

### #2-19 *Follow-Up Accident Investigation*



A follow-up investigation is used to analyze the data obtained in the initial investigation, conduct further investigation if necessary, and determine why the accident occurred, the likely sequence of events and probable causes (direct, indirect, basic), and finally, a decision as to the most likely causes.

**Conducting Interviews.** All interviews should be conducted in a quiet and private location. It is essential to get preliminary statements as soon as possible from all witnesses. Investigators should not provide any facts to the witness – only ask non-leading questions.

- Explain the purpose of the investigation (accident prevention) and put each witness at ease.
- Listen, let each witness speak freely, and be professional, courteous and considerate.
- Take notes without distracting the witness. Use a recorder only with consent of the witness.
- Use sketches and diagrams to help the witness.
- Emphasize areas of direct observation. Label hearsay accordingly.
- Do not argue with the witness.
- Record the exact words used by the witness to describe each observation.
- Identify each witness (name, address, occupation, years of experience, etc.).

**Accident Analysis.** Accidents represent problems that must be solved through investigations. Formal procedures are helpful in identifying and solving problems. The two most common procedures are:

- **Change Analysis.** As its name implies, this technique emphasizes change – what was done that was not a safe work practice. Use the following steps in this method:
  - ❖ Define the problem (what happened?).
  - ❖ Establish the norm (what should have happened?).
  - ❖ Identify, locate, and describe the change (what, where, when, to what extent).
  - ❖ Specify what was and what was not affected.
  - ❖ Identify the distinctive features of the change.
  - ❖ List the possible causes.
  - ❖ Select the most likely causes.
- **Job Safety Analysis.** Job safety analysis (JSA) is a chart listing each job step, hazards, and controls. Review any existing JSA during the investigation. Perform a JSA if one is not available to determine the events and conditions that led to the accident.

**Investigation Report.** An accident investigation is not complete until a report is prepared and submitted to management.

**Take Away:** A more thorough follow-up investigation should be conducted for any injury accident or any incident with the potential to create an injury accident. The purpose of the investigation and resulting report is to ensure the accident does not reoccur.