

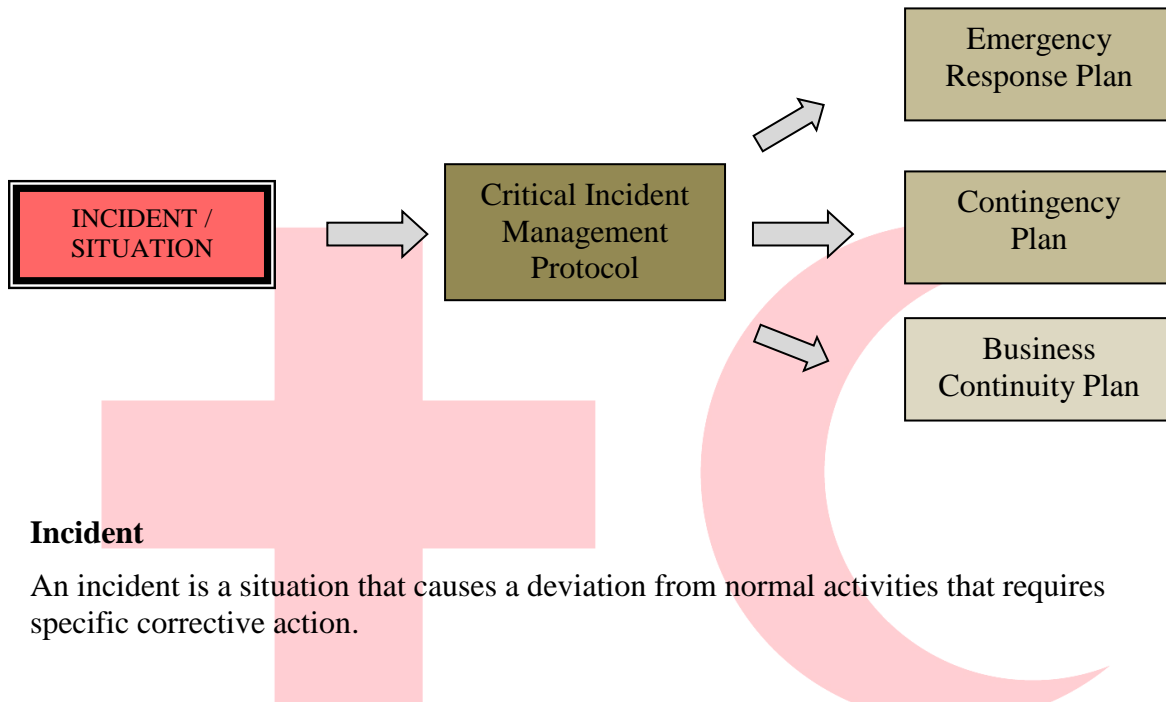
CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

IFRC Haiti Country Cluster Office

INTRODUCTION

International Federation personnel-- including international and local staff, NS personnel and volunteers – operate in a wide range of working environments around the world. By the nature of the work the Federation undertakes, personnel often operate in a higher risk environment. As a result there is a requirement to have procedures to manage situations that may develop due to this higher risk environment.

The actions required to manage a critical incident will vary depending on the situation, however the process involved should follow a predefined sequence.



Incident

An incident is a situation that causes a deviation from normal activities that requires specific corrective action.

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.

	Minor Critical Incident	Significant Critical Incident	Major Critical Incident
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Description	Incidents that cause minor disruption to the Federation's 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	Senior manager ² manages the incident, and Geneva SMT advised through incident reporting procedures.	HoR or in case of Geneva Department Head/Director manages incident with advice and if required direction provided by higher management.	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

I. Immediate Response:

The below is the basic procedure to be followed in response to a Critical Incident within the IFRC Haiti Country Cluster

- 1) Incident reported to Security focal point.
- 2) Security focal point calls (Security Officer: **+5093484-9801 / +5093200-5515**, *if no answer : whatsapp message and then call back up : 3701-6217*) until one is reached, who then informs the others on this list:
 - Head of Cluster (**+509 31707809**)
 - Head of Region (**+507 66707377**)
 - Regional Security (**+507 69495546**)
 - Security Unit in Geneva (**+ 41 22 730 44 45 / Mob: + 41 79 217 33 71**)
 - Health Officer GVA if required (**+41 22 730 43 41/ +41 22 730 42 22**)
- 3) Security Officer contacts local authorities in the area (police: **114**, fire brigade **+50938421111**, etc.) and requests assistance.
- 4) Security focal SMS Alert of incident to all to ensure no more staff are exposed to the danger.
- 5) Security Officer starts collecting information on the incident to advise the HoC.
- 6) HoC informs Insurance Provider, GVA and family members (as applicable).

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.

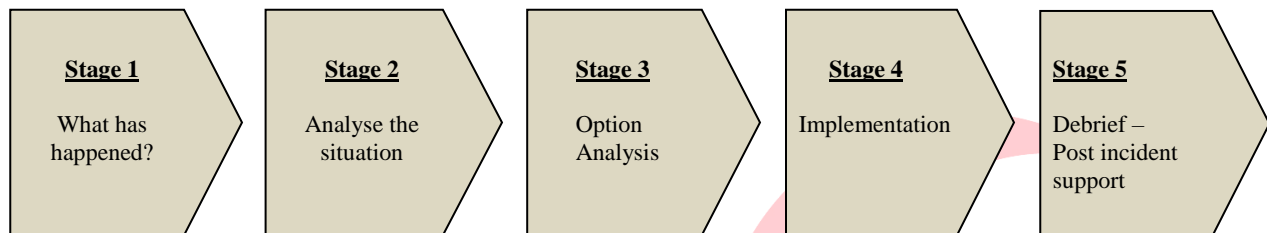
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- 7) HoC forms Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT – including staff members as outlined above), either chairing it himself/herself, or appointing a Critical Incident Manager (CIM), who directs resources as needed.
- 8) The CIMT takes over all line and operational responsibilities of the incident (as per the process outlined below), report directly to the HoC who retains overall authority.

II. Critical Incident Management Process:

Usually includes five stages as per the diagram below:



Stage 1: Establishing What has Happened

The first action must be to identify whether there *is any immediate action required to protect life – 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

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

- RC Movement actors involved (ICRC, NS, PNS) 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
- Legal issues
- Medical issues

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- 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.

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. 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 this must be obtained.
- Options tested against
 - Fundamental principles
 - Code of conduct
 - Limitations imposed by country context
 - Resources available to implement
- Preferred option is identified and presented to the Head of Country Cluster, Regional Director, USG/Director or Secretary General as appropriate for executive decision.

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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
- Assign roles
- Detail clear coordination aspects – timings, reporting requirements, interaction with other players – ICRC, PNS (if any), NS, external
- Define clear command and control framework
- Information flow – the CIMT needs to ensure that Federation Media and External Communication Department, ICRC and NS are kept informed on the need for control over information to the press/media and information sharing with our stakeholders. This might involve information black outs or preparing press lines, media statements and internal information sharing with NS.

The CIMT’s role is to monitor the implementation and be prepared to adjust things if 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 and whether it could have been prevented. Secondly the debrief is to examine how the incident or situation was managed 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 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.