

WP 12-ER.03
Revision 0

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Crisis Intervention Program

Cognizant Department: Emergency Services

Approved by: Robert Paslay



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CHANGE HISTORY SUMMARY		
Revision No.	Date Issued	Description of Changes
0	10/14/10	Initial issuance of document

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1.0 INTRODUCTION¹

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) recognizes the fact that crisis can result from stress and tension in an employee's life, with stress being the key element in crisis development. As stress increases, an individual's coping skills become increasingly ineffective and the potential for crisis occurs. Such stress can be generated by day-to-day life activities and/or by one major incident. The WIPP Crisis Intervention Program provides direct services to emergency responders, using peer support and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team members, in accordance with 18.4.2 New Mexico Administrative Code, "Ambulance and Medical Rescue Services." The program provides indirect services to nonemergency responders through referrals to outside resources.

There are no records generated by the implementation of this program.

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Crisis Intervention Advisory Board (CIAB): The CIAB consists of the Emergency Services manager, who oversees emergency services, the CIAB Program Coordinator, and the medical director for the CISM. The duties of the CIAB are to: (1) provide oversight of the CISM and the Peer Support Program; (2) provide guidance on program objectives and goals; (3) assist in evaluating critical incident stress responses; and (4) suggest program improvements.

Emergency Services Manager: The Washington TRU Solutions LLC (WTS) Emergency Services will serve as the lead for the Crisis Intervention Program.

It is the responsibility of Emergency Services to provide the resources necessary for the program and its participants to provide required services by:

- Providing a CIAB Program Coordinator
- Providing a credentialing process for internal participants (Peer Support Team)
- Supporting training of Peer Support Team
- Supporting the activities of the Crisis Intervention Program
- Providing administrative support to program activities
- Providing a mechanism for quality assurance
- Providing necessary equipment for the program and the participants
- Ensuring maximum use of site resources in the crisis intervention program

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- Providing team building opportunities for crisis intervention and critical incident team members

Medical Director: The medical director is responsible for overseeing the delivery and quality of the peer support and critical incident services. Duties include:

- Participating as a member of the CIAB
- Providing professional advice and support for the CIAB
- Offering quality assurance support for the CIAB, the team members, and the peer counselors

Program Coordinator: The CIAB Program Coordinator will be appointed by, and reports to, the Emergency Services manager and will be responsible for the overall management of the Crisis Intervention Program.

It will be the responsibility of the CIAB Program Coordinator to:

- Oversee the functioning of the Crisis Intervention Program
- Solicit volunteers for the program
- Represent the Crisis Intervention Program before service and community organizations
- Coordinate with Technical Training to establish training sessions for the team in accordance with training procedures
- Assist in the training of the team, the providers, administration, and general site employees
- Answer requests for crisis intervention assistance
- Evaluate requests for debriefing
- Dispatch the CISM team
- Handle the logistics of assembling and housing the team, providing assistance and support during the debriefings
- Provide debriefing of the debriefers when necessary or requested
- Solicit support from appropriate departments
- Maintain quality control

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- Coordinate with Technical Training to set up training sessions and continuing educational programs
- Establish a network of crisis intervention services with other agencies
- Keep abreast of current research, findings, and theories concerning emergency responder stress

All inquiries about the Crisis Intervention Program will be directed to the CIAB Program Coordinator.

Peer Support Team Members: Peer support personnel are WIPP employees trained to provide basic peer support and crisis intervention management services to WIPP emergency responders. They can provide critical incident stress services if they have completed the basic CISM training. If so, they may participate in the defusing process and may participate in the debriefing process. Their responsibilities include:

- Initiating contact with those who have responded to a critical incident
- Participating in the defusing process
- Assisting in setting up the demobilization area
- Estimating number of persons involved
- Performing initial assessment of the need for a debriefing
- Reporting information to the CIAB Program Coordinator
- Making post-debriefing contacts, as assigned
- Assisting the CIAB Program Coordinator as required
- Assisting in the development of crisis intervention programming

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident: Any incident that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of either an individual or group. Critical incidents are typically sudden, powerful events outside the range of ordinary human experiences. Because they tend to be sudden and unusual, they can have a strong psychological, cognitive, behavioral, and emotional effect even on well-trained, experienced people.

Critical Incident Stress: The reaction a person or group has to a critical incident. Critical incident stress is characterized by a wide range of physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral signs and symptoms.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD): A structured group meeting or discussion about a distressing critical incident, usually taking place 24-72 hours after the incident. Based on principles of education and crisis intervention, CISD is a peer-driven, clinician-guided discussion intended to mitigate the incident and accelerate recovery from significant stress related to a traumatic event. The CISD consists of seven phases: Introduction, Fact, Thought, Reaction, Symptom, Teaching, and Reentry.

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Defusing: A shortened version of the CISD, consisting of only three phases: Introduction, Exploration, and Information. The defusings take place immediately or relatively soon after the critical incident and typically last less than one hour.

Demobilization: A brief intervention reserved for use immediately after a disaster or large-scale incident. Demobilization provides a transition period from the traumatic event back to normal functions. As units are disengaged from operations at the scene of the disaster, they are sent to the center for a ten-minute talk on critical incident stress and possible symptoms they might encounter. Workers hear concrete stress management suggestions, which will be immediately helpful to them until a CISD can be arranged. After the ten-minute talk, personnel move to another room where food and drink are available. After a twenty-minute rest, the workers either return to normal duties or home.

On-Scene Support: Services will be provided at the scene of an ongoing traumatic event. Two basic support services are provided at the scene: (1) brief crisis interventions with emergency personnel who show signs of distress; and (2) assistance to victims, survivors, and family members directly involved with the incident.

4.0 PEER SUPPORT TEAM

The Peer Support Team is composed of volunteer WIPP employees. The CIAB Program Coordinator will evaluate volunteers and select individuals meeting the following criteria:

- Have the ability to maintain confidentiality of material presented in a defusing or debriefing and the ability to be flexible and available as the need arises.
- Must be nonjudgmental, aware of one's own biases, and be able to accept differences in values of those who are being debriefed.
- Must be open to the presentation of information regardless of its emotional content during a defusing or debriefing.
- Must be empathetic, aware of the wide range of feelings that will have occurred during a critical incident, and acknowledge the validity of such feelings.
- Must be trusted and respected among peers.

Any WIPP employee may apply to be on the Peer Support Team. The CIAB will establish the number of team members needed. Selection criteria include:

- An expressed desire to be a Peer Support Team member.
- At least a competent (or standard) performance rating.
- No work restrictions involving psychological stress.
- Manager/supervisor endorsement.
- Acceptance by the CIAB and CIAB Program Coordinator.

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An individual must be active in the team to remain on the team. "Active" means being available for crisis intervention and/or critical incident activities, and maintaining the appropriate training/credentialing.

All selected CISM and Peer Support Team members will be required to complete basic CISM training or provide acceptable documentation of comparable training/experience as part of the credentialing. The CISM training is intended to provide a basic understanding of techniques in at least the following areas:

- Crisis identification
- Crisis intervention
- Listening skills
- Assessment skills
- Ethical and legal issues
- Peer team organization and procedures

5.0 CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

WIPP recognizes the harmful effects of stress associated with critical incidents, especially upon emergency response personnel and upon other employees involved in the incident. To minimize the adverse effects of critical incident stress, WIPP has established a Critical Incident Stress Management Plan, focused on three groups of activities: pre-incident; incident; and post-incident.

5.1 Pre-Incident Activities of the CISM Program

Pre-incident activities of the CISM Program include those activities that will put the program in a state of readiness for emergency CISM response. Those activities include:

- Identifying of resources.
- Coordinating training sessions conducted by CISD-certified facilitator trainers for Peer Support Team.
- Developing appropriate policies and practices relative to stress related to emergency responders.
- Developing protocols for supervisors to deal with employees involved in a critical incident.

5.2 Critical Incident Activities

Critical Incident activities involve reactive activities focused on or at the scene of the incident and activities occurring immediately following the incident focused on those directly affected by the incident. Those activities include evaluating the CISD

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requirements; support establishing demobilization services; providing on-scene support, and providing critical incident stress debriefings.

5.3 Critical Incident Support Services

5.3.1 Defusings

The goal is to provide defusings for most critical incidents, rather than CISD. The defusing should take place within eight to twelve hours of the incident and should be managed by two peers who were not involved in the incident. Typical defusings last 30 to 45 minutes. Objectives for defusings include:

- Rapid reduction of intense reactions to a traumatic event.
- "Normalizing" the experience so that people can return to their routine duties as quickly as possible.
- Reestablishment of the social network so that individuals won't isolate themselves from each other.
- Assessment of personnel to determine if a full CISD is necessary.

A carefully applied and well managed defusing will usually:

- Eliminate the need for a debriefing, or
- Enhance a debriefing if one is still necessary.

5.3.2 On-Scene Support

During incidents that are capable of producing significant distress for more than one person, crisis intervention personnel will be called to provide on-scene support. On-scene services are brief crisis intervention functions designed to limit the level of distress encountered by the workers. The two groups who are targeted for field interventions are:

- Individuals with obvious signs of distress
- Provide a list of referral services for distressed primary victims, their families, and witnesses or bystanders involved in the actual incident

5.3.3 Demobilizations

During any large scale event or disaster the CISM team may be notified to provide on-scene support and demobilizations as personnel are released from the scene.

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5.3.4 Critical Incident Stress Debriefings

Critical Incident Stress Debriefings will be made available as necessary for the following and other significant incidents:

- Line-of-duty death or serious injury
- Multi-casualty incident
- Suicide of a co-worker
- Death or serious injury to a civilian as a result of an operational procedure
- Traumatic event involving a child victim
- Events with excessive media interest
- Victims or relatives of the emergency responders

Critical Incident Stress Debriefings will be provided on critical incidents where it has been impractical, impossible, or for some reason unable to perform a defusing, or for incidents which warrant a formal debriefing. Attendance is mandatory, but participation is voluntary. CISD is not an operational critique or evaluation. It is a stress debriefing designed to support workers who have experienced a distressing event. The rules of CISD include the following:

- Confidentiality - what is said in the debriefing stays in the debriefing.
- Only those present at or directly involved in the incident may attend.
- No notes, cameras, or recordings will be allowed.
- A CISD is not psychotherapy or counseling.
- A CISD is not an investigation or a tactical critique.
- No reports will be made to supervisors.
- No media is allowed.
- No breaks will be taken.
- No one has to speak.

5.4 Post -Incident Activities

Post-incident activities occur immediately following an incident (short term) and at a later date as problems related to the incident occur or reoccur (long term). Short-term activities include evaluation of the incident CISM response and recommendations for improvement. Long-term activities include anniversary debriefings, informal crisis intervention, and follow-up.

Supervisors will receive education on certain behaviors to look for in an employee who has been involved in an incident, which include, but are not limited to:

- Belligerent behavior towards coworkers
- Crying
- Excessive quietness exhibited by a normally outgoing person

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- Tardiness
- Excessive absenteeism

If any of these behaviors are observed or if an employee comes to any supervisor indicating that he or she is experiencing difficulty due to a work-related incident, the supervisor should immediately contact the CIAB Program Coordinator for assistance and/or referrals.

5.5 Follow-Up

After the CISM intervention, the Peer Support Team members will follow-up with those who experienced the critical incident. Such follow-up activities will be coordinated by the CIAB Program Coordinator. If the personnel are still experiencing significant distress, there will be a referral for additional support. Sources for referral could include:

- Psychological or psychiatric services
- Employee Assistance Program
- Clergy
- Medical Services
- Family support services
- Other services as necessary, including peer support

6.0 REFERENCES

18.4.2 New Mexico Administrative Code, "Ambulance and Medical Rescue Services"