

Addressing Incident Underreporting for Improved Safety Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

Accurate and timely reporting of safety incidents is a crucial component of a positive safety culture. These invaluable learning opportunities allow us to adapt, make improvements and prevent future injury. But how can an organisation, team or individual learn and improve when incidents are not reported or captured?

Recent Australian data has shown that on average, 31% of incidents go unreported and in some organisations this figure rises as high as 53%. That's a lot of missed opportunities to improve safety.

An underreporting research study of 12,460 participants resulted in a number of insights, including:

- Underreporting rates across team, frontline leader, and senior leader levels
- Three key drivers of underreporting: Underappreciation, Fear, and Process factors
- The influence of safety culture maturity on underreporting
- The link between safety climate and underreporting, with a particular focus on error management climate

High underreporting rates within your business means missed opportunities to improve and learn from mistakes. Exploring the drivers of underreporting, and understanding the cultural and climate factors that may influence underreporting within your business can help you to create a workplace culture where mistakes and incidents are shared, discussed, and prevented from occurring again.

Session Outcomes:

- Understand the current underreporting rate in high-risk industries across teams, frontline leaders, and senior leaders
- Explore the three key drivers of underreporting: Underappreciation, Fear, and Process, and how these could be driving underreporting within your business
- Learn how your organisation's safety culture maturity could be influencing your underreporting rates
- Explore the link between various dimensions of safety climate and underreporting, with an emphasis on error management climate