

Health and Safety Executive	Operational Circular
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To
All FCG Professional Staff

STRUCTURE OF SUMMARIES FOR FCG REPORTS

This OC formalizes the existing local instructions in FCGs for structuring summaries of FCG reports using FI 2501.
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BACKGROUND

1 The computerisation of FCG reports is intended to establish a system of providing specialist inspectors both in the field and at HQ, and their "customers", with useful information.

INFORMATION TO BE STORED

2 The information stored on computer is restricted to:

- 1) information about the source of the request;
- 2) the firm concerned;
- 3) the relevant file and other reference numbers
- 4) the date of visit (if any) and persons seen etc; and
- 5) the textual summary itself.

SUMMARY STRUCTURE AND CONTEXT

3 The textual summary is restricted to a maximum of 300 words (generally the summary would be much less than this). Summaries will be searched by "free text", ie on the basis of any selected word. The information is accessible to specialists in all FCGs and in each THSD HQ unit and to customers in FOD HQ and in the regions.

4 To maximise its usefulness it is important that the report summaries are structured and contain the information that specialists and customers will need. The aim must be to:

- 1) enable other specialists and customers to gain a clear picture of any report's contents. The report should include clear statements covering what advice was requested, or other purpose of

the visit, conclusions and recommendations;

- 2) identify as clearly as possible whether they need to see the full report; and
- 3) minimise the frequency with which such a need occurs.

GENERAL POINTS OF GUIDANCE ON TEXT COMPILATION

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- 1) A text summary should contain only factual information relating to the incident. Opinions or subjective assessments eg "he was probably speeding" should not be included. Individuals should be identified by occupation/position and must not be named.
- 2) Any abbreviations/local dialect terms should be avoided unless applicable and understandable throughout HSE.
- 3) All dimensions, weights, capacities should be entered in SI metric units, eg mm/m, kg/tonnes, litres.
- 4) Words at the end of a line should not be split over 2 lines unless absolutely essential; in which case, they must be hyphenated. This will assist in search and retrieval by text.
- 5) It is important that information in a text summary is of sufficient quality and quantity while remaining concise, to enable it to be easily retrieved when required and convey useful information easily, readily and understandably to assist others in their work.

6 Report summaries should be prepared with the required structure in mind. In this context, a set of topics is given at paras 7-15 which inspectors should consider when structuring their summaries. This set is not meant to be exhaustive, nor is it meant to constrain inspectors' initiatives. It is not intended that a separate sentence should be included to cover each topic or piece of information. This would result in summaries becoming unduly long. A carefully constructed summary can cover a number of the appropriate topics and items in a single sentence. (Clearly, not all topics will always need to be included). A few sentences can thus cover the entire need.

TOPICS FOR INCLUSION IN SUMMARIES

Purpose

7 The summary should always cover the purpose of the job undertaken. This might include, for example, the collection of information about a particular topic (eg for an FCG project); the assessment of a CIMAH safety report; provision of information for an SP(N) or a TDS; support for THSD HQ (eg on standards work); support for the (local) NIG; provision of advice to FI/AgI/ExI/QI etc; investigation of an accident/incident/DO; or support for improvement/prohibition notice or prosecution.

Activity or process

8 Where any activity or process in operation was relevant to the job in hand then it should always be included. A brief description should suffice.

Substance/plant/machinery/equipment or structure

9 A brief description of any substance/plant/machinery/equipment or structure relevant to the work should be included. Here the details relevant to specific items of plant or machinery (eg make, type, model number etc) should be included.

Hazard or problem

10 The summary should specify the hazard or problem arising; if possible, or if known, the level of **risk** should also be given. The description of hazards will flow from the nature of the job, ranging through eg electric shock/electrocution; RF burn; exposure to ionising/non-ionising radiation; exposure to noise/thermal stress etc; loss of containment; explosion; fire; entrapment; falling; collapse; toxic release; etc. Where **death or injury** have occurred this should be included in the summary, indicating the number involved and whether employees or members of the public.

Data or information

11 A summary of the data or information arising from any measurement/ testing/sampling/analysis should always be included. This should briefly specify the method adopted for the measurement etc. Results of occupational hygiene sampling measurements should be presented in accordance with the guidance prepared by THSD C5 *Presentation of Occupational Hygiene Data* (HSE leaflet M5 (file 201)). See also para 16.

Main conclusions

12 The summary should set out the main conclusions reached by the inspector. For example, authors should include any relevant conclusions about causation of accidents, or levels of exposure being above or below any limits such as MELs or OESs etc.

Main recommendations

13 The main recommendations made should be set out briefly. It is not possible to go into minor details but the text should avoid statements such as "various recommendations are made" - which is valueless. It is more helpful to say, for example, "recommendations are made for reducing exposure by improving containment at source, better exhaust ventilation and, where appropriate, use of suitable RPE".

14 Where recommendations are made, and the inspector would be able to support these in terms of enforcement, then this should also be stated in the summary.

Further action

15 Some work will inevitably lead to proposals for further action. Such needs should be briefly referred to in the summary. Examples might include the need to refer matters to a NIG or to other PIs (eg on HSW Act s.6 matters); or to THSD HQ because of the potential for national implications; or for research.

RELEVANCE TO OTHER THSD DATABASES

16 It should be noted that other databases developed in THSD HQ for specific purposes, and which depend in part on FCG reports for input, must not be corrupted by the new scheme. For example, OHVR will remain in use at least until the new system is up and running successfully and with summaries of good quality. Hence hygiene reports, and the data in particular, must continue to provide information currently required for OHVR.

17 Similarly, the requirements of ANVIL must continue to be met. Here the SIC classification relevant to the industry has been found useful in searching files and this should continue to be included.

FEEDBACK

18 As experience develops and with the new ability to search the growing database in mind, it is possible that inspectors will identify additional topics and types of material for inclusion in summaries. It would be appreciated if inspectors would keep their line managers informed of new ideas, so that these may be disseminated to the others.

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ASI headings

Database: Field Consultant Groups: records.