

**SAFE WATER SPORT EVENT  
MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA:**

**SAFETY PLAN  
TEMPLATE**

**WATER SPORT EVENT  
SAFETY PLAN**

*Name of your event*

*Date of your event*

**CREATED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF CREATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF REVIEW/UPDATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## INTRODUCTION

Below you will find an outline for the necessary components of a water sport event safety plan.

1. Headings in **DARK GREY COLOUR** are to be used for your plan.
2. Text in *blue italics* indicates what type of information the document requires.
3. The bullet points are there as a checklist to help you but are not exhaustive and may change according to the type or location of the event you are planning.

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Provide a paragraph here that is an executive summary of the event.*

- Type of water sport event
- History of the event
- Number of participants
- Number of spectators

### 2. LOCATION/SITE PLAN AND COURSE LAYOUT

*Sketch a site plan indicating VOC location, assembly areas, start/finish, parking, storage areas, toilets.*

- Placement of all temporary structures
- All other site infrastructure
- Any fencing or barriers
- Water entry and exit points
- Emergency exits and assembly points
- First aid and medical points
- Vehicle entry points

*Sketch 3 options for your course layout. Clearly mark start/finish points, resources deployed at key points, factors affecting course layout (wind/wave/temperature etc). This is a dynamic document that must be continually evaluated in terms of safety risks.*

### 3. PERMITS/INSURANCE

*Attach all relevant permits for the event.*

- SAMSA documentation (where relevant)
- Municipal permits
- Copy of public liability or Federation insurance

### 4. MEDICAL PROVIDER

*Attach the following documentation from your medical provider.*

- Proof of registration with the Department of Health
- Medical operations plan
- List of all additional medical personnel not employed by the medical provider and date of last resuscitation.
- Will you have medical personnel on a boat, on the shore?
- Do you have a medical station and first aid for spectators?

### 5. TRANSPORT PLAN

*It is important that through your risk assessment you consider traffic, transport and parking no matter what scale your event is. Outline any traffic, transport or parking plans you have in place for your event.*

*Points to consider when developing your plans:*

- How many vehicles can the car park hold?
- Where will boat trailers be parked?
- How will emergency vehicles access the site?
- If you are using a helicopter is there a designated landing zone?

## 6. EVENT CONTACTS

Populate the table with the names, roles, responsibilities and contact details of the key people involved in organising your event.

All events should have one person who is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the event. Depending on the nature and scale of the event a number of other people will have key tasks and responsibilities allocated to them, but will report to the event organiser.

### Key Event Management Staff – Example

NAME	ROLE	RESPONSIBLE FOR	MOBILE NUMBER
<i>Evan Orwell</i>	<i>Event Organiser</i>	<i>Overall responsibility for event</i>	
<i>Jill Jones</i>	<i>Safety Officer</i>	<i>Risk assessments, legal compliance, all safety</i>	
<i>Tendai Dudu</i>	<i>Technical Director (For official races)</i>	<i>Technical compliance, fair competition, location of marker buoys, safety boats and personnel</i>	
	<i>Medical (Registered with the Department of Health)</i>	<i>Approved medical plan, all medical personnel on land and water</i>	
	<i>SA Lifesaving</i>	<i>Lifeguards</i>	
	<i>Land co-ordinator</i>	<i>Permits, toilets, parking, security, tents</i>	
	<i>Powered rescue boats</i>	<i>Co-ordination, equipment check and deployment of boats</i>	
	<i>Non powered rescue vessels</i>	<i>Co-ordination, equipment check and deployment of SUPS, kayaks etc</i>	
	<i>Data capturer</i>	<i>Competitor details, logs, timings</i>	
	<i>Volunteer co-ordinator</i>	<i>Volunteers</i>	

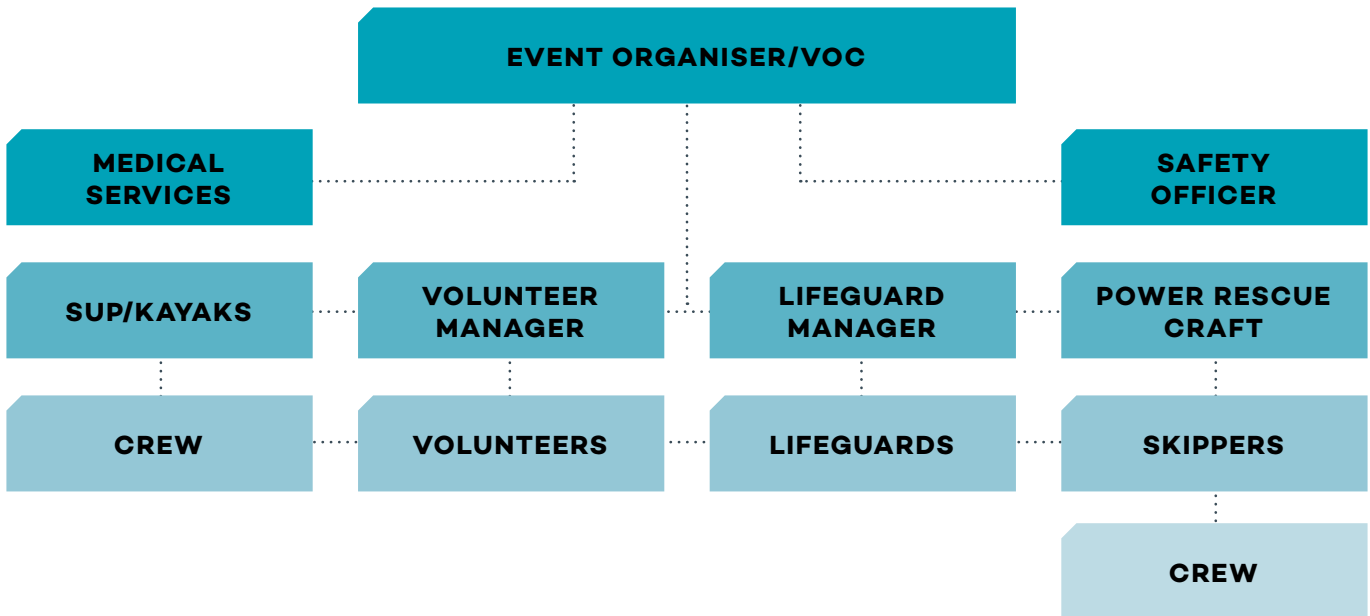
## 7. PERSONNEL/RESOURCES

List here the other personnel/resources that will be required to ensure safety at your event. It is important that you think carefully about your event and the level of staffing that will be required. It is easy to underestimate how many people will be required. Completing a risk assessment will help to ensure that you allocate adequate staff to the event, ensuring it is effectively managed and is safe.

FUNCTION	EQUIPMENT	LOCATION	NAME	MOBILE/VHF	CALL SIGN	HOURS
<i>Lifeguard 1</i>	<i>Torpedo buoy, whistle,</i>	<i>East beach surf zone</i>	<i>Bulelewa Ndingi</i>			<i>10:00 – 15:00</i>
<i>Lifeguard 2</i>		<i>West beach surf zone</i>	<i>Jaryd Smith</i>			<i>10:00 – 15:00</i>
<i>Semi rigid boat with medic on board</i>	<i>Kill switch, PFD, first aid kit, space blankets, trauma board.</i>	<i>Turn buoy 200m</i>	<i>Andrew Driver</i>		<i>Andrew</i>	<i>11:00 – 14:00</i>
<i>Jet ski/PWC</i>	<i>Kill switch, PFD, rescue sled</i>	<i>Patrol back of surfline</i>	<i>Sizwe Banda</i>		<i>Sizwe</i>	<i>11:00 – 14:00</i>
<i>Stand up paddle board co-ordinator</i>	<i>Whistle, paddle,</i>	<i>Every 20 meters along course</i>	<i>Susan Mugabe</i>			<i>10:00 – 15:00</i>

## 8. ORGANISATIONAL MATRIX

Create a simple organisational matrix below. For smaller events an organisational matrix should still be developed. It helps everyone understand the management structure and who is responsible for what. It is also an essential element in your emergency response planning. If an incident occurs it is crucial that your staff, or emergency services know the chain of command. The below example is a very simple structure, you should highlight the levels of command and the protocols for communication up and down the hierarchy.



## 9. EVENT SCHEDULE

A production schedule is an essential element in successful event management, it ensures tasks are done on time and not forgotten, with so much to think about it is easy to forget things if you don't document each and every task. Regardless of the scale of the event you should document what needs to be done prior, during and after the event to ensure all tasks are carried out in a timely manner.

PRE-EVENT DAY							
Date	Task	Start	Finish	Resources/ who	Notes	In Hand	Complete
	Municipal event permit	10am	2pm	Bongi	Details on file		Done
	Weather Forecast	9am	10am	Dave	Inform safety officer		
EVENT DAY							
Task	Start	Finish	Resources/ who	Notes	In Hand	Complete	
Brief all staff and volunteers	7am	7.30am	Safety officer	Non-arrivals of volunteers communicated to event organiser and safety officer	10 staff 20 volunteers		
Final weather and course evaluation	8am		VOC	Water temperature test 1 hour before at a depth of 60 cm at the middle of the course			
Brief participants	8.30am	9am	Safety officer				
Equipment check of rescue boats	7.30am	8.30am	Dave	Adequate fuel, radio, call sign, flares, torpedo buoy, tow rope			
POST EVENT DAY							
Date	Task	Start	Finish	Resources/ who	Notes	In Hand	Complete
	Review the event	9am	10am	Van + Tom		X	
	Modify the plan						

## 10. PROTOCOLS

### a. Lifeguards

*Include your protocol for lifeguards at the event, In consultation with the lifeguard co-ordinator:*

- Lifeguard can identify a casualty in 30 seconds and reach them in 120 seconds
- Positioning and number of lifeguards to ensure this protocol can be observed
- Lifeguard inflatable rescue boat deployed at the back of the surfline minimum crew: one lifeguard crew and one lifeguard driver with safety and rescue equipment
- Minimum of one lifeguard operated rescue boat every 500m of the course
- Lifeguards on rescue boards or SUPs positioned no more than 50 m apart
- Lifeguards on rescue boards or SUPS escort and act as a buffer between swimmers and boats

*A well-equipped duty squad should have at its disposal: Personal Safety Equipment stored in moon bag or similar.*

*Whistles; Torpedo Buoys (sufficient for the squad); Flippers; Rescue Craft; Spine Board with head Blocks; Signal Flags; Boxline; two way radio or cell phone. First Aid Kit. Area demarcation rope and portable observation tower.*

*Optional Items: Binoculars; Motorized Rescue Craft with qualified personnel; Motorized Vehicle with qualified personnel.*

*Source: Lifesaving SA Patrol Guidelines 2015*

### b. Rescue Boats

*Document the protocols for rescue boats to be used at the event*

- Document boat registration number, call sign, skipper and crew details including medical qualifications and date of last resuscitation
- Capabilities and endurance hours
- Preference for brightly coloured craft
- Boats able to respond quickly and the ability to rescue casualties
- Medic on board with CPR training
- Crew trained to extract casualties from the water
- Boat fitted with a prop guard
- In the event of multiple rescue boats converging on one emergency area all boats to follow a clockwise movement
- One boat per 500m of the course/event area
- Boats positioned at turn markets and dangerous points on the course or move with the course
- At least one sweep boat at the back of the event following slower/weaker participants
- Equipped with a radio and a cell phone
- Skipper certified and fitted with a kill switch
- Crew trained in scanning swimmers in the water
- Where the rescue boat will take a casualty in the event of an emergency
- Safety equipment on board
- Skipper and crew adequately attired for conditions (sun, wind, rain, spray etc) with PFDs
- Adequate fuel reserves

### c. Personal water craft/jet skis

*Provide a detailed protocol for the use of PWC/jet skis at the event*

- Document boat registration number and skipper
- Check that jet skis are permitted to operate in the area of the event
- Preference for brightly coloured craft
- Boats able to respond quickly and the ability to rescue casualties in the surf line
- Skipper trained to extract casualties from the water (with/without a sled)
- In the event of multiple rescue boats converging on one emergency area all boats to follow a clockwise movement
- One pax per 500m of the course/event area
- Equipped with a radio and a cell phone
- Skipper certified and fitted with a kill switch
- Skipper adequately attired for conditions (sun, wind, rain, spray etc) with PFD
- Adequate fuel reserves

***d. Other resources******Document your plans for using SUPs and kayaks at the event***

- One SUP/kayak per 5 - 8 swimmers in the water, depending on conditions
- Adequate buoyancy
- Paddle leash attached
- Protective clothing/sunscreen and PFD
- Whistle

***Document your plans for using rescue divers at the event or having them on standby.***

- Water deeper than 5m, have divers on stand bay
- Divers placed at high risk areas, such as obstacles on a river paddling event
- Document diver details, qualifications and contact information
- Names and contact details of SAPS search and rescue divers in the event of a suspected fatality/entrapment

***Document vehicle resources.***

- Type of vehicle
- Capabilities
- Staffing
- Position

***Document spotters and any additional equipment.***

- Position of spotters
- Contact details
- Call signs
- Capabilities

***Document contact details for the nearest NSRI Station***

- Station commander name and cell phone contact details
- What rescue facilities they can deploy
- Call signs for station and boats
- Inform the station of your event and provide an event management plan

***Document contact details for airborne support***

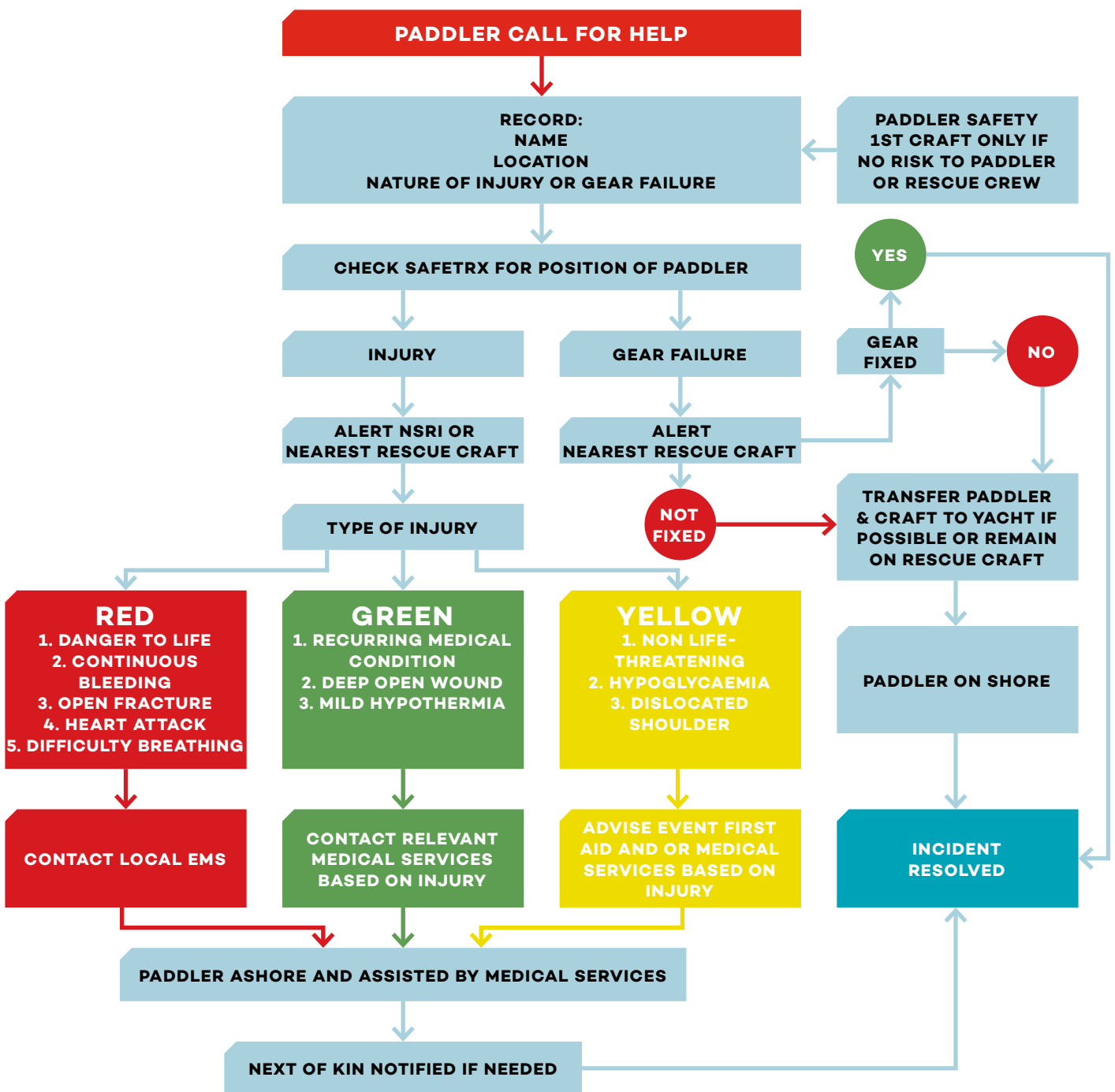
- Helicopters
- Fixed wing aircraft

### 11. COMMUNICATIONS

Document your communication plan for the event and a decision-making flow chart for emergencies

- List of names contact phone numbers
- Creation of a Whats App group for the event
- Type of communication and who is allocated what (cell phone, landline, hand held radios, line of sight 2 way radio, marine radio)
- Radio channels being used and call signs
- Everyone understands the chain of command and who to contact
- Code word for extreme threat such as sharks
- Decision making flow chart
- Triage descriptors

SAMPLE OF A DECISION-MAKING FLOW CHART



## 12. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

*Document here what emergency procedures you will have in place for your event.*

*Be prepared for a single rescue or a mass rescue situation. Factors affecting rescue are numerous and they must be considered, discussed and worked through and inform your safety plan. This includes qualified people, rescue equipment and communication.*

- First awareness of a problem
- Log time of first awareness call
- Clarify and confirm details
- Determine exact location and nature of the problem
- Evaluate seriousness and urgency of the problem
- Initiate rescue procedure considering hazards for both rescuer and casualty
- Have clear lines of communication between race organiser and rescue teams
- Keep a log of all communication and decisions taken and weather conditions (applications such as Whats App and Zelo can be very useful)
- Advise medical team of situation and casualty status
- Activate further resources if needed
- Evaluate and report

## 13. RISK ASSESSMENT

*Provide a copy of your completed risk assessment.*

*The risk assessment process is not an option, it is an absolute necessity. It is important that a risk assessment is not just something you do because it is a legal requirement, it is the single most important tool to ensure you cover all health, safety and planning aspects of your event. A risk assessment is a 'fluid' document that should be developed early, constantly monitored, adjusted and shared widely with internal and external stakeholders.*

*Below are two examples of a risk assessment matrix:*

RISK: OCEAN SWIM EVENT						MITIGATION	SCORE AFTER MITIGATION
Degrees Celcius	>20	15 - 20	10 - 15	5 - 10	<5	Compulsory thermal suit	
Water temperature score	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
Knots	<5	5 - 15	15 - 25	25 - 35	>35	Additional rescue personnel	
Wind speed score	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
Metres	<0.5	0.5 - 1	1 - 2	2 - 3	>3	Start swim after shore break	
Shore Break Score	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
Metres	<0.1	0.1 - 0.2	0.2 - 0.3	0.3 - 0.4	>0.4	Additional rescue personnel	
Chop Score	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
Metres	>20	15 - 20	10 - 15	5 - 10	<5	Diver on standby	
Water Visibility	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
Experience	Professional	Experienced	Average	Inexperienced	Beginner	Additional spotters	
Swimmer proficiency	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>		
TOTAL							



RISK: DAM SWIM EVENT									
ACTIVITY	HAZARD	LIKELY HARM	C	L	RISK SCORE	CONTROLS	C	L	RISK SCORE
Race Start	Glass/rocks in the mud at the edge of the water	Cuts and abrasions	3	3	9	Swimmers advised. First aid available to treat cuts. Swimming "booties" minimise harm. Rocks/glass removed if possible. Start area adjusted.	3	1	3
	Air temperature of 32 C	Hyperthermia Sunburn	2	3	6	Waiting time without shade not to exceed 15 minutes. Shade and water provided close to the start point.	2	1	2
Swim course	Water Hyacinth weed	Obstruct swimmer and panic	3	1	3	Clear the course of hyacinth weed the day before.	2	1	2
	Afternoon winds and increased water chop	Fatigued swimmer Water inhalation	5	3	15	Lifeguards on Stand-Up Paddleboards deployed every 20 metres along the course. Powered sweep boat at the back of the field to respond to emergencies.	5	1	5
	Poor water quality and pollution	ENT infections and stomach upsets	2	2	2	Event organiser checks water samples beforehand to ensure adequate water quality. Final decision taken the day before the event.	2	1	2

**C** = consequence rating:    **1** negligible        **2** minor        **3** moderate        **4** major        **5** catastrophic  
**L** = likelihood rating:        **1** rare        **2** unlikely        **3** possible        **4** likely        **5** almost certain

## 14. RISK ASSESSMENTS FROM CONTRACTORS

*Please list here all other contractors associated with your event. You will need to collect copies of their risk assessments. Remember that you as the event organiser hold ultimate responsibility for any element of the event you contract in.*

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## 15. INCIDENT REGISTER

*Maintain an incident register of anything that happens at the event.*

*Below is a sample of an incident report form.*

INCIDENT REPORT		
<b>Particulars of incident:</b>		
Date:	Time:	Location:
<b>Type of incident (please circle below):</b>		
Injury	Illness	Environmental
Notifiable event	Other	
Reported by:	Phone:	
Role in the event:	Email:	
<b>The injured person:</b>		
Name:	Address:	
Age:	Phone:	
<b>Witness(s):</b>		
Name:	Phone:	
Name:	Phone:	
Name:	Phone:	
<b>Describe the incident:</b> <i>(space overleaf for diagram if needed)</i>		
<b>Describe any illness or injury:</b> <i>What part of the body is affected and how?</i>		
<b>Describe any property damage:</b> <i>What damage was caused and how?</i>		
<b>Analysis:</b> <i>What do you think caused or contributed to the incident?</i>		
<b>Action:</b> <i>What was the emergency response to the incident?</i>		
<b>Prevention:</b> <i>What action has been taken to prevent a re-occurrence?</i>		
<b>Have all preventative actions been reviewed by the VOC committee and implemented?</b>		
Yes		No
VOC Committee Signature:	Date completed:	
<b>Medical treatment:</b>		
Hospital:	Doctor/Medic:	
Type of treatment provided:		