

Mayne Island Improvement District

Critical Incident Stress Management Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Mayne Island Improvement District (MIID) believes in fostering a culture of care and compassion. It believes that employees are most effective when they are supported both in their physical and mental health. As the employer of individuals in emergency services, MIID accepts that Critical Incidents involving their employees will occur from time to time. This policy is intended to foster and maintain the mental and physical health of MIID personnel exposed to potentially traumatic incidents.

SCOPE

All Mayne Island Improvement District Personnel.

OVERVIEW

A critical incident is a traumatic event, which could happen at work or in the community, which can cause a strong emotional reaction with the potential to affect one's ability to cope with the after effect. Critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- Death or serious injury of a colleague in the line of duty;
- Incidents involving the death or serious injury of members of the public, particularly children;
- Incidents where responders know the victims involved;
- Being the victim of physical violence;
- Witnessing violence at an incident or workplace;
- Suicide of a colleague;
- Any incident where there is intensive or negative media coverage; and
- Any other incident deemed critical by the Fire Chief in joint consultation with a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) - trained team member and/or mental health professional.

CISM services offered are mostly a peer-managed and peer-driven process, which can utilize a CISM mental health professional for guidance when needed. Types of interventions that can be held include:

- Preventive training;
- On-scene support;
- Defusing session;
- Debriefing session;
- Critiquing session; and
- Corporate review.

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The program is completely voluntary and the services are available without charge to employees. Any decision on the part of an employee to use the CISM services will not impact on employment or promotional opportunities. An employee may end their association with the CISM services at any time.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Fire Chief shall:

- Ensure that all employees are informed about CISM;
- Encourage employees to recognize their own need for assistance and obtain CISM services and/or contact a trained CISM peer-support colleague to access CISM services;
- Provide all necessary support to employees using CISM services; and
- Provide CISM peer-support colleagues with all necessary training to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities related to CISM.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

At CISM diffusing and/or debriefing sessions only attendance records will be kept. All other information shared or expressed is considered confidential and private.

SERVICES TO FAMILIES

Family members do not normally directly experience the critical incident; however, they do experience how the incident affects their family members.

At the discretion of the Fire Chief and on the recommendation of a CISM mental health professional, counselling services will be made available for family members in situations where mental health issues of an employee are impacting the family and these issues are a reaction to one or more traumatic events that arose out of and in the course of employment with MIID.

PROGRAM LIMITATIONS

CISM does not involve therapy or long-term counselling. If required, counselling and follow-up intervention will be provided through the employer, WorkSafeBC's Critical Incident Response (CIR) Program, and/or WorkSafeBC if a claim for compensation is approved.

An employee may experience critical incidents outside the workplace. Counselling services in these incidents would be accessed through employer provided benefits. The CISM program is intended to only deal with critical incidents that arise out of and in the course of employment with MIID.

In addition to community resources, additional professional counselling services may be available through other group benefit programs offered by MIID.

References:

MIID Confidentiality Agreement;
MIFD O.G. #2.0.01.01

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE

MAYNE ISLAND FIRE RESCUE	O.G.# 2.0.01.01
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PURPOSE:

To ensure the mental health of all Mayne Island Improvement District (MIID) employees.

SCOPE:

All MIID personnel.

PROCEDURE:

Following a traumatic event the officer in charge will conduct a **defusing** as soon as possible following the event and will include all attending personnel. A defusing is a round table meeting of responding personnel directly involved with the event facilitated by a member who will:

- Explain to the attendees the physical, emotional and mental reactions that they are or may soon be experiencing; and
- Provide information on how personnel can take care of their emotional and physical health and resources available to personnel who may require more assistance in doing so;
- Defusing participation is voluntary and strictly confidential.

At completion of debriefing, CISM team will determine further action is required. The Fire Chief or designate will contact Reach Trauma Response Consulting Ltd. and/or the Gulf Islands CISM team and organize a **Debriefing**.

A debriefing is an organized discussion with members of one or more agencies involved in the same critical incident designed to mitigate the potential for long-term emotional trauma facilitated by a CISM trained team or approved mental health professional and will be conducted no later than 72 hrs after the traumatic event.

If CISM team members or an individual personnel member determine that a workplace injury has occurred as a result of a traumatic incident the Fire Chief or designate will contact Worksafe BC and initiate a claim.

CONTACTS:

REACH Trauma Response Consulting Ltd: 1-236-999-7510

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue: 250 537 2531

Worksafe BC: 1-800-624-2928

REFERENCE: MIID CISM Policy

_____ Signature of Fire Chief	This O.G. Replaces: _____
Date of Issue: _____	Issued on: _____
Forwarded to : _____	Admin. Approval: _____