



CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT
IFRC AMERICAS REGIONAL OFFICE, PANAMÁ

Reference: CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT WITHIN FEDERATION
OPERATIONS

Document authorization				
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Definition of a Critical Incident

A situation that, threatens, or has impacted on, the safety / security of Federation personnel, assets or operations to the extent that there is the potential to be a significant disruption or even incapacity to continue to operate.

The term **situation** is used in the definition so as to be sufficiently broad to encompass, specific situations e.g. death of a delegate or third party caused by Federation personnel, accidents with serious or multiple injuries, violation of status agreement, kidnapping; or a major disruptive events such as a building fire or pandemic.



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	Minor Critical Incident	Significant Critical Incident	Major Critical Incident
Description	Incidents that cause minor disruption to the Federation's Regional operations e.g. vehicle accident without serious injury, theft, burglary. ¹	Incidents that cause significant disruption to Federation operations e.g. accidental death of a delegate, accident with serious or multiple injuries etc. ¹	Incident that jeopardizes Federation's operations or that incapacitates the local office's ability to function. e.g. serious deterioration in security situation, multiple loss of life, violation of status agreement, major equipment loss, office fire, pandemic etc. ¹
Management Approach	Security Coordinator and senior manager ² manage the incident, and Director of Zone and Geneva SMT advised through incident reporting procedures.	Security Coordinator and Deputy Director of Region manage incident with advice and if required direction provided by Director of Region and Geneva SMT	Incident managed through Geneva, field teams provide information and act on direction from the critical incident manager, a support team may be deployed in the case of a field incident.
Reporting Requirements	Normal incident report ³	Immediate verbal report via telephone	Immediate verbal report via telephone

¹ The examples given are not exhaustive, but designed to be indicative.

² The term Senior Manager is used as a generic term, dependent on the situation in the field this could be a Head of Operations, Country Representative, Regional Representative, or a FACT/ERU Team Leader; in Geneva it will likely be a Department Head.

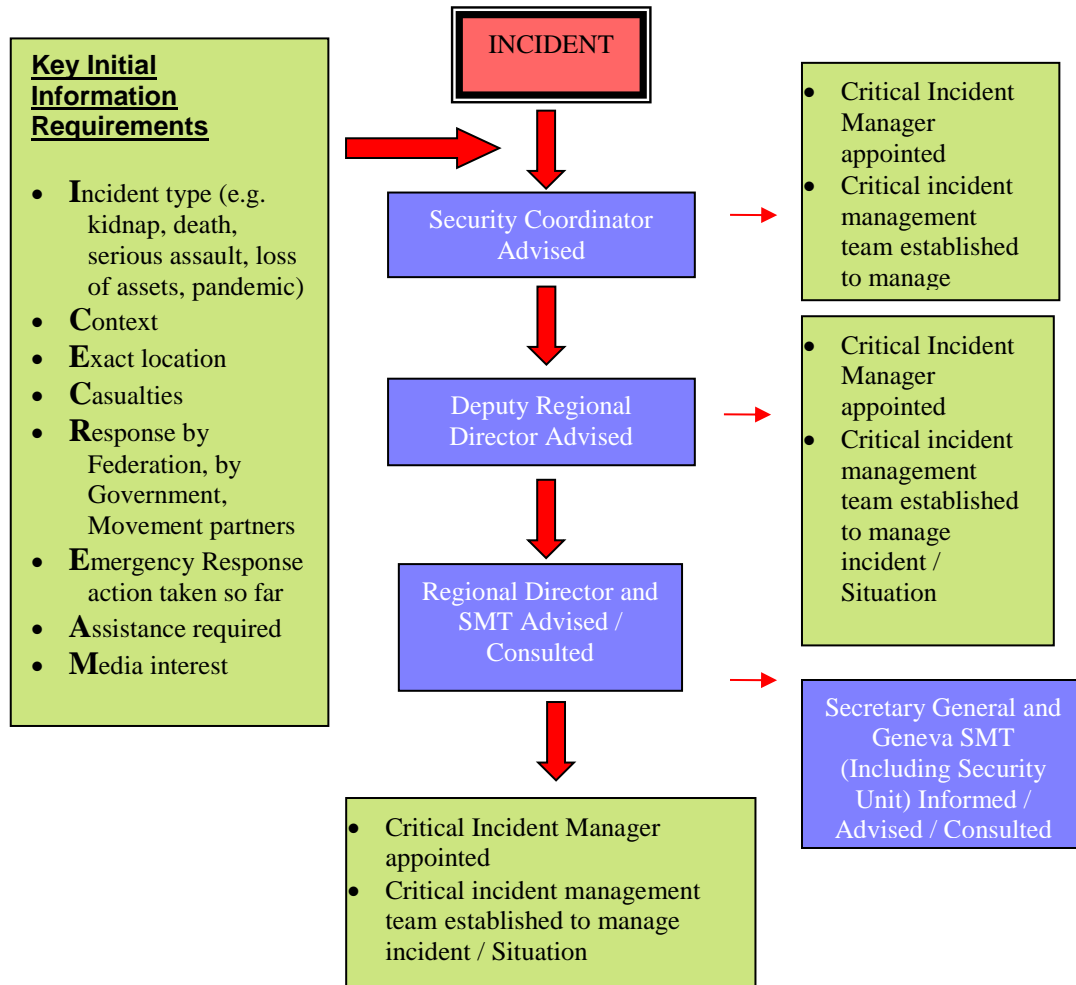
³ Security incident reporting procedures are outlined in the Security Section of the Fed Net - go on Fed Net-secretariat-security and then incident reporting.



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NOTIFICATION AND RESPONSE PROCEDURE

The notification and response procedure for significant and major incidents is as follows:



I. Immediate Response:

The document below outlines the basic procedures to be followed in response to a critical incident within the IFRC AMERICAS REGIONAL OFFICE in Panamá.

- 1) Incident reported to Security Coordinator – Jorge E. Zequeira – 507-6949-5546.
- 2) Security Coordinator calls until one is reached, who then informs the others on this list:

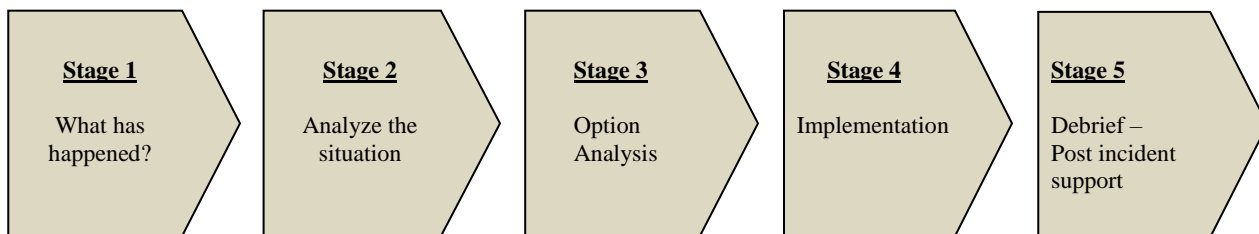


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- Deputy Director of IFRC Americas Regional Office (ARO) - Stephen McAndrew – 507-6677-6520
 - Regional Director of ARO – Walter Cotte - 507-6670-7377
 - Security Unit in Geneva informed – 41 79 217 33 71
 - Panamanian Red Cross Secretary General / President – 507 – 6671-2058
- 3) Security Coordinator contacts local authorities in the area (police, 911, Panama RC, SINAPROC, fire brigade, etc.) and requests assistance.
 - 4) Security Coordinator SMS Alert of incident to all to ensure no more staff members are exposed to the danger.
 - 5) Security Coordinator commences collecting information on the incident to advice the Deputy and Director of Americas Region.
 - 6) Security Coordinator and Administrative Coordinator inform Insurance Provider, GVA and family members (as applicable).
 - 7) Security Coordinator, Director and/or Deputy Director of Region form Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT – including staff members as outlined above), either chairing it himself/herself, or appointing a Critical Incident Manager (CIM), who directs resources as needed.
 - 8) The CIMT takes over all line and operational responsibilities of the incident (as per the process outlined below), report directly to the Director of Region who retains overall authority.

II. Critical Incident Management Process:

Usually includes five stages as per the diagram below:



Stage 1: Establishing What has Happened



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The first action must be to identify whether there *is any immediate action required to protect life, liberty, limb or eyesight – if so this must be taken.*

Verifiable information must be established outlining the details of the incident and an incident log is to be initiated. This is to record the chronology of events, log phone calls, record notes of all meetings and ensure all documents are recorded and filed.

Stage 2: Analyse the situation / Map the playing field

What do you know?

What do you need to know?

What has been done?

What do you need to do?

The primary aim of this stage is to identify the problem and the parameters surrounding the problem:

- RC Movement actors involved (ICRC, IFRC) and current status (locations, operational agreements in force)
- Security issues
- External actors involved
- Country context – current situation (disaster, conflict etc.), infrastructure (transport, medical, food and water, sanitation), capability of Government, status and capability of NS in country, status of Federation in country, limitations on ability to act and operate.
- Legal issues
- Medical issues
- Communications issues
- Media issues
- Determine the end-state objective (injured person evacuated, body repatriated, hostage released)

The CIMT must also decide:

- Whether due to risks to personnel, any programme activities should be suspended or whether personnel should be withdrawn to a more secure location.
- If additional support personnel should be deployed to any field location to assist.
- What information should be circulated internally and externally, and identify any limitations or confidentiality issues.
- If any additional personnel or external specialists should be included in the CIMT.

CIMT members may be assigned specific roles/tasks and responsibilities for managing relations with specific stakeholders.



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Stage 3: Option Analysis

At the start of this stage two questions must be asked:

- Is this situation covered by existing contingency plans – if so, can they be implemented?
- Is the situation severe enough to warrant the activation of a business continuity plan?
- Does the Federation have the internal expertise to manage the incident – if not, where can this be accessed?

If there are no existing contingency plans or no existing continuity plans that can be adapted, then a response plan must be developed. This requires the identification and analysis of options to reach the end-state objective(s). During this stage the following should be considered:

- Only options and factors that contribute to the identified end-state should be discussed and analysed.
- Options should have technical input from all members of the CIMT.
- If technical input is required that is not available from CIMT then it must be obtained.
- Options tested against:
 - Fundamental principles
 - Code of conduct
 - Limitations imposed by country context
 - Resources available to implement
- Preferred option is identified by members including the Security Coordinator, and presented for approval and action of the Americas Director of Region and Panamanian RC Secretary General.

When considering options and having identified the preferred option the CIMT must always consider the fluid nature of the situation and the potential implication this might have – the question ‘**What if?**’ (something changes or something new happens) should constantly be tabled.

Stage 4: Implementation

Implementation of the preferred option should be in the form of a plan. This should:

- Clearly define the objective(s)
- Assign clear roles
- Detail clear coordination aspects – timings, reporting requirements, interaction with other players – ICRC, Panamanian RC and/or external
- Define a clear command and control framework
- Information flow – the CIMT needs to ensure that Federation Media and External Communication Department, ICRC and Panamanian RC are kept informed on the need for control over information to the press/media and information sharing with our



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stakeholders. This might involve information black outs or preparing press lines, media statements and internal information sharing with the Panamanian RC.

The CIMT's role is to monitor the implementation and be prepared to adjust actions and plans as required.

Stage 5: Follow Up/Debrief

After the incident has been resolved a debriefing process is to be implemented. In the first instance, the incident and situation surrounding the incident is to be fully investigated to determine why it occurred, whether it could have been prevented and how to prevent it in the future. Secondly, the debrief is to examine how the incident or situation was managed, in order to determine what can be learned and whether the manner in which it was managed could be improved. This process is to work through the incident chronologically (from start to finish) and examine actions taken at each stage.

- Confirm the incident log and sequence of events is accurate
- Were the actions taken appropriate?
- Were the existing procedures followed and are these procedures appropriate or do they need changing?
- Lessons should be identified and recorded
- Are there any follow-up requirements: e.g. counselling, legal, insurance related?

A post incident report is to be produced and forwarded to senior management.

It is absolutely necessary to ensure support is provided to those directly affected and those closely involved with the situation.

For any other assistance, reports and recommendations please don't hesitate to contact. The undersigned.

Jorge E. Zequeira
Regional Security Coordinator
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