Langley Research Center

LPR 1830.2

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Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Program at NASA Langley Research Center

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ii
P.1 Purpose ii
P.2 Applicability ii
P.3 Authority ii
P.4 Applicable Documents and Forms ii
P.5 Measurement/Verification ii
P.6 Cancellation ii

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER 2. CORE COMPONENTS 3

CHAPTER 3. RESPONSIBILITY 5

CHAPTER 4. RECORDS 8

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Responsible Office: Office of Human and Capital Management, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Branch

PREFACE

P.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) program is to provide employees at NASA Langley Research Center with support when there is an occurrence which causes a significant stress reaction that overwhelms the employees' ability to adjust emotionally.

P.2 APPLICABILITY

This LPR is applicable to all NASA personnel involved in a critical incident.

P.3 AUTHORITY

NPR 1800.1, "NASA Occupational Health Program Procedures."

P.4 APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

NPR 1800.1, "NASA Occupational Health Program Procedures."

P.5 MEASUREMENT/VERIFICATION

None

P.6 CANCELLATION

LPR 1830.2, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Program at NASA Langley Research Center dated March 13, 2007.

Original signed on file

David E. Bowles
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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This LPR establishes a procedure for delivery of these services through a team coordinated by the Center Medical Officer (CMO) and Clinic Administrator and outlines the responsibilities of Center Management, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Coordinator, CISM team members, human resources personnel, and supervisors. This plan describes the procedures to be followed in providing CISM services immediately following an emergency situation, delegates, specific responsibilities , outlines preparatory measures to be taken in advance, provides for the psychological care and support of victims and their families, and measures to assist with bringing about the orderly return of the workplace to a normal mode of operation.

1.2 These critical incidents occur at home or within the work place that could include, but are not limited to:

a. Suicides
b. Assaults and threats
c. Homicide in the workplace
d. Situations attracting undue and/or critical media attention
e. Serious workplace accidents
f. Vehicle accidents
g. Natural or man-made disasters
h. Terrorism
i. Major mission failure
j. Domestic violence

1.3 Definitions:

a. Critical Incident - The recognized definition of a critical incident is quite broad. A critical incident is defined as any event outside of the usual realm of daily human experience that is markedly distressing and has the potential to interfere with an individual's ability to function, either at the scene or at a later time.

b. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing - Critical Incident Stress Debriefing is a structured group discussion, conducted soon after a traumatic event, (24 hours or less after an event) led by trained personnel intended to assist employees who have experienced a critical incident. Its purpose is to mitigate the adverse psychological reaction resulting from a traumatic experience. The process supports recovery by providing group support and linking participants to counseling and treatment services if they become necessary.

c. Critical Incident Stress Defusing - Critical Incident Stress Defusing is a small group process that typically takes no more than 30 minutes. The purpose is to try to rapidly reduce the intense reaction to a traumatic event, "normalize" the experience so that employees can return to routine duties as quickly as possible, provide information on acute stress and how to reduce it, and to determine if a full debriefing should be scheduled.

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d. Critical Incident Stress Management - Critical Incident Stress Management is a process that includes pre-crisis preparation, stress education, and intervention designed to help employees recover more quickly from abnormally stressful events.

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CHAPTER 2. CORE COMPONENTS

CISM includes six core components that are comprehensive in scope and span the entire temporal spectrum of a crisis.

2.1 Pre-Incident preparation

2.1.1 Pre-incident training helps employees prepare to cope with traumatic events and incidents. People who are forewarned about traumatic stress are better able to manage it and recognize its signs earlier.

2.1.2 Training designed to: (1) teach effective approaches to dealing with traumatic stress; (2) avoid ineffective approaches; and (3) emphasize that it is normal to feel stress in abnormal situations, shall be included as part of new supervisor orientation and organizational briefings provided by the EAP Coordinator at staff meetings, all-hands meetings, lunch/learns and other appropriate venues. Trainings shall include best practices and procedures in dealing with critical incidents indentified in 1.2.

2.2 Disaster, terrorist, or other large scale incident interventions

2.2.1 Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services shall be offered by NASA LaRC management at the 24 Hour EAP Call Center.

2.2.2 EAP Call Center employees shall assist in contacting EAP providers who shall in turn assist local leadership in Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) activities.

2.2.3 Once notified of a critical incident, the EAP Coordinator shall:

a. assemble and notify the CISD team and any appropriate community partners when there is a need for intervention/support.
b. lead the CISD team in providing defusing and debriefings and, as needed, provide one-on-one interventions, referral, and follow-up services, as needed.

2.3 Defusing

2.3.1 EAP providers shall offer one-on-one or small group discussions in the immediate post-event phase.

2.3.2 Based on an employee(s) desire for discussion, the employee(s) shall receive education about recognition of stress symptoms and management strategies for coping with stress. These techniques are used for limited-scope events or when only a small number of employees are affected.

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2.4 Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

2.4.1 CISD team members participate in initial assessments and post-incident intervention planning.

2.4.2 Team members provide defusing and debriefing services under the direction of the EAP Coordinator and assist in identifying individuals in need of additional EAP services. Upon completion of CISD services, those team members who provided the services shall be debriefed themselves by other team members.

2.4.3 Team members or the EAP Coordinator assist in follow up monitoring of adversely affected employees as requested or appropriate. The EAP Coordinator provides guidance with all follow-up activities.

2.5 One-on-one Crisis Intervention/Counseling

2.5.1 Psychological support for employees and family members shall be offered throughout the crisis spectrum.

2.5.2 The EAP provider shall be informed by the Director, Office of Human Capital Management or Occupational Health Officer of personnel who are assisting in major Center or agency-wide incident mitigation or recovery efforts.

2.5.3 Supervisors are responsible for encouraging and granting time for employees to participate in officially sanctioned CISM services. The supervisor should contact EAP directly if he/she is concerned that an employee is in need of additional assistance.

2.6 Referral mechanisms for assessment and follow on treatment

2.6.1 EAP shall maintain a list of resources for referral and 24-hour support shall be available throughout the incident and aftercare.

2.7.2 A general after action report on critical incident services shall be prepared by the EAP provider for review by the LaRC Medical Director and/or Clinic Administrator for review by the CISM team's review for lessons learned and process improvement at the next CISM team meeting.

CHAPTER 3. RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team

3.1.1 The CISM team shall include the following:

a. Center Medical Director or his/her designee,
b. the Occupational Health Manager,
c. Clinic Administrator,
d. Employee/Labor relations representative,
e. Office of Chief Counsel legal advisor,
f. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) mental health professionals,
g. Security and Program Protection Branch representative,
h. Office of Safety and Mission Assurance representative,
i. managers or supervisors as appropriate for review of critical incidents and to help determine appropriate members for the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team

3.1.2 The CISM team shall determine what services are needed, when the support shall be provided, and how the services are to be delivered.

3.1.3 The CISM team shall review NPR annually for any required updates and publish in accordance with LMS. If no changes are required, it shall be noted in CISM meeting minutes annually.

3.1.4 Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team:

3.1.4.1 The EAP in coordination with CISM determines needed CISD team members. Desired CISD team's responsibilities are:

a. able to respect confidentiality,
b. have good to excellent interpersonal skills and
c. able to react quickly when called .

3.1.4.2 CISD team members shall also be responsible for:

a. maintaining familiarization with CISD components, and
b. maintaining intervention skills through participation in team building and planning meetings once initial training is completed.
c. responsible for knowing and adhering to CISD procedures and protocol.
d. being able to provide CISM support following a critical incident whenever possible.
e. taking guidance and direction from the EAP.

3.1.4.3 Mental health providers from the outside community shall also be included as needed for support of non NASA individuals.

3.1.4.4 The EAP Coordinator shall serve as CISM team lead. Team members are expected to make a two year commitment to the team once trained.

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3.2 Center EAP Officer (Provider)

3.2.1 The Center EAP Officer (Provider) is responsible for the overall Critical Incident Stress Management Program at Langley Research Center

3.2.2 It is the responsibility of the EAP Coordinator to:

a. coordinate the response plan,
b. conduct and coordinate debriefing,
c. conduct training,
d. consult with management,
e. mobilize support services both within the Center and in the community at large,
f. assess the Center's response to the crisis,
g. adjust the response as warranted and be flexible, available, and accessible.

3.2.3 The EAP Coordinator shall:

a. develop CISM procedures,
b. train and maintain a CISD team, and
c. provide direction and coordination of that team
d. ensure proper assessment, triage, treatment, referral, and follow up for employees adversely affected for up to one year post-incident
e. provide promotion and education about the plan to Center management, supervisors, and employees.

3.2.4 Center managers and supervisors are responsible for:

a. notifying the EAP Coordinator of any critical incidents,
b. assisting in identification of individuals and groups adversely affected by the event, and
c. providing incident information that will facilitate the debriefing process.

3.2.4.1 Notification of the EAP Coordinator occurs by phone; either at the regular office number or by cell phone, which is carried by the EAP Coordinator at all times. Supervisors are also responsible for allowing and encouraging employees to participate in post-incident defusing and debriefings.

3.2.5 The Security and Protection Branch shall:

a. include EAP Coordinator/CISD team lead in emergency preparedness training activities and will maintain awareness and familiarization with CISM services.
b. notify the EAP Coordinator, by phone of any critical incident and will assist in identifying groups and individuals adversely affected by an event.

3.2.6 The Office of Human Capital Management is responsible for providing guidance and assistance on how to handle employee problems and (with the help of the NASA Shared Services Center) for providing services to victims following an incident (insurance, death benefits, workers compensation claims, etc.).

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3.2.6.1 The Office of Human Capital Management will notify the EAP Coordinator, by phone, of critical incidents, assist in identifying individuals and groups adversely affected by the event, and inform supervisors of availability of CISM services.

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Chapter 4. RECORDS

4.1 Critical incident stress debriefings are considered confidential discussions under EAP. All records must be kept in compliance with NPR 1800.1, paragraph 5.7.9. Team members shall not make personal notes or records outside of required EAP records

4.2 The EAP coordinator shall:

a. maintain an up-to-date list of trained CISD team members and contact information
b. provide a copy via e-mail to each of the team members and to the Manager, Employee Services and Operations Office each time the list is changed.

4.3 The EAP coordinator and/or Health Clinic administrator will maintain minutes of the CISM meetings to maintain a record of collaboration among center offices in CISM process improvements and lessons learned.