Payette National Forest

2013

AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE

for

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Approved: _/s/ Keith Lannom_________________________________

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This plan to be updated annually by the Forest Safety Officer by January 1

BEFORE THE INCIDENT

Agency Administrator Roles and Responsibilities

1) Each incident will have its own set of circumstances which may or may not require the full implementation of an Incident Command System (except for wildfires). It will be the responsibility of each line officer and the first responder(s) to determine the need for an incident organization.

2) In the event that it has been determined that the incident is significant in scope, a Delegation of Authority for the established incident management team will be developed. A template delegation should be created and kept on file. It can be edited at the time of the incident to reflect specific complexity and scope.

3) Ensure that ALL Forest employees have current emergency information on file (secured yet accessible). Update information as seasonals are hired and ensure information for permanent employees is updated annually. **(See Appendix A, Employee Emergency Notification Form)**

4) Family liaison(s) need to be identified for when serious injuries/fatalities occur. Ideally, local personnel should fill this role. The roles and responsibilities of the family liaison can be located in the **Family Liaision section** of this document.

5) Understand initial response and notification procedures. **(Appendix B, Flowchart and Notification Process)**

6) It is recommended that training and exercises focusing on interagency cooperation, coordination, and incident management be conducted annually in order to prepare for these kind of incidents.

7) Only personnel who are capable, organized, and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities will be designated to manage critical incidents. Many of these individuals already have qualifications through the Incident Qualifications Certification Sysytem (IQCS) which is managed by the Fire and Aviation Organization.

Agency Notification and Reporting

1) The list located in **Appendix D** should be used in order to assure that all priority officials have been contacted.

2) For wildland fire fatalities, entrapments, and burnovers, notify the National Interagency Coordination Center (208-387-5400) within 24 hours. Use NWCG Form PMS 405-1 found at:

http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/forms_otr/forms_otr.htm. The form is also found with the Agency Reporting Log in **Appendix C**. Individual agency follow-up is still required by the Agency Administrator.

3) Ensure notification of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) area office within eight hours for:
   - Death of any employee from work-related incident.
   - Inpatient hospitalization of three or more employees as a result of a work related incident.
   - Contact: Boise OSHA Office (208) 321-2960

4) Establish a process/protocol for notification of next of kin in case of serious injury or death; coordinate with local authorities. **Appendix F, Fatality/Serious Injury Notification Guide**, provides clear direction on how to approach this process. It should be used as a guide when confronted with having to make this type of notification.

Family Support Team

1) Depending upon the number of fatalities or severe injuries, the Forest may need to consider assembling a Family Support Team to coordinate the activities of the individual Family Liaisons. Team members would include a Team Leader, Family Liaisons, and Forest Supervisor or representative.

Family Liaison

2) Identify resources that are available to assist the designated family liaison(s). The **Family Liaison section** of this document should be used as a reference in order to select and provide guidance to these individuals.

3) Identify internal policies that may apply when assisting the family. For example:

   - A work-related death autopsy may be necessary to ensure family death benefit.
   - Determine what death benefits (funeral and burial costs) would be covered by the agency.
   - Procedures for processing personnel papers.
   - Determine what advice should be given for filing claims.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

1) Ensure that CISM protocols and resources are identified prior to the occurrence of a critical incident.

   - Identify local/regional/area CISM resources (e.g., peer support, defusing, debriefing).

- CISM resources should be ordered through the Payette Dispatch Center. They will coordinate with the Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center (EGBCC) in locating the necessary resource(s). Further information regarding CISM can be found in Supplement 2 of the Great Basin Mobilization Guide.
- Contact CISM resources to discuss activation/capabilities/costs.

2) The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and its capabilities in:

- Grief counseling
- Family support
- Critical incident stress support can be located by accessing the Forest Service ASC - Human Resources Management website through your intranet site.
- Information regarding EAP can be found at: http://fsweb.r4.fs.fed.us/unit/cr/eac/eap/index.shtml

Information and Communications

1) Develop critical incident communication procedures as part of a local emergency operating plan. Include:

- Agency jurisdiction
- Directory of local/regional/national support
- Directory of agency experts
  - Qualified Public Information Officer or equivalent.
  - Some agencies may have designated crisis communication teams.
  - Experienced crisis communicators may be available under contract or through special hiring authorities.
- Key spokespersons
- List of communication tools and resources needed
- Process for setting up communication center
- Coordination of information dissemination
- Coordinate communication process with accident investigation team

2) Create media contact lists; include phone and FAX numbers.

3) Identify technical expertise to produce maps and graphics (e.g., directions for family visits to fatality site, directions to memorial service).

4) Ensure Public Information Officers receive appropriate formal training (including trainee assignments) and participate in simulation exercises.

Administration

1) Create a draft Delegation(s) of Authority to manage the critical incident.
2) Create, review, update, and/or renegotiate Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs), Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs), contracts, and other procurement documents that support the management of serious injuries or fatalities. These may include:

   - Local law enforcement agencies
   - Medical facilities
   - Counseling/CISM services
   - Lodging facilities

3) Establish a resource list of experts:

   - Personal claims
   - Tort claims
   - Workers' compensation
   - Death benefits (e.g., Department of Justice's Public Safety Officer's Benefits)

4) Establish a list of the nearest medical facilities, burn/trauma centers, hours of operation and transport capabilities. **(Appendix D, Key Contact List)**

5) Ensure that emergency notification information is periodically reviewed and updated (must have street addresses; no PO boxes) and that this information is easily accessible in an emergency.

6) Casual hires/ADs/EFFs are agency employees and are the responsibility of the hiring unit.

   - Refer to NWCG Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH).
   - Ensure accurate emergency contact information is recorded on all Fire Time Reports (OF-288).

7) Reference respective agency guides (e.g., employee casualty guide) that contain:

   - Benefits available for type of employment.
   - How to file a claim.
   - When the Social Security Administration (SSA) should be contacted.

Investigations

1) Become familiar with laws/regulations pertaining to local/county/state/tribal jurisdictions and their roles/responsibilities for investigating critical incidents.

2) Review the Forest Service Accident Investigation Guide (2005 edition). This guide may be found at: http://www.nifc.gov/fireInfo/fireInfo_documents/FS_Accident_Investigation_Guide_2005.pdf.

3) Meet/develop rapport with key local law enforcement administrators (e.g., sheriff, police chief).

4) Conduct joint training and simulation exercises, where possible, with cooperators.

5) Participate in local emergency response and/or public safety council meetings on a regular basis.

DURING THE INCIDENT

Agency Administrator Roles and Responsibilities

1) Provide for and emphasize the treatment and care of survivors, co-workers, and their families.
2) Determine the scope of the incident, identify the involved jurisdictions, and implement initial actions.
3) Determine the capabilities and limitations of your organization and request assistance (e.g., neighboring unit, National, State or Regional offices, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation LAST Teams).
4) As warranted, provide a Delegation of Authority and objectives for the management of the critical incident.
5) Determine the level of management required by using pre-identified criteria for implementation of ICS organizational structure.
6) Implement reporting/notification procedures **(Appendix C, Agency Reporting Log)**. Participate personally whenever possible.
7) Identify key contacts during the critical incident **(Appendix D, Key Contact List).**
8) When off-unit employees are involved, personally contact Agency Administrator for victim's home duty station with as much information as possible, including names and phone numbers of contacts.
9) Prepare for accident investigation **(see Accident Investigation Protocol section of this document)**.
10) Determine the need for and level of Critical Incident Stress management (CISM) and implement accordingly. Advise SAIT of CISM actions taken.
11) Monitor the management of the critical incident. Be readily available to provide direction, guidance and support as needed.

Initial Action Checklist

1) Ensure that the rescue/recovery response has been activated. Conduct a risk assessment on rescue/recovery operations. For traumatic injuries, including burn injuries, ensure that agency protocols are followed **(see Serious Burn Information section of this document)**.
2) Gather and verify initial information which includes:
   - ☐ **Who:** Full names of victims, including nicknames.
   - ☐ **When:** Approximate time and date of accident.
   - ☐ **What:** Suspected cause of injury or death.
   - ☐ **Where:** Location of accident (incident name, closest town, jurisdiction, or other geographic information).

3) Implement local emergency response plan and critical incident communications procedures **(see Communications Information section of this document)**.
   - Ensure that communications are controlled to guarantee the privacy of victims' names until next of kin are notified.
   - Instruct incident personnel not to use communication methods that could compromise privacy and not to use names of victims if communications can be monitored.

4) For agency employees from your unit:
   - Obtain victims' personal emergency notification information and make notification to next of kin **(Appendix F, Fatality/Serious Injury Notification Guide)**.

5) **For Payette NF employees killed or severely injured on another unit:**
   - The Forest will designate an appropriate number of employees to travel to incident site to assist with communications, survivor needs, and act as a Payette Forest representative. **(Appendix G, Protocol for Handing Off-Unit Fatalities or Serious Injuries)**

6) **For off-unit or other agency employees**:
   - Communicate with off-unit victims' home duty stations until his/her liaison arrives to coordinate with the on-scene agency.

7) In case of serious injury or death to a Native American, immediately contact the home tribal leadership for cultural considerations.

Agency Notification and Reporting (Internal Key Contact – [redacted])

1) Implement agency notification procedures **(Appendix C, Agency Reporting Log)**.
2) Prior to official notification to next of kin, do not release victims' names **(Appendix F, Fatality/Serious Injury Notification Guide)**.
3) Coordinate with law enforcement, coroner, or medical examiner **(see Accident Investigation Protocol section of this document)**.
4) Immediately notify critical incident Public Affairs Officer when family and other internal notification is complete so release of information to the public may proceed in a timely manner.
   - Initial agency press release will be made by the designated Public Affairs Officer to preserve the integrity of the notification process.
   - Recognize that impacts to the local communities and others may be significant, depending on the nature of the incident.
   - State only the facts; DO NOT SPECULATE!
   - Keep employees (including injured survivors) informed about the details of the incident as well as a schedule of events to follow. Depending on the extent of the incident, consider opening an incident public relations office to assist with the amount of information that is likely to be associated with the incident.

Family Liaison (Internal Key Contact – Alexis Martin)

1) Designate family liaison(s).
   - Consideration should be given to unique circumstances and need for multiple family liaisons.
   - Assign one liaison per family, but consider the need for other individuals to assist.
   - Allow the designated family liaison the opportunity to decline the assignment.
   - Be cognizant of any previous relationship between the family and liaison – chose someone not too close to the family
   - Make conscience decisions on who is designated as a Family Liaison – the person needs to understand how to work within the policy and still get needs attended to.
2) Coordinate communications among liaisons.
3) The family liaison should be available to the family within the first 24 hours.
   - Consider the need for appropriate representatives at locations where family members may be present (e.g., hospitals, helicopter/ambulance shuttle points) to assist with their needs.
4) Facilitate family attendance at agency sponsored events (e.g., memorials).
5) Consider facilitating networking between families, survivors, and co-workers.
6) Provide family members access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Critical Incident Stress Management (Internal Key Contact – [redacted])

1) As needed, activate CISM resources.
2) For critical incidents that occur during incidents managed by an Incident Management Team (IMT), the Human Resource Specialist, if assigned, may be able to help the local unit with identifying CISM needs. All CISM coordination should go through the Payette Dispatch Center
3) Coordinate CISM logistics:
   - Location away from incident and media.
   - Transportation
   - Refreshments
   - Lodging
4) Ensure that CISM resources can handle the magnitude of debriefing requirements.
   - Identify approximate number of employees that have a need for CISM services.
   - Contact CISM resources and discuss approximate numbers of participating employees, time frames for mobilization and conducting CISM sessions, and participant limits per session.
5) CISM is generally implemented within 48-72 hours of the critical event.
   - Initial CISM provided to personnel directly involved in the incident (e.g., survivors, rescue workers, IMT members, dispatchers, etc.).
   - Relieve involved personnel from external responsibilities.
   - Keep crews together, if possible.
   - Hold separate sessions for personnel involved in the immediate critical incident and outside peers/co-workers.

<u>Information and Communications</u> (Internal Key Contact – [redacted])

1. Implement critical incident communication procedures. Needs may vary based on complexity of the critical incident. **(see Communication Information section of this document)**
   - Develop a communication strategy.
   - Set up a communication center if the complexity of the incident dictates such.
   - Publicize information "Hotline" with number and location in order to assist with information flow.
   - Consider establishing a website to provide current incident information.
2. Place order(s) for qualified incident information officer(s). Designate a lead Public Information Officer. It would be better to be overstaffed than understaffed.
3. Confirm roles and responsibilities and ensure that appropriate coordination occurs.
   - Local unit PIO.
   - Incident Management Team PIO of team is/if assigned.
   - Cooperator information officers.
   - Incoming critical incident information resources.
   - Serious Accident Investigation Team's (SAIT) information officers.
4. Establish approval process for release of information.
   - Designate a primary spokesperson for external release of information.
   - Provide information to victim/family first. Respond quickly and compassionately.
   - Names of fatality victims can be released as soon as next of kin have been notified.
   - Never release names of injured or missing victims.
5. Brief receptionists, dispatchers, and others on routing/handling of incoming calls and visitors. Provide PIO assistance at dispatch centers and reception areas, if appropriate.
6. Make immediate contact with local media and develop positive relationships with them.
7. Be prepared to respond to media inquiries within minutes. Use the media to deliver important messages to the public.
   - Develop an initial prepared statement.
   - Show concern.
   - Say what is being done.
   - Tell what resources responded.
   - Give any verified, releasable facts that are available.
   - Report current status.
   - Do not speculate or talk off the record. State only the facts.
   - Confirm the obvious.
   - Discuss initiation of investigation/review, if appropriate.
   - Stress that safety of rescue crews, SAIT, community, and others is priority number one.
   - Mention environmental impacts, if appropriate.
   - Thank cooperators.
   - Inform the public what they can do to help.

8. Ensure appropriate communication with:
    - Internal – within local unit
    - Interagency – agency cooperators
    - External – general public, media, public officials
9. Document all events, contacts, etc. – could include:
    - Chronology
    - Contact log
    - Photos
10. Have maps and graphics available.
11. Use media to get messages to the public. Develop an initial prepared statement.
    - Need for volunteers, along with contact point, if appropriate.
    - Safety messages
    - Need for cooperation, road closures, etc.
    - Fire restrictions
    - Wildland/urban interface issues
12. Ensure technical experts (e.g., safety, aviation, fire behavior) are available and prepared for media interviews.
13. Provide and coordinate media access to the incident site in cooperation with the IMT and SAIT.
    - Brief media on incident site and air restrictions.
    - Consider media pool arrangements.
14. Anticipate media's needs.
    - Logistical (phones, work areas)
    - Photos/biography(s) of victim(s)
    - Deadlines
    - Protective gear
    - Photo and video opportunities
    - Interviews
15. Take advantage of existing newsletters and other established communications tools.
16. Keep the community and affected landowners/users informed and involved. Establish a community liaison position as necessary.
17. Provide PIO support through the family liaison, for victims, families, and survivors; local distant hospitals.
18. Protect the rights of those employees who do not want media contact.
19. Coordinate media access at funerals, memorial services, etc., with family liaison(s).
20. Prepare agency condolence letters within 24 hours, if possible. Coordinate at all levels within the agency.

21. Prepare for official visits (top agency management, governor, mayor, members of congress).
    - Briefing material, facts/statistics about the area, talking points, or speeches, if appropriate.
    - Assign liaisons/escorts.
    - Arrange for transportation.
    - Schedule and facilitate press conference(s), if desired.
    - Provide mechanism for keeping them informed/involved.

<u>Administration</u> (Internal Key Contact – [redacted])

1. Develop additional Delegation(s) of Authority, MOUs, MOAs, BPs and other agreements as required.
2. Evaluate local unit's added workload and request assistance as needed.
    - Request help from people who have experience in this type of incident.
    - Request additional personnel to maintain daily operations.
    - Consider requesting relief from identified work targets for affected personnel.
    - Designate individual(s) to take the lead in preparing/processing required paperwork. Worker's compensation
3. Death benefits (Provide a benefits package to the families so they are aware of all entitlements). (**Appendix H, Initiation of Benefits Checklist)**
    - Department of Justice's Public Safety Officer's Benefit
4. Designate a records person familiar with documentation needs and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations.
5. Designate a single source for administrative record keeping and tracking throughout the critical incident.
6. Designate individual(s) to coordinate and be responsible for securing, gathering, and returning personal items, including vehicles and items from lockers or desks.
7. Identify a fiscal representative to give advice on administrative questions associated with:
    - Paying travel costs of family members.
    - Transportation costs for the deceased.
    - Funerals and memorials.
    - Other funding questions that may arise.
8. Assist Serious Accident Investigation Team (SAIT) as needed.

Investigations (Internal Key Contact – [redacted]

1. Ensure the investigation team(s) receives a thorough briefing about:
    - What happened – review the initial report.
    - Jurisdictions involved
    - Current activities
        - Search and Rescue
        - Other investigations
    - Lists of personnel involved (injuries, fatalities, etc.)
        - Status
        - Location
        - How to contact
        - Agency
    - Key officials
    - Cooperators
    - Safety Officers
    - Criminal/civil implications
2. If a fatality or serious injury has occurred, a SAIT will likely be appointed by a higher-level official. The local Agency Administrator should be prepared to host and cooperate with the SAIT.
3. Clarify and agree upon roles, responsibilities, authorities, and objectives.
    - Determine who provides Delegation(s) of Authority (at what level of organization).
    - Determine how public information will be handled and designate a spokesperson.
4. Coordinate with SAIT in forwarding pertinent safety information through agency channels (e.g., preliminary reports, safety alerts, etc.).
5. Identify a local unit agency law enforcement officer available to serve as a liaison to local law enforcement entities.
6. In the case of a SAIT, the Forest will assign an employee to serve as a liaison.
7. In the case of an OSHA investigation, a Line or Staff Officer will be assigned to serve as a liaison. One of the duties of the individual will be to serve as a liaison between multiple agencies and the appropriate unit manager when scheduling interviews.
8. Depending of nature of incident, consider using a Facilitated Learning Analysis.

AFTER THE INCIDENT

Agency Administrator Roles and Responsibilities

1. Ensure that key individuals (families, survivors and other appropriate individuals) are briefed on the accident investigation report prior to its release.
2. When accident investigation reports are released, make subject-matter experts available to answer families' questions and concerns.
3. Debrief and release CISM providers.
4. Monitor stress reactions and cumulative stress in agency employees, especially during:
   - Release of investigative reports and incident management review reports.
   - Anniversary dates
   - Memorial services
5. Provide Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other sources for assistance.
6. Ensure that administrative requirements for affected employees and families (e.g., compensation for claims, benefits) are expedited.
7. Conduct an After Action Review (AAR) of the management of the critical incident. Develop recommendations for improvement and incorporate into existing plans and share lessons learned.
   - Address how well agency worked with local, state, and federal cooperators.
   - Determine if the local emergency plan was effective.
   - Identify weak areas.
   - Update this plan as necessary.
8. Follow-up on recommendations/corrective actions from accident investigation reports.

Family Liaison (Internal Key Contact – [redacted])

1. Continue working with family members concerning:
   - Claims and benefits
   - Information requests (e.g., media interviews)
   - Visiting site of incident.
   - Assistance with writing obituary as requested.
   - Funeral arrangements
   - Ensure family receives personal property of deceased family member.
2. Ensure that family liaison(s) receive debriefing/stress counseling as necessary.
3. Continue to communicate regularly with families, but establish a mutually agreed-upon conclusion to official involvement.
4. Provide family with information on follow-up resources (e.g., Wildland Firefighter Foundation).
5. Brief family on the potential of future contacts (e.g., media attention during anniversaries).

<u>Information and Communications</u> (Internal Key Contact – [redacted])

1. Develop a communication transition plan to ensure the dissemination of information regarding the critical incident.
    - Address continuing impacts, staff rides, visitors, traffic, media, production companies, etc.
    - Identify potential need for follow-up committee.
    - Potential requests for dedication memorials (plaques and statues).
    - Plan for facilitating return visits to the incident site by family members/survivors/visitors.
    - Evaluate public information activities; adjust communication plan as appropriate.
    - Develop mechanism for dissemination for follow-up information to family members/survivors.
2. Prepare "Thank you" letters and commendations.
3. Complete any pending documentation.

<u>Administration</u> (Internal Key Contact – [redacted])

1. Follow-up with designated Freedom of Information Act contact person for the archiving and dissemination of information.
2. Assist survivors and family members with paperwork as necessary.
    - Worker's Compensation benefits
    - Death Benefits
    - Other benefits as applicable.
3. If requested, provide the process for filing tort claims.
4. Obtain contact information for fiscal and contracting experts who were assigned during the critical incident.

<u>Investigations</u> (Internal Key Contacts – [redacted])

- Ensure that the accident investigation team closes out with:
    - Agency Administrator
    - Agency officials at appropriate levels.