

Safety Corner

Regulations on Reporting, Investigation and Handling of Work Safety Accidents

The State Council of the People's Republic of China promulgated Decree (国务院令) No. 493, the *Regulations on Reporting, Investigation and Handling of Work Safety Accidents* (生产安全事故报告和调查处理条例), with an aim to standardise accident handling and define the responsibilities of involved parties. These Regulations came into effect on 1 June 2007.

The Regulations classifies work accidents into four categories according to the number of fatalities or the amount of direct financial loss: Extraordinary Major Accidents (特别重大事故); Major Accidents (重大事故); Serious Accidents (较大事故); and General Accidents (一般事故). For example, Extraordinary Major Accidents are those resulting in more than 30 fatalities, more than 100 serious injury (including acute industrial poisoning), or a direct financial loss of more than RMB100 million.

The Regulations define different channels of reporting, investigation and handling of accidents for the above accident categories. For the Extraordinary Major Accidents, when an accident occurs, staff on site should immediately report to the person in charge, who will then have one hour to report to the government parties stipulated in the Regulations. The related work safety department should further report to its supervising authority, and update the accident's status to their higher authorities within two hours. Members of the investigation team must submit the investigation report within the time frame specified in the Regulations.

Agencies and firms will incur hefty fines if their staff deliberately interfere accident rescue, or tempering evidence, refuse to assist investigations, give false testimony or encourage others to do so, or leave the scene of an accident. Furthermore, the heads of related agencies and firms will also incur fines equal up to 80% of their annual incomes for failure to organize timely rescue operations, covering up accidents, delaying the reporting of accidents, or evading investigations.

For full text of the Regulations, please visit:

http://www.legalinfo.gov.cn/misc/2007-05/21/content_621280.htm

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