

Policy Name:	CRITICAL INCIDENT AFTERCARE PROGRAM		
Policy #:	AD 5.2	Last Updated:	2022-01-14
Issued By:	SUPPORT SERVICES BUREAU	Approved By:	SURREY POLICE BOARD
		Review Frequency:	AS REQUIRED

RELATED POLICIES

AD 5.3.1 *Employee and Family Assistance Program*

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to recognize that any individual within the Surrey Police Service (SPS) may experience Critical Incidents, Critical Incident Stress, or Cumulative Trauma and require support.
- 1.2. This policy establishes protocols and guidelines providing timely and confidential support via the SPS Critical Incident Aftercare Program to both Members and civilian staff and their families.
- 1.3. To describe the mandate of the Critical Incident Aftercare Program (CIAP) and Critical Incident Aftercare Team (CIAT).

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. The CIAP will offer support to:
 - i. all SPS Members ;
 - ii. all SPS civilian staff;
 - iii. the immediate family members of Members and civilian staff who have been involved in a Critical Incident or suffering from the affects of Critical Incident Stress or Cumulative Trauma;
 - iv. Volunteers that are registered and participating in SPS sponsored programs; and
 - v. Members and civilian staff of another agency involved in the Critical Incident, as deemed appropriate by the CIAP Team coordinator.

3. POLICY

3.1. The SPS is committed to providing an organizational response to Critical Incidents and Cumulative Stress that may be experienced by SPS Employees. CIAT will be created to support SPS Employees.

3.2. CIAT includes Members and civilian staff trained to help those involved in Critical Incidents, to minimize the negative effects on an involved person's health, safety, and general well-being.

3.3. CIAT will report to the CIAT Coordinator, within the Wellness Unit.

3.4. CIAT will be deployed in the following circumstances:

- i. serious injury or death of a Member or Employee of SPS;
- ii. death or serious injury of a child resulting from violent means;
- iii. hostage taking where the hostage is injured or killed;
- iv. where a Member in the line of duty discharges their service weapon at another person or causes injury or death to a person;
- v. any serious injury or death resulting from direct or indirect police action;
- vi. an event which results in multiple fatalities;
- vii. any other incident that is charged with profound emotion to the point where it could be classified as a Critical Incident.

3.5. Following a Critical Incident, CIAT will:

- i. facilitate the defusing process;
- ii. provide support for anyone who has experienced potentially traumatic events or who are suffering from the effects of cumulative stress;
- iii. provide education and training relating to critical incident theory and practices to Employees and outside agencies;
- iv. facilitate referrals for employees to the Employee and Family Assistance Program, WorkSafe BC, health care professionals and other resources as appropriate; and
- v. Upon consent of the involved Employee's wishes, ensure that Employee's spouse, significant other, and/or immediate family is notified of the incident in person, by an appropriate person in a timely manner;

4. PROCEDURE

Employee Responsibilities

4.2. All Employees will immediately notify their Supervisor when an incident has occurred which creates, or may create, a Critical Incident reaction on behalf of themselves or other Employees.

Supervisor and Duty Officer responsibilities

- 4.3. When an Employee(s) is involved in a Critical Incident, their Supervisor will notify the Duty Officer. The Duty Officer will determine if CIAT is to be called out.
- 4.4. If the Duty Officer decides to deploy CIAT, the Duty Officer will notify the CIAT Co-ordinator and request CIAT members attend either the SPS workplace, or a designated location.
- 4.5. The CIAT Coordinator may use CIAT Members that are on duty, should they be deemed not involved in the incident.
- 4.6. CIAT Coordinator will be responsible for making additional call outs and ensuring that a minimum of two CIAT Members attend all Critical Incidents.
- 4.7. The Supervisor, Duty Officer and CIAT Coordinator will ensure that the involved Employee's exposure to further trauma is minimized and managed as much as practicable.
- 4.8. The Supervisor, Duty Officer or a CIAT Member will arrange for transportation of the Employee(s) by a Member who has no direct involvement in the incident to an alternate location as required. If practicable, transport shall be completed by on duty CIAT Members.

Transporting Member Duties

- 4.9. The transporting Member of the involved Employee(s) will:
 - i. provide a quiet and safe place for the involved Employee(s);
 - ii. not discuss details of the incident with the involved employee(s) as the transporting member could become a compellable witness in any Police Act, criminal or civil process;
 - iii. remain with the involved Employee(s) until relieved by the Critical Incident Aftercare Team Coordinator.

Critical Incident Aftercare Team

- 4.10. The CIAT Co-ordinator will notify the appropriate number of team Members to attend the designated location and assist the Employees involved in the critical incident (minimum of two).
- 4.11. CIAT Members will attend the location designated to meet the involved Employees and coordinate defusing.
- 4.12. The CIAT will liaise with the Duty Officer and Supervisor regarding the condition and status of the involved Employees.

4.13. CIAT Members will complete the following forms and submit them, along with a copy of the PRIME Report to the Employee Services Section Sergeant and the CIAT Co-ordinator prior to the end of their tour of duty:

- i. Employee Services Section Notification Form – Critical Incident Aftercare Team Callout;
- ii. Worksafe BC Report of Injury form, if applicable; and
- iii. An Overtime Leave form, if applicable.

Defusing (Initial Support)

4.14. The Defusing is a confidential discussion led by at least two CIAT Members, within eight hours of the incident. The Defusing is to take place before any Debriefing and prior to any Members leaving the office or ending their shift.

4.15. The Defusing provides the involved Employees an opportunity to discuss how they felt during the incident and obtain support, as required.

4.16. The record of a Defusing session occurring will be reported by the CIAT Coordinator.

4.17. ESS will send an acknowledgement of receipt of the call-out and/or defusing form and confirm that a copy is retained in the applicable Employee(s) personnel file.

Psychological Debriefing (Secondary Support)

4.18. Following a Defusing for a Critical Incident, the Critical Incident Aftercare Team Leader will determine if a Psychological Debriefing is needed.

Employee Services Responsibilities

4.19. The ESS Staff Sergeant will liaise with the Critical Incident Aftercare Team Co-ordinator to ensure the appropriate Defusings and Debriefings have been scheduled for Employees involved in the Critical Incident.

4.20. The ESS Staff Sergeant is responsible for ensuring the Employees involved in the Critical Incident receive appropriate support and resources required to assist them as they go through the various stages of the investigation, trials, inquests or hearings.

4.21. The ESS Staff Sergeant will be responsible for monitoring the follow-up process that the Employees involved in the Critical Incident may be required to participate in.

4.22. The monitoring process will require the establishment of a diary system which includes:

- i. the nature of the incident;
- ii. the date of incident;

- iii. the Employees involved;
- iv. the Critical Incident Aftercare Team Members who conducted the defusing;
- v. the Critical Incident Aftercare Team who arranged a debriefing date along with the time and location; and
- vi. any union agent who was notified.

IIO Investigations

4.23. Where the Independent Investigations Office (IIO) has asserted jurisdiction for an investigation, the ESS Staff Sergeant will contact the applicable IIO Liaison Officer and ensure communication is established to determine the following:

- i. the identified Subject Officer(s);
- ii. progress regarding the investigation;
- iii. outcome of the investigation;
- iv. Crown Counsel's decision on the file (if applicable); and
- v. provide updates regarding any criminal or civil processes.

4.24. The ESS Staff Sergeant will contact the Members(s) involved, and their Supervisors, to determine if the Members are receiving the support they require according to the following schedule:

- i. as much contact as necessary after the incident;
- ii. at six (6) months after the incident;
- iii. at twelve (12) months after the incident, on the anniversary date;
- iv. the commencement of any subsequent legal process that may occur and affect the Member(s); and
- v. as much additional contact necessary, based on information received.

Confidentiality

4.25. It is the responsibility of every Critical Incident Aftercare Team member to promote trust and confidentiality of individuals accessing any service from the Critical Incident Aftercare Team or Program.

4.26. Subject to the limitations set out in this policy, communications between an individual utilizing the program and Critical Incident Aftercare Team members will be considered by SPS to be confidential.

4.27. Other than the information required to complete the Critical Incident Aftercare Team operations log, Critical Incident Aftercare Team members will not be required or ordered to submit any report to SPS in relation to Critical Incident Aftercare Team activities related to a Critical Incident.

4.28. A Team member will not disclose the content of any communications that took place during or related to Critical Incident support activities except as described in this policy, or with the prior authorization of the individual involved.

Limitations of Confidentiality

4.29. CIAT Members are considered compellable witnesses for court purposes, and for this reason it is imperative that communication and interaction with any individual who may be in a position of legal jeopardy be focused on providing Critical Incident support and directed away from fact finding.

4.30. CIAT Members will advise all individuals receiving support after a Critical Incident that:

- i. no legal privilege of confidentiality exists between a CIAT Members and the individual they support; and
- ii. CIAT Members are compellable witnesses for the purposes of criminal or civil proceedings.

4.31. A CIAT Member will inform and discuss, forthwith, with the CIAT Coordinator any incident where disclosure is made regarding:

- i. any intention to injure oneself or another person;
- ii. participation in a criminal offence;
- iii. endangerment of a child; or
- iv. any circumstance that the Team member believes requires the abeyance of confidentiality.

4.32. The CIAT Coordinator will, forthwith, inform the Duty Officer where the CIAT Coordinator receives information that a criminal offence has occurred, an individual poses a danger to themselves or others, or any other circumstance that requires the abeyance of confidentiality.

4.33. Nothing within this policy will be deemed to limit the actions of a CIAT Member in situations where an individual makes a disclosure that indicates they are a danger to themselves or any other person.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

“Critical Incident” means a traumatic event that generates, or has the potential to generate, such intense emotional energy that it overwhelms an individual’s coping mechanisms, causing impairment in work or personal activities.

“Critical Incident Stress” means the normal extraordinary physiological and/or psychological responses experienced by an individual who has been exposed to a Critical Incident. It has also been described as “the normal reaction of people experiencing abnormal responses to abnormal events”.

“Critical Incident Stress Psychological Debriefing Session” (Debriefing) means a further intervention to augment the Defusing. A psychological Debriefing is typically scheduled between 24 to 72 hours post incident.

“Critical Incident Defusing Session” (Defusing) means a structured confidential group discussion that is led by at least two members from the trained CIAT Team, within eight hours of the incident.

“Critical Incident Aftercare Team” (CIAT) means the team of specially trained volunteer Members that will facilitate a “Defusing” session with the involved Employees and may assist with psychological Debriefings.

“Critical Incident Aftercare Team Coordinator” (CIAT Coordinator) means the SPS employee appointed by the Deputy Chief Constable Support Services to provide the day-to-day coordination of the CIA Team and their services.

“Cumulative Trauma” means a severe form of anxiety as a result of trauma experienced by an employee who has previously undergone a Critical Incident. This additional trauma may result from:

- (a) exposure to more than one Critical Incident over a period of time;
- (b) comments, actions or reports by supervisors, co-workers, the media or other means;
- (c) exposure to legal proceedings or other forms of review, including internal investigations or investigations being conducted by an external authority; or
- (d) any event that triggers an emotional response

“Employee” means a sworn Member or Civilian Employee appointed by the Surrey Police Board.

“Member” means a sworn Police Officer appointed by the Surrey Police Board.

“Subject Officer” means:

- i. an on-duty Member whose presence, action, or decision is reasonably believed to have been a contributing factor in the death of any person, including in-custody deaths;
- ii. an on-duty Member who has discharged a firearm, where there are reasonable grounds to believe that any person (including a Member) may have been injured by that discharge;

- iii. an on-duty Member whose presence, action, or decision is on reasonable grounds believed to have resulted in injury requiring emergency care by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner and also requiring transfer to a hospital or community medical facility, or
- iv. an off-duty Member whose action is on reasonable grounds believed to have been a contributing factor in the death of any person, or is on reasonable grounds believed to have resulted in injury requiring emergency care by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner and also requiring transfer to a hospital or community medical facility.

“Supervisor” means a Team Leader, Manager, Sergeant, Staff Sergeant, Inspector, Superintendent, Deputy Chief Constable, Chief Constable, and any other person acting in a Supervisory capacity who is accountable for a particular area or shift on behalf of the SPS.