

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT DEFINITIONS

CRISIS EVENT An event producing a temporary state of psychological disequilibrium with possible subsequent emotional turmoil.

STRESS Physical/emotional arousal in response to or as a result of exposure to any demand or pressure; the more significant the demand, the more intense the reaction.

STRESSOR Any event which acts as a stimulus to place demand on an individual.

CRITICAL INCIDENT An event which acts as a turning point (crisis event), with impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of an individual; it is usually sudden, powerful, and outside the range of normal human experience. If extreme enough, the experience may serve as the catalyst for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS Characterized by a wide range of emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioral signs and symptoms, it is the reaction an individual or group has to a crisis event. Most people recover within a few weeks.

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS DEBRIEFING (CISD) A group meeting about a critical incident designed to mitigate the impact of said incident; to assist the personnel involved in recovering from the stress associated with the event. The meeting, or debriefing, is peer driven and clinician guided, with seven distinctive and structured phases: 1. Remarks (set the tone of the meeting) 2. Fact phase (participants describe what happened) 3. Thought phase (what were their first or most prominent thoughts) 4. Reaction phase (what was the worst part of the incident) 5. Symptom phase (what signs or symptoms of distress were encountered during or after the situation) 6. Teaching phase (information provided to reduce the impacts of stress) 7. Re-entry (participants questions answered and loose ends tied up).

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL Mental health professionals and clergy.

PEER SUPPORT PERSONNEL The rest of the membership who are involved in emergency services; pilots, ground team, administrative staff ... any *adult* member selected and trained to provide this service. *No cadets* may participate as team members.

DEMOBILIZATIONS Reserved for large scale incidents and disasters, 30 minutes are devoted to informational dissemination, food and rest. It is to assess the well-being of the membership, mitigate the impact of the event, provide stress management information and provide an opportunity for rest and food before dismissal or return to duties. It also provides information to the CISM interventionist regarding the need for debriefing and other services.

DEFUSINGS A shortened version of the debriefing, lasting 20-45 minutes, comprised of three segments: Introduction, Exploration, Information. It must be provided within 8 hours of an incident, is conducted by peers, and may eliminate the need to provide a formal debriefing. If a debriefing is needed, the defusing is an excellent preparatory step for that intervention.