



## Risk and Incident Management are Everyone's Business!



**Risk and incident management are critical components of WOA operations. Through effective risk and incident management, we can ensure that we are better prepared to respond to potential threats, both internal and external, and that we can continue to meet our goals and objectives. This will help us remain resilient and ensure our future success.**

### **What is risk management and why is it important for our Organisation?**

Risk management is a global approach, based on the identification and evaluation of all risks that threaten the achievement of strategic objectives, with the aim of implementing actions to reduce the potential negative impact of such risks. It involves all members of our Organisation, at all levels.

Risk management allows us to:

- Better satisfy our strategic objectives and improve the Organisation's performance
- Control costs
- Satisfy legal obligations
- Answer the need for transparency required by our Members and donors

There are two types of risks. Estimated risks are derived from an analysis of processes, audit reports and staff experience—their probabilities are estimated, not factual. Observed risks, or incidents, are factual and are identified by monitoring activities or staff feedback. Their probabilities are real statistics, and the damages are real observations.

## What is an incident?

An incident: **something that disrupted the normal functioning of a process, organisation, system or project, which caused an impact, or was carried out in non-compliance (with standard procedure)**

An example of one of our identified risks is the deficiency in WOA's institutional memory and archives. This risk, identified by external audits in 2016, was due to lack of clear processes and secure archiving facilities. Should an archive burn down or if binding documents are lost in the electronic archive, this would be an incident that increases the probability of risk. We are currently securing our archiving processes and safeguarding our institutional memory to limit the risk.

An incident should not be confused with a problem. An incident is the result of a problem. For example, it gets hot in some offices in summer. This is a problem. It only becomes an incident if a staff member feels unwell because of the temperature in the office.

An incident should not be confused with a technical failure either. For example, a toilet is out of order or your computer crashes. These are both failures and you should report them to the relevant departments—respectively to General Services or DTIS via the dedicated helpdesks.

Problem/Failure ( <i>and what to do</i> )	Incident
An error on the website ( <i>notify the Communications Dept.</i> )	Non-compliance with safety rules
A coffee machine breakdown ( <i>notify General Services</i> )	A mission that could not take place due to lack of visa or mission order
A bug or problem accessing an application ( <i>notify the Product Owner</i> )	A contract cancelled due to non-compliance with procedures
	A non-compliant bidder is contracted
	A breach of security related to personal data
	A procedure, Decision or Memorandum not respected

## On incident management and staff implication

Incident management is one of the levers for updating our Organisation's risk assessment.

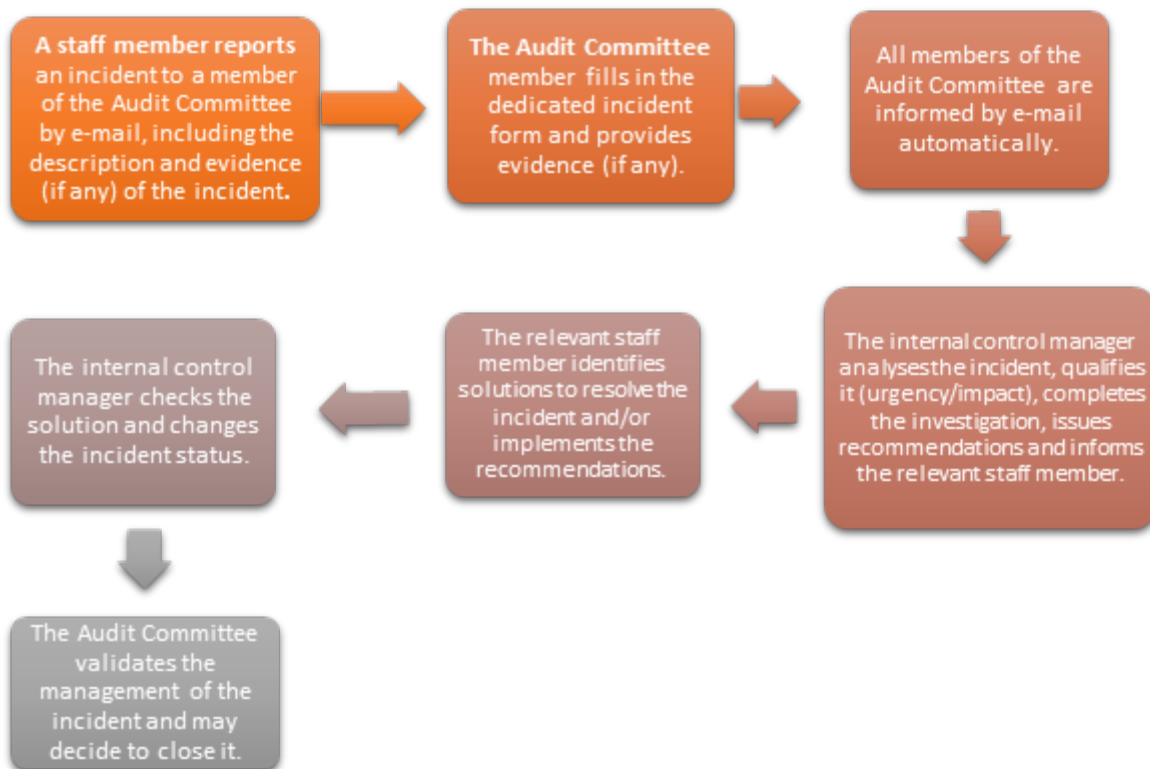
In 2022, we launched an incident reporting system. [Members of the Audit Committee](#)—who have been designated to supervise the internal control system and risk management—may fill in a form to report on observed incidents across the Organisation.

To ensure visibility of all possible incidents, each staff member may report incidents—health, psychosocial, financial, geopolitical, legal, organisational, operational, reputational, technical, etc.—to a member of the Audit Committee, describing the incident and providing evidence where appropriate.

If you work in a regional or sub-regional office, kindly report incidents directly to Neo Mapitse or Nathaly Monsalve from the Regional Activities Department, who will then communicate them to our internal control manager, Stéphanie Frehel.

An incident can be reported whatever its status, even after it has been resolved, for it is important to keep a record for both feedback and prevention.

### **A streamlined incident handling process for everyone to follow**



In conclusion, the implementation of a risk and incident management plan is essential for our Organisation. By proactively assessing and managing risks, we can reduce our exposure to potential threats and minimise the impact of incidents when they do occur. And by creating an effective risk and incident management process, we will better ensure that our Organisation remains resilient and robust in the long-term.

More information on the [Audit Committee and risk management web page](#).

We wish to thank Stéphanie Frehel for writing this article for *In-house Times*.

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