access to an SRS report

Requests to access an incident report from external persons (such as a parent or guardian) can be made by following the external [Right to Information](#) process. All requests go through a review process.

Internal persons (such as elected Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)) can be provided information on a hazard or incident by following the internal [Information Requests](#) process. HSRs can only be provided reports that affect their work group.

Any reports provided are de-identified and will not contain any personal medical information.

5 Related policies

- [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Security and Emergency Management Policy](#)
- [Risk Management Policy](#)

6 Related procedures

- [Work Health and Safety Risk Management Procedure](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Roles and Responsibilities Procedure](#)
- [Security and Emergency Management Procedures \(SEMP\)](#)
- [Critical Incident Response Procedure](#)
- [Duty of Care for Students on Departmental Educational Sites Procedure](#)

7 Supporting information/tools

- [WorkSafe Incident Notification Form](#)
- [Organisational Safety Service and Help Centre](#)
- [Incident Notification and Reporting Summary \(Security and Emergency Management\) Table](#)
- [Safety Reporting System User Guides](#)
- [WHS Issue Resolution Flowchart](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#)
- [Student Support and wellbeing functions and services](#)

8 Definitions

Child or Children

Anyone under the age of 18. In the context of this document, any reference to a child or children has the same meaning as a young person or young people.

Control measure

An action or measure taken to eliminate, control or minimise the health and safety risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

Dangerous Incidents

For the purpose of the WHS Act, a 'dangerous incident' means an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
- electric shock
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing

- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel
- any other event prescribed by the regulations; but does not include an incident of a prescribed kind.

Hazard

A situation or thing that has the potential to cause harm to a person.

Incident

An unplanned event that causes or could cause harm (illness, injury, damage) to persons, plant or material. This includes near-miss events where the incident could have resulted in harm but did not.

First Aid Injury

A work-related injury, which is treated by approved first aid techniques (whether applied by a First Aid Officer, nurse or medical practitioner) at the time of the injury.

Minor injury

Incident results in minimal harm, requires first aid treatment or access to wellbeing support but is not persisting.

Must

The word "must" is to be interpreted as being mandatory.

Near-miss

An unplanned event that did not result in an injury or illness to people or damage to property but had the potential to do so.

Negligible incident

An injury that does not result in any harm (physical or mental).

Notifiable Incident

A work-related incident that must be reported to WorkSafe Tasmania and includes:

- The death of a person
- A serious injury or illness
- A dangerous incident
- A person contracts certain infections or occupational zoonoses
- A person contracts COVID-19 and the person dies, or is treated as an in-patient in hospital, or the reason the person contracted COVID-19 is reliably attributable to carrying out work that involves

providing treatment or care to a person, or involves contact with human blood or body substances.

TasNetworks must also be notified if the incident involved is an electric shock or electrocution.

Principal/manager

A worker who has responsibility for the supervision and management of workers and may also have site management responsibilities.

Risk

The possibility that harm (death, injury or illness) will occur when exposed to a hazard. Measured using the factors of likelihood and consequence.

So far as is reasonably practicable

For the purposes of the WHS Act, 'reasonably practicable' means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk
- what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating.

Safety Reporting System (SRS)

A dedicated DECYP database designed to support the reporting of safety hazards and incidents (including near-misses).

Serious Injury or Illness

For the purposes of the WHS act, a serious injury or illness includes:

- immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
- immediate treatment for
- the amputation of any part of his or her body
- a serious head injury
- a serious eye injury
- a serious burn
- the separation of his or her skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping)
- a spinal injury
- the loss of a bodily function
- serious lacerations
- medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance and includes any other injury or illness prescribed by the regulations but does not include an injury or illness of a prescribed kind.

Staff

As used in the *Education Act 2016 (Tas)*.

Student

As defined under the *Education Act 2016 (Tas)*, a child, youth or person –

- enrolled at a school or
- provided with home education or
- participating in an approved learning program.

Visitor

Person attending the facility with permission, who is not designated as an employee or contractor (worker).

Worker

For the purposes of the WHS Act, a person is a 'worker' if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as:

- an employee
- a contractor or subcontractor
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor
- an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking
- an outworker
- an apprentice or trainee
- a student gaining work experience
- a volunteer
- a person of a prescribed class.

Workplace

A workplace is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.

Work related

Situations which arise out of the conduct of the business or undertaking.

Young person or young people

Commonly used to refer to any person aged 12 to 17, but also defined under the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* as a person aged 16 or 17; in the context of this document, any reference to a young person or young people has the same meaning as a child or children.

9 Legislation

Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tas)

Children Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (Tas)

Education Act 2016 (Tas)

Youth Justice Act 1997 (Tas)

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas)

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022 (Tas)

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