

What Your Daily Job Reports are Missing

By Dr. Heather Moore and Sydney Parvin

What are Daily Job Reports?

Many contractors use some form of a daily job report as a standard way of documenting project activities and issues across their projects.

These reports are often completed by the field lead onsite to provide an update on what was worked on, if any issues came up throughout the day, and to note specific safety hazards. They also may be used for timekeeping purposes or to verify subcontractor / equipment present on the jobsite. Daily job reports typically include the following information:

- Project Name / Location
- Foreman / Supervisor
- Activities worked on
- Payroll information (Shift start time & end per person)
- Subcontractor onsite (Manpower)
- Equipment
- Issues
- Safety Hazard/ Corrective Action

Figure 1: Contractor Example of Daily Job Report

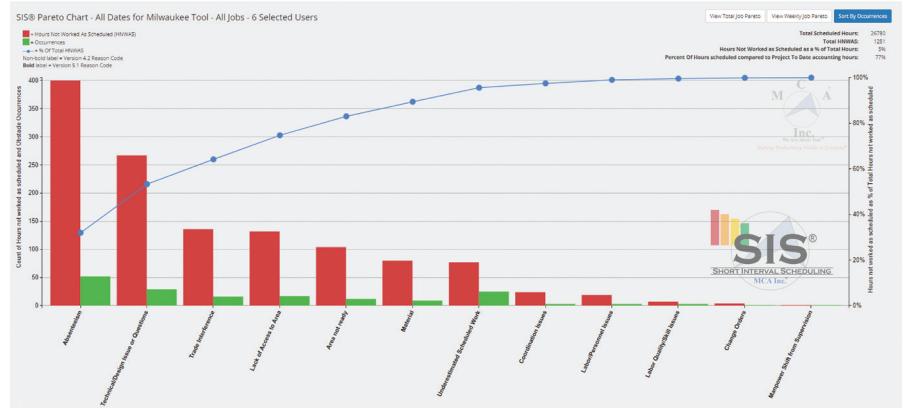


Figure 2: Quantify and prioritize obstacles for effective response and management

What is Missing?

So, your company has a daily job report, field personnel are trained on how to fill it out, project managers agree it has the correct information, and if you are lucky, many of your field leads are filling out the reports consistently. You find that many projects are still struggling to put out fires at the end of the job. Shouldn't the daily job reports help raise these issues before the last three weeks of the project?

MCA, Inc. recognized this pattern and identified a few key reasons why the use of daily job reports is not achieving intended results.

Lack of Feedback. The reality is field personnel can spend hours per week filling out paperwork that they may never actually get feedback on. When reports don't get a response from their project team, field personnel may stop completing them consistently, and the cycle of poor communication between the office and field continues.

The lack of feedback is not simply the fault of the project managers. The format of the information and delays in timing between when the report is filled out make timely reporting challenging. Daily reports are

either filled out as a hard copy and brought into the office at the end of the week or filled out in excel and sent to the PM/office directly. In either scenario, the data that gets to the project manager is usually delayed by a few days, and only accessible across multiple files/locations. To find key issues, the project manager must sift through several documents across all their projects to review the information, and then determine the most critical pieces.

Lack of Quantification. Many daily job reports are intended to capture a lot of information in a single report. What is often overlooked is how this information might need to be quantified and acted upon. For example, jobsite issues are documented, but the impact of the issues is not always possible to determine, thus corrective action is difficult to prioritize.

The example in Figure 1 shows how the field lead reported issues on their project. From this report, we can tell the nature of the issue, but are not able to determine what work might have been impacted, and how often this type of issue has been occurring throughout the life of the project. It is a one-off or has it been ongoing? If it is ongoing, does it need to be raised to the GC or other trades?



SIS® Managerial Report For All Projects

Print Show Only w/ Manager Notes Expand All Collapse All Sort By Occurrences View Weekly

PRIMARY REASON CODE	# OCCURRENCES	HNWAS	EXTRA HOURS	CUMULATIVE				
Material	1	4 hrs	0 hrs	100 %				
DETAILED REASON CODE	# OCCURRENCES	HNWAS	EXTRA HOURS	CUMULATIVE				
Ran out of material	1	4 hrs	0 hrs	100 %				
Schedule Date	Job	User	Contract /Job# / Crew#	Task	Quantity/ Outcome	Scheduled Hours	% Complete	HNWAS / EH
08/06/2021	ECO WA 5.1 Project: ECO WA 5.1 Division: Training 5.1	Sydney Parvin	Bob & Matt	Wire Pulling - 2nd Floor - Area A	300 ft	8	50	4
No User Notes					Why did you run out of material?			
					Last Updated: Brian Kelly - 01/20/2022 9:29 AM			

Figure 3: SIS® Managerial Report

Obstacles need to be quantifiable and linked to the work so that they can be acted upon.

Lack of Planning and Scheduling. Daily job reports describe what was worked on and are usually reported at the end of the day or even at the end of the week, thus requiring little-to-no forethought on what needs to be worked on before the day is started. A mechanism that allows for planning and scheduling in advance will help field leads prevent obstacles like missing tools or material before they encounter them during the day.

Considerations for Effective Reporting

If your company is not seeing results from using a daily job report, or is considering implementing a daily job report, MCA, Inc. recommends making the following considerations:

- What is the objective of the report?
- What is the company looking to learn from the information reported?
- Is there value in the process of completing the form itself? (i.e., does the process of completing the form act as a checklist/reminder for the user?)
- Is the information gained from reporting quantifiable?
- Is the report easy for the user to fill out?
- Is the report easy for the receiver to review and give feedback / act on?

To put effective job reporting in place, your company should define the inputs, process, and outputs so that the right information can be captured, quantified, reported, and ultimately communicated between the office and jobsite.

ASTM Standard E2691 offers a recommended approach for daily job reporting, known as Short Interval Scheduling, which allows companies to identify the reasons for common cause variation on a project. The principles of this approach include:

Planning and Scheduling. Listing ‘what was worked on’ in the daily job report can be useful for timesheet or historical reference; however, this information is captured at the end of the day or after the fact. Without a schedule created in advance, your daily job report has no baseline to measure against when noting obstacles. Instead, field personnel should schedule the work for the day that morning and plan the next two days. This will improve your reporting process by helping field personnel avoid obstacles and safety concerns by planning around them in advance. This also allows field personnel to quickly evaluate obstacles relative to their scheduled work at the end of the day.

Actionable Outputs. Because obstacles reported are tied back to scheduled work, the project team can pinpoint which tasks were impacted on which days by which obstacles. ASTM Standard E2691’s reason code dictionary can further help with codification of obstacles across your projects. Using the software application of the standard, output charts can be generated in real time (see example in Figure 2) to review the obstacles of highest priority based on their impact of scheduled work. Project managers can quickly get a high-level view of scheduled work across all of their projects or review

the detail on issues that were reported in real time.

Timely Review & Response for Project Managers. Independent of the method your company selects for daily job reporting, a process that ensures timely review and response is critical. SIS®’s Managerial Report allows instant feedback between the field and office to make sure that obstacles reported can be responded to and reviewed to work through resolutions.

If your company is struggling to deal with project obstacles in the last 10% of the project, it may be time to revisit your current daily job reporting process for responsiveness, quantification of issues, and use of scheduling in advance. Short Interval Scheduling® is proven to reduce the time to react and is an effective alternative to daily job reporting in construction. For more information on ASTM Standard E2691 or Short Interval Scheduling, visit <http://mca.net/products/sis/>.

Dr. Heather Moore is vice president of operations at MCA, Inc., Grand Blanc, MI. She can be reached at hmoore@mca.net. Sydney Parvin is associate data analyst & technical assistant to the VP of Operations at MCA, Inc., Grand Blanc, MI. She can be reached at sparvin@mca.net.

