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# ***LRD Regional Park Ranger Conference***

*Covington, Kentucky  
23 – 25 October 2007*

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# **US Army Corps of Engineers Critical Incident Stress Management Program**

*Tuesday 23 October 2007  
13:00 – 13:45 Hours*

*Presenter: Dr. Michael A. Loesch  
NRM Program Manager & Peer Supporter  
Filling in for Melissa Salsgiver*

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## ***CISM***



- September 5, 2003 - CISM PDT authorized by LTG Flowers – establish a model national CISM program for potential implementation.
- LRD was represented on the national team by Dr. Michael Loesch, LRD and Melissa Salsgiver, LRP

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## ***Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)***



- A peer-driven stress management program to include pre-crisis preparation, stress education, and intervention.
- It helps normal people recover more quickly from normal reactions to abnormally stressful events!
- Complements and supplements the Employee Assistance Program.

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## Critical Incident



- A Critical Incident is:
  - an event or series of events that overwhelms one's normal coping skills



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## CISM Advantages



- CISM is an excellent first step for people needing someone to talk to but are reluctant to seek out a mental health professional.
- CISM can be present in daily situations where the mental health professional often cannot go.
- CISM is analogous to first aid. It has the potential to mitigate initial emotional reactions from going on to becoming serious psychological symptoms requiring longer term clinical therapy.

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## CISM Response Examples



- **Local Incident**
  - Line of Duty Death/Suicide
  - Serious employee accidents
  - Public Fatalities
- **Civil Emergencies**
  - Earthquake, Hurricane, Terrorist, Floods
- **Civilian Deployment to War Zones**
  - Iraq and Afghanistan

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## *What is Crisis Intervention*



- **Temporary**, but **Active** and **Supportive** entry into the life of individuals or groups during extreme stress.

**“Emotional First Aid”**

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## ***Critical Incident Stress Management:***



- A comprehensive, systematic and **integrated multi-tactic crisis intervention approach** to manage critical incident stress after traumatic events.
- Model developed by Jeffrey Mitchell, Ph.D., and George S. Everly, Ph.D., at the University of Maryland

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## ***CISM Interventions – The Tool Box***



- Pre-crisis preparation
- Demobilizations
- Crisis Management Briefings
- Defusings
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD)
- Individual Crisis Intervention
- Follow-up – handing off

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## *Interventions – Application of Tools*



- Model used by the Corps is one advocated by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF)
- Our Peer teams strictly follow ICISF protocols
- All Peer supporters trained in these protocols
- All current supporters have completed at least three (3) ICISF officially sanctioned courses

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## *Goals -*



- Mitigate impact of the event
- Facilitate normal recovery process in normal people who are having normal reactions to abnormal events
- Restore adaptive functioning

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## *Who Uses CISM*



- American/International Red Cross
- National Park Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- FAA
- EPA
- FEMA
- Many Airlines
- Emergency Medical Services
- Motorola Communications
- United Auto Workers
- US Navy
- US Air Force
- US Coast Guard
- US Army
- US Dept. of Agriculture
- Homeland Security
- FBI
- Police Depts.
- National and International Relief Agencies
- Martin Marietta Corp.

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## *Why Should We Worry About Critical Incident Stress?*



- Decline in Productivity
- Increased sick leave
- Functional Impairment
- Stress Disorders
- Increased use of drugs and alcohol
- Loss of employee from organization
- **Bottom line – There is a direct connection between stress and one's health and productivity.**

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## ***CISM and EAP***



- CISM complements and supplements the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- CISM does not duplicate the EAP program.
  - CISM is designed to enable handoffs to the EAP.
- A mental health professional/trauma specialist participates in CISD interventions.
- Follow Up with affected employees 30 days post-incident.

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## ***Peer Support and Employee Assistance Program***



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|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <u>Peer Support</u></li><li>• Crisis Intervention and Education<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Immediate short term</li><li>– 1-2 visits</li></ul></li><li>• Emphasis<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Prevention &amp; Education</li></ul></li><li>• On location Corps-wide support</li><li>• Provide EAP contact information</li><li>• Peer Supporter drives the process</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <u>Employee Assistance Program</u></li><li>• Therapy<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Long term</li><li>– 12 or more visits</li></ul></li><li>• Emphasis<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Treatment</li></ul></li><li>• Clinical Setting</li><li>• Symptoms Worsen<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Treatment continues</li></ul></li><li>• Therapist drives the process</li></ul> |
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## *CISM Peer Support Team*



- The CISM Peer Support Team consists of US Army Corps of Engineers employee volunteers trained in CISM interventions.
- The CISM Team provides information about critical incidents and stress reactions that employees can use to help identify healthy life choices. The team provides an atmosphere of concern and caring as well as identifying personal options for dealing with stress.

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## *CISM*



- November 2005 – First national deployment of National CISM team.
  - Louisiana Recovery Field Office (Katrina and Rita)
  - What event prompted the request
  - Commander, Safety Officer and HQ Safety
  - First FEMA tasker for COE CISM team

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## CISM



- 10 peer supporters rotated in and out of the LA RFO from 3 November 2005 through 24 February 2006. Maximum of 4 peer supporters deployed at any time
- 364 individual support sessions
- 62 CISM assessment interviews
- 1,116 attended pre-briefings
- Distributed 3,000 copies CISM educational materials
- 42 crisis management briefings with 2,536 participants
- 12 supervisory referrals in one day
- 16,000 vehicles miles taking the CISM program to field sites
- 2,172 follow-up e-mails to employees who have returned from deployment for reach back

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## CISM



- May 15, 2006 - LTG Strock authorized nation wide implementation of a CISM program
- Implemented by the Program Management Team

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## ***Program Management Team:***



- Co-Program Proponents USACE HQ -  
(OPs Steve Austin and HR not presently filled)
- Co-Program Managers SWD – (Larry Bogue and Terry Holt)
- Subject Matter Experts – MSCs
- CISM Professional Contract Consultant – Cindy Bethany
- USACE HQ Command Chaplain – Col. Munn
- Emergency Support Function (ESF #3)
- Office of Council

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## ***Program Management Team Focus***



- Training review and scheduling
- FY08-FY09 Funding and execution
- Deployment reviews
- Activation Triggers
- Marketing
- Internal Teams
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Cindy Bethany, COE CISM Consultant overview

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## ***Participating Major Subordinate Commands***



- Southwestern Division – Chris Smith and also the National Operations Center
- Trans-Atlantic Command – Tom Waters
- South Pacific Division – Phillip Turner
- North Atlantic Command – Ken Kovacs
- Mississippi Valley Division – Mark Roderick
- Pacific Ocean Division – Bruce Barrett
- Great Lakes & Ohio River Division – Melissa Salsgiver
- South Atlantic Division – non-participating
- Northwestern division – non-participating

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## ***LRD Status***



- November 2006 LRD decided to participate division wide (7 Districts)
- SME – Melissa Salsgiver, LRP
- Alternate SME, Dr. Mike Loesch, LRD
- Trained three additional peer supporters (1 LRB and 2 LRH) Total of 5 trained in LRD
- Next basic training is to be determined

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## CISM



- February 2007 – First training for national cadre of peer supporters, Fort Worth, TX
- LRD Peer Supporters:
  - Patrina Adkins, Administrative Assistant - LRH
  - Michele L. Hope, Archeologist/Project Mgr – LRB
  - Dr. Michael Loesch, LRD-PDS-O
  - Melissa Salsgiver, Supervisory Park Ranger, LRP
  - Jennifer R. Walker, Regulatory Project Mgr – LRH

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## Employee Comments



- "Some folks have stigmas with regard to seeking counseling. Your group provides a gentle alternative. The more training on CISM that you can get, all the better. "
- "I truly hope that this program remains intact, for lack of a better term, and, unfortunately, I feel that you all may be needed again in the near future to help with acute stressful incidents related to the war. "
- "Having the opportunity to depend on the peer support of the CISM team is a clear example of People, Process, and Communication."
- "I view it as Corps employees helping their own."
- "It is a helpful and very worthwhile team to have available to COE members especially during stressful times."

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## QUESTIONS



- What to read more about the COE CISM Program?
- Interested in being part of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Team?
- Would like a CISM program presentation for a group?
- As a supervisor, not sure if you should support an interested staff member?
- Then contact Melissa Salsgiver, LRP or Dr. Michael Loesch LRD

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## Summary



The CISM program supports the Corps to be one team  
"Relevant, Ready, Responsive, and Reliable".

As LTG Strock stated:

" As we move forward, we will be one team focused on taking care of our people. This includes leaders ensuring employees have the right tools and meaningful work in a safe environment. It also includes teammates taking care of each other and employees living a healthy and balanced lifestyle."

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