



UK DCTN Serious incident reporting policy

Scope

This policy covers the activities of the UK DCTN as a charity and its operations. It does not cover or replace the charity's obligations to report incidents to statutory authorities (such as the police or Health and Safety Executive) that UK DCTN may need to do from time to time in the ordinary operation of its business.

However, incidents that are reported to the statutory authorities can become relevant to this policy e.g. if the charity is subjected to an investigation by a statutory authority or if it deems itself to be at fault and there is potential reputational damage to the charity as a result.

Background

The Charity Commission states that it is vital that charities, (whether they work domestically or internationally), report serious incidents to the regulator. The Charity Commission also states that data on serious incident reporting allows it to better understand risks facing the sector and take appropriate action.

Serious incidents can and will happen, but it is the commission's role to ensure that Trustees comply with their legal duties and that the charity manages the incident responsibly, has taken steps to limit the immediate impact of any serious incidents that may occur and, where possible, prevent it from happening again.

The commission acknowledges that many problems can be resolved by trustees themselves. However, sometimes it needs to use its powers to protect a charity. Reporting also means the commission can identify whether other charities might be affected and can give better advice to all charities to help them protect themselves.

What is a serious incident?

The commission defines significant as 'significant in the context of your charity, taking account of its staff, operations, finances and / or reputation'; and defines a serious incident as an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- Harm to people who come into contact with the UK DCTN through our work
- Loss of our charity's money or assets.
- Harm to our charity's work or reputation.

An act of discrimination against any person with a protected characteristic listed in the [Equality Act 2010](#) will also be treated as a serious incident.

The main categories of reportable incidents set out by the commission are:

- Protecting people and safeguarding incidents – incidents that have resulted in or risk significant harm to beneficiaries and other people who come into contact with the charity through its work.
- Financial crimes – fraud, theft, cyber-crime and money laundering.

- Large donations from an unknown or unverifiable source, or suspicious financial activity using the charity's funds.
- Other significant financial loss.
- Links to terrorism or extremism, including 'proscribed' (or banned) organisations, individuals subject to an asset freeze or kidnapping of staff.
- Other significant incidents, such as – insolvency, forced withdrawal of banking services without an alternative, significant data breaches / losses or incidents involving partners that materially affect the charity.

Policy:

It is UK DCTN's policy to aim to report all 'serious incidents' to the commission within five working days of the Independent Chair of the UK DCTN's decision that the matter is a serious incident. If the matter has been referred more widely to some or all of the charity's trustees, the decision of those trustees to report a serious incident, providing an appropriate level of information and to respond to any resulting requests for information, will be within ten working days.

Serious incidents should be reported to the UK DCTN by the most appropriate means according to the incident as soon as possible after the event.

1. What we will report

The nature of the charity's assets and activities mean that it deals with incidents on a frequent basis as part of its operations.

The incidents that we will report and the incidents that it is not necessary to report are detailed in [appendix 1](#) (based on Charity commission guidance). This is not a definitive list of reportable incidents but indicates the type of incidents categorised as 'serious' and reportable and will act as a guide as to what should and should not be reported.

2. Who is responsible for reporting to the Charity Commission?

The responsibility for reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission rests with the UK DCTN trustees. All trustees bear ultimate responsibility for ensuring the UK DCTN makes a report and does so in a timely manner.

All discussions and decisions taken will be formally recorded at the next available Executive Committee meeting along with any outcomes and further action taken.

3. How we will report serious incidents to the Charity Commission

The trustees delegate formal responsibility for reporting those incidents deemed to be serious incidents to the UK DCTN Network Manager who will report them to the Charity Commission using its online reporting form.

If the information provided (or which UK DCTN wish to provide to the commission) is particularly sensitive or confidential or if a particular exemption applies, we will inform the commission and explain our reasoning.

To ensure that the relevant and appropriate information is captured at the time and reported consistently we will use the serious incident reporting form, which is available on request. This form is intended for internal use only as currently the online form cannot be saved or printed.

The UK DCTN is required as part of its annual return, to sign a declaration confirming there were no serious incidents during the financial year that should have been reported to the commission. If incidents did occur, but were not reported at the time, we will submit these before we file our

charity annual return, so that we can make the declaration and meet our legal reporting requirements.

4. Actions we will take in response to a serious incident

If there is a serious incident, the trustees, together with the Independent Chair and UK DCTN staff will:

- As soon as reasonably practicable prevent or minimise any further harm, loss or damage.
- Report it to the Charity Commission as a serious incident.
- Report it to the police (and / or other relevant agencies) if we suspect a crime has been committed, and to any other regulators the charity is accountable to.
- Put in place a communication plan for staff, volunteers, the public, the media and other stakeholders.
- Inform the British Association of Dermatologists (as they provide some infrastructure funding for the UK DCTN).
- Inform the University of Nottingham (as UK DCTN staff are substantive employees of this organisation).
- Review what happened and prevent it from happening again – this may include reviewing internal controls and procedures, internal or external investigation and / or seeking appropriate help from professional advisers.

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