Southwestern Division Critical Incident Stress Management

Program Manual

20 March 2002

1. <u>Purpose:</u> This program manual implements the Department of the Army, Southwestern Division, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Peer Supporters Program throughout the Southwestern Division. All employees will have access to this program.

2. <u>Applicability:</u> This program manual is applicable to all personnel assigned to the Southwestern Division, recognizing the Corps of Engineer's many mission roles, and its needs for addressing critical stress events within the organization.

3. **<u>General:</u>**

a. Highly dedicated and professional personnel, particularly those performing certain jobs and functions, are susceptible to the toll that unique stressors encountered in their occupations may take on the quality of their lives. The nature of their jobs may expose these individuals to stress, either routinely or periodically, which the individuals may or may not be able to resolve satisfactorily by themselves.

b. Factors that cause stress in one individual may not in another. Research has shown however, that only a small percentage of individuals are unaffected by job stressors. Many factors can affect an individual's response to stress, such as personal qualities, past experiences, factors specific to the stressor, and the available support resources.

c. The design of an effective CISM Program is to educate personnel about the effects of stress, to support the physical and mental health of employees, to facilitate employee's in selecting healthy life choices and options, and to insure that all employees are treated with dignity and respect during crisis situations.

d. CISM is NOT therapy as practiced by mental health professionals.

It may be considered as a form of emotional triage, intervention, emotional first aid, and possible referral.

4. **Implementation.** All commanders within SWD are responsible for fully implementing and supporting this program. Supervisors will be proactive in providing their employees with information regarding critical incident stress management, including the availability of peer support and Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources.

5. **Policy.**

a. This manual will guide Commanders in fully implementing and utilizing all CISM and Peer Support Programs.

b. Commanders will utilize the SWD CISM Critical Incident Program Management Team (CIPMT) as a resource for strategic and proactive deployment of the CISM program.

6. Definitions:

a. Critical Incident: Any situation faced by employees which causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions which may have the potential to interfere with their ability to function either immediately or post-event. Any incident, regardless of the type, may be defined as "critical" if unusually strong emotions are generated in the involved personnel.

b. Significant Events: These include, but are not limited to, incidents involving loss of life or serious injury (especially when associated with children), direct contact with dying people, incidents of mass casualties, injury or death of a co-worker or family member, prolonged body recovery operations, extended flood fight, emergency management operations, or extreme exposures to disaster relief work that require long term expenditures of physical and emotional energy, and operations that attract extremely unusual or negative attention from the news media.

c. Individual Reaction: Affects will vary with each individual and depend upon on the frame of mind, feeling at the time of the event, personal past events that trigger emotions, or the suddenness or intensity of the event.

Reactions may include physical, mental or emotional symptoms, or combinations of each.

d. Program Personnel Designations:

(a) **Peer Supporter**– An individual employed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that has volunteered to serve and to receive approved training in the area of critical incident stress management for the purposes of peer support. Upon completion of such training this individual may be sent to carry out approved critical incident stress interventions.

(b) **Critical Incident Program Management Team (CIPMT)**– A group of Corps' Employees representing the Southwestern Division office and each District designated with the responsibility of program management.

(c) **Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)-** A team of peer supporters assembled by the CIPMT and sent onsite to carry out specific critical stress interventions.

7. Program Description:

a. CISM Education: An aggressive CISM orientation/information effort is essential to introduce and maintain program visibility within the Southwestern Division of the US Army Corps of Engineers. Information may be distributed through manager/supervisor briefings, the SWD and District intranet sites, EAP presentations and employee briefings, ranger conferences, and SWD-produced media resources. At minimum, educational programs should include the following:

(a) The nature of stress
(b) Specific job stressors
(c) Causes of critical incident stress
(d) Signs and symptoms of stress
(e) Survival strategies of stress
(f) The SWD Critical Incident Stress Management Program

(g) Access to the SWD CISM Program

b. Core Elements of CISM Interventions: CISM interventions are multifaceted and can be applied to either individual, group, or organizational needs. The following chart describes the versatility of the potential support interventions.

Intervention	Timing	Activation	Target/Focus	Format
Critical Incident Stress Defusing (Defusing)	Post-crises 8-12 hours	Symptom or Event Driven	Mitigation of symptoms. Possible closure. Triage.	Small groups
Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)	Post-crises 1-2 days 3-4 weeks post-mass disaster	Symptom or event driven.	Symptom mitigation. Facilitate psychological closure. Triage	Small groups
Individual crises intervention 1:1	Anytime	Usually symptom driven.	Symptom mitigation. Return to functioning, if possible or referral if needed.	Individuals
Pre-crises preparation and education	Pre-crises	Anticipation of a crises response.	Target expectations. Improve coping skills and stress management	Groups dealing with emergency operations and mass disasters.
Demobilizations & staff consultations.	Shift disengagement/ Return to normal duty	Event driven	To educate and inform, allow for psychological decompression	Groups dealing with emergency operations and mass disasters
Crises Management Briefing	Post-crises			
Follow-up	Approximately 30 days post intervention for CISD and 1:1	Symptom driven	Access to higher level of care/ Employee Assistance Program	Individuals

Referral Assistance	Anytime	Symptom driven	Enable access to higher level of care/ Employee Assistance Program	Individuals

c. Selection of CISM Peer Supporters: Employees interested in serving as peer supporters may apply to the CIPMT, which is charged with making all selections to the peer supporter cadre. Supervisory approval will be required in order to apply and serve. Peer supporters are to be replaced through attrition. The CIPMT will select individuals that are qualified and suited to a highly skilled level of interpersonal communication. Following initial training, the new peer supporter will serve a one-year probationary period as a trainee/intern. During this probationary period, the trainee/intern will be evaluated by the CIPMT and either approved or disapproved for continuance in the program. The trainee will be evaluated on the basis of successful implementation of procedures and practices outlined in this manual and the absence of failure in carrying out the accepted "Standard-of-Care" outlined in their training.

d. Revocation or Suspension of Peer Supporter Team Membership: Membership from the SWD CISM Peer Supporter Team may be revoked by recommendation of the CIPMT (which sits as a peer review board), Contract Trainer, or on advice of a qualified EAP professional. Typically, a decision is rendered after a review of the facts of the event. The following may be considered grounds for revocation or suspension as a peer supporter:

(a) Breach of confidentiality.
(b) Failure to follow manual policies and procedures.
(c) Providing a CISM response without notification of the CIPMT.
(d) Not conforming to the "standard of care" as required in approved training.
(e) Using one's membership for personal monetary or social gain.
(f) Failure to be present at an assigned intervention unless an exception is approved.
(g) Consistent failure to attend training/meetings.
(h) Acting against the direction of the Critical Incident Program Management Team.

(i) Misrepresenting one's level of training or stated policies and procedures.
(j) Failure to complete required team paperwork.

e. Service on CIPMT and Peer Support Cadre: Due to the need for continuous training and practice to develop the skills necessary to become an effective peer supporter, length of assignment and service to this program is indefinite, subject to the team member's availability and the mission requirements of his/her job duties.

f. Peer Supporter Training: Peer supporter personnel must attend a recognized critical incident stress debriefing (CISD)/peer support training program approved by the CIPMT to obtain basic training. After no more than two years, peer support personnel will attend a similarly approved advanced training to enhance effectiveness in CISM. Following Advanced Training, other pertinent or applicable CISM training topics may be selected/ recommended by the CIPMT in order to advance team skill levels. Individual self-development opportunities and in-service training for peer support personnel are encouraged.

g. CISM Peer Supporter Referral List: The CIPMT will develop and maintain a peer supporter referral list that will be utilized for deployment to critical incidents. Once assigned to deploy to a specific incident, the responders will be referred to as the incident's Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT).

h. Deployment of CISM Response: Request for CISM response may be made by SWD and District Command Staff, affected supervisors, Division/District Emergency Operations Team Leaders, or employees involved in the incident. Activation is achieved through the notification of the SWD CIPMT. A 24-hour notification list shall be maintained by the CIPMT to minimize response time. The CIPMT will evaluate and verify that a response is appropriate. The CIPMT will notify the onsite project manager that a team is being deployed, then "right-size" a deployment of qualified peer supporter(s) to onsite locations. Once deployed, the member(s) become the specific incident's Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT). Responding CIRT member or members will be selected from persons not involved in the incident or with the affected employees. Again, the response may range in scope from a single individual as in the case of a

"one-to-one" intervention or several peer supporters for group interventions. The CIPMT shall not designate or assign any peer supporter if any of the following conditions exist. Individual peer supporters must excuse themselves if any of the following conditions exist as well:

(a) The peer supporter has played a significant role in the event.
(b) The peer supporter has direct command or supervisory authority over any employee involved in the event.
(c) The peer supporter and the affected employees are close friends.
(d) The peer supporter works with the affected group on a regular basis.
(e) The peer supporter may become involved as a part of an internal investigative body that may be given potential responsibility connected with the investigation of the event.
(f) The peer supporter is a close relative of any affected employee.

i. Deployment Guidelines: While every incident and situation requires an individually considered and measured response, the impacts of certain events have been determined to be of such magnitude as to typically require a response or intervention. Such job related events may include, but not be limited to:

(a) Line of duty death or serious injury
(c) Employee suicide or unexpected death
(d) Extended disaster response/mass disasters
(e) Difficult body recoveries
(f) Difficult traumatic events, including CPR and critical emergency medical treatment.
(g) High-impact recovery operations, exposure to grieving public
(g) Extended negative media exposure
(h) Act of terrorism

j. Initial Defusing: Initial informal defusing sessions should be held within 8-12 hours after the incident. A defusing session is a brief, spontaneous, non-evaluative discussion coordinated and conducted by a

minimum of two peer supporters and held immediately following a critical incident. The defusing may be considered an emotional "triage", in which a person can begin to talk about and explore their thoughts concerning the incident – a chance to "vent" feelings - in an informal, positive and supportive atmosphere. **It is NOT a critique of the situation.** Stress education and coping strategies will be emphasized. All personnel connected or directly involved in the event should attend. Personnel not connected with the event will not attend.

k. Formal Debriefing Sessions: The CIPMT and the onsite CIRT will determine the need for a formal debriefing session, typically after the initial defusing session has been held. If, determined to be needed, a formal Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) session will be conducted within 72 hours of the critical incident. In cases where severe stress or impact may be indicated, CIPMT and CIRT may request that a representative from the EAP attend the debriefing. Any request for on-site assistance from an EAP contract provider must go through the Corps' EAP contract representative. CISD sessions are confidential, non-evaluative discussions about the persons' involvement in the incident, their thoughts and feelings, and their stress reactions. All personnel involved in the incident will attend this formal debriefing, although active participation is not mandatory. Individuals not involved in the incident will not be included in the debriefings. CISDs should be conducted at a location that provides space, privacy, and freedom from distractions. The selection of the debriefing site will be approved by the CIRT.

l. One-on-One Intervention: One-on-One interventions are voluntary and typically follow defusings or debriefings. These are opportunities for individuals to raise issues not discussed within a group format. However, one-on-one interventions may be requested by an individual as a stand-alone intervention and not a part of a previous defusing or debriefing. One-on-one sessions are confidential in nature and serve to stabilize the situation, acknowledge the personal crises, facilitate problem solving, encourage acceptance and the utilization of resources and coping skills, and refer to the EAP if needed.

m. Crises/Disaster Interventions: Several crises interventions are available to offer assistance to deal with the often stressful and demanding duties of emergency operations workers. They include pre-crises preparation, demobilizations, and crises management briefings. Each has a

role either before, during, or following a large-scale event related to emergency operations. Typically, activation of disaster interventions is accomplished at the command level or through the emergency operations center (EOC). Pre-crises preparation, demobilizations, and crises management briefings are described as follows:

(a) Pre-Crisis Preparation – involves a proactive educative program that addresses the setting of expectations for the high intensity stressors of emergency work. The setting of expectations serves as "psychological immunization." In addition, pre-crisis preparation includes stress coping skills and also discusses the direct correlation between stress, trauma, and safety.

(b) Demobilization – is a group intervention conducted following large-scale events. It is provided one time after the first exposure to the incident and/or after a mission is complete. It is designed to give information about the event and stress survival instructions.

(c) Crisis Management Briefing (CMB) – is an intervention designed for large groups. It works well when addressing an intervention needed as a result of an act of terrorism, business/industrial crises and mass disasters. A CMB consists of credible representation of the facts, a brief period of questions and answers, and stress survival skills.

m. Follow-up: A follow-up is a very important step which is accomplished approximately 30 days with post-CISD and 1:1 interventions. If required, this facilitates access to the EAP for an employee who may still be experiencing distress or has not had a lessening of symptoms.

o. Referral: A referral can be recommended to an employee for EAP assistance at anytime it is obvious an employee's needs are beyond the scope of the CISM program. The referral action of the CISM program is considered an essential component that supports and enhances the Employee Assistance Program.

8. General CISM Program Guidelines:

a. Standard of Care: Peer support personnel shall be generally trained to follow the Jeffery Mitchell model and protocol for CISM sessions as the "Standard of Care."

b. Confidentiality: All personal information and responses volunteered by participants regarding the incident shall be held in strict confidence. Except where required by law, CIPMT and CIRT members will not divulge such information or responses outside the context of the CISM function. Session participants will be asked to adhere to the same guidelines. As required by intervention specific protocol, no written notes or mechanical recordings shall be kept. This constraint will be enforced by the CIRT.

c. Follow-up Notice: Session participants will be advised that they may expect a call at a later date to inform the employees of the availability of additional peer supporter or EAP resources if they might be interested in availing themselves of them.

d. Media Inquiries: Inquiries from the media will be directed to the appropriate Public Affairs Office.

e. Non-investigative Function: The CISM program, including debriefings, will not be used to critique the incident. The CIRT has no evaluative or investigative function, and will not become a review of tactical or operational processes. The CISM protocol is specifically constructed to help personnel discuss their feelings and reactions to an event, and to thereby reduce stress resulting from exposure to a critical incident. The goal of CISD is to encourage ventilation of feelings in a supportive environment and to help those affected to make healthy life choices.

f. Overtime: Overtime compensation shall be made to affected employees attending a CISD session outside their normal duty hours.

g. Multiple Sessions: If a group requiring a debriefing/defusing session is too large (more than twenty persons), additional sessions will be held to accommodate smaller groups.

h. Proper Dress: Consideration of proper dress for peer supporters is important. Dress should be casual but not highly colorful. It could detract

from the intervention. The wearing of uniforms is recommended only in appropriate circumstances, as might be the case for Park Rangers.

h. Peer Supporter Health: Peer supporters are certainly not immune from the affects of direct contact with highly stressful events or from dealing with people with raw human emotions. Peer supporters should be aware of the potential toll that their role as peer supporters can have on their lives. Proper breaks, food and rest are essential. Peers supporters should practice the same techniques that they teach with regard to handling stress. It is also true that team members should temporarily remove themselves from availability when their personal health and home life issues need more attention. An extremely important practice is to encourage team members to meet immediately after an intervention. At minimum the following should be accomplished:

(a) A quick review of the debriefing. Attempt to understand what took place.
(b) CIPMT follow-up on involved CIRT members
(c) Allow debriefers enough time to describe their own reactions. Teams should do a self-check before the team is released

i. Program Manual Revision: This program manual is subject to revision based upon program adjustments related to intervention "standard of care" revisions, program demographics, program protocol, or program procedures. Any changes must be considered and evaluated by the Critical Incident Program Team (CIPMT) and in turn sent forward to the appropriate level for approval and release. However, the same revision protocol shall not apply to the Incident Reporting Form. This is due to the need to constantly fine-tune the reporting form as the program is implemented.

9. Professional Support:

a. SWD CPAC Support: EAP contracts will be maintained through the SWD CPAC to provide necessary CISM support and individual counseling. The EAP representatives shall be required to have had prior training and experience in the Mitchell model of critical incident stress management as well as post-traumatic stress management. Employees

always have the option of contacting EAP representatives directly without involvement of the CISM program.

b. EAP Support: If possible, CIRT members will consult the Corps' EAP CPAC contract representative when considering a request for an on-site visit from an EAP professional. This process will be followed when the magnitude or depth of problems encountered at the site warrant such support. The peer support team will refrain from offering advice or opinions that are outside of the CISM protocol and training.

c. 30 day Follow-up: After every CIRT deployment the CIRT team will conduct a 30-day follow-up by telephone to see if any further assistance is needed. In debriefings requiring the presence of an Employee Assistance Program professional that EAP professional will also make follow-up telephonic contact within 30 days with all participants to advise them of the availability of EAP resources and assistance if needed. This procedure will help protect the privacy issue for employees.

10. Funds Tracking: CISM expenses, including general program administration, peer supporter training, and CIRT deployment expenses (defusing sessions, and associated travel / *per diem* costs) shall be tracked through a separable work category code in whichever accounts are used to fund the efforts.

11. Reporting: The CIRT team shall submit a post-deployment report to the CIPMT following each response. The final deployment report shall include a statement of travel and expenses referencing any applicable TDY or local travel orders. This report shall be completed and forwarded as soon as practical after the incident. Other summary reports shall also be made to SWD and the districts as needed for program administration and oversight. Again, no personal or confidential information shall be conveyed in any report. A CIRT Deployment Event Record form is provided in Appendix A.

12. Program Monitoring: The designated SWD CIPMT will maintain necessary program records, including, but not limited to:

a. Peer Supporters- including their location, training record, background and experience, CIRT deployment history, and present availability status.

b. Individual Deployment Files- to include standard deployment checklists, CIRT post-deployment reports, internal team performance evaluations done by team leaders, and other appropriate documents.

c. Annual Reporting- on an annual fiscal basis, the CIPMT shall prepare a cumulative report. The report shall contain a summary taken from detailed deployment records. The report shall also contain CIPMT recommendations concerning program refinement, training, and goals. A deployment report form is attached to this document as Appendix A to assist with data collection and annual reporting.

Appendix A

Deployment Report Form And Instructions

CIRT DEPLOYMENT EVENT RECORD INSTRUCTIONS
07 March 2002

A. As the Southwestern Division Critical Incident Stress Management
Program progresses there will be a highly important need to capture information regarding the performance and the resources required to sustain this program. For these reasons the "CIRT DEPLOYMENT EVENT RECORD" has been created. (CIRT stands for the Critical Incident Response Team.) Please realize that this is the first version. It will certainly change over time. But for now, here are some instructions that will hopefully explain what information is asked for on the form.

B. It is important to realize that as a peer supporter you may be contacted personally by some office, employee or by a member of the Critical Incident Program Management Team (CIPMT) concerning a CISM response. In essence, the need for a CISM response will take one of two general routes:

a. Contact of a Peer Supporter from an Individual/Office procedure:
1. **Record as much information possible on the event record.**
2. **Report contact information to the CIPMT member.**
    a. **Terry Holt**
    b. **Tim Gibson**
    c. **Or respective District CIPMT Member**
3. **Based on your availability, CIPMT will right size a CIRT response.**
4. **Respond as determined.**

b. Contact from CIPMT member procedure.
1. **Information gathered by the CIPMT will be sent to you for a possible response.**
2. **Based on your availability, CIPMT will right size a CIRT response.**
3. **Respond as determined**

C. Please note that the following numbers correspond to the numbered blanks on the form. The Critical Incident Program Management Team (CIPMT) will enter the "Record Control Number" for you. Unless otherwise noted, the CIRT team leader shall be responsible for the completion of this form. The following information serves as a checklist of things to do as well as a tool for gathering information.

1. **Enter the requesting location symbol and name.**
2. **Enter the number of employees involved. (It could be a single person or a group or an entire office.)**
3. **Enter Voice Phone Contact.**
4. **Enter FAX number.**
5. **Enter date of initial notification.**
6. **Enter name of the immediate supervisor.**
7. **Check block. (It is very important not to drop in on an office unannounced.)**
8. **Enter time and date of supervisor notification.**
9. **Enter a brief description of the critical incident and comments. (Remember to protect anonymity.)**
10. **Enter the names of CIPMT that have been notified or consulted about this specific event.**
11. **Deployment Decision, enter yes or no. (What was decided with regard to sending someone onsite.)**
12. **Deployment Remarks (Enter why a deployment was or was not made.)**
13. **If deployed, enter who was deployed.**
14. **Check that you are in possession of the regional EAP contract information. (Duane Braxton, SWD EAP Contract Rep will have this information if it is not included in your "jump-kit".**
15. **Enter EAP phone number.**
16. **Enter EAP Contractor name.**
17. **Enter EAP FAX number.**
18. **Record if Duane Braxton, SWD EAP Contract Rep was contacted to request EAP onsite support. EAP support is generally reserved for high impact critical incidents. Consultation with CIPMT is also recommended. <u>Note any request for EAP support must go through Mr. Braxton.)</u>**

19. **Indicate if Mr. Braxton requested onsite EAP support.**
20. **Record date of EAP arrival onsite if applicable.**
21. **Onsite assessment accomplished. Identify employees involved in the incident. (This is a necessary check point to make sure this effort is made. Experience has shown that this is sometimes a challenge.)**
22. **Indicate if a defusing was accomplished.**
23. **Indicate the date of the defusing.**
24. **Enter the number attending the defusing.**
25. **Indicate if a debriefing was accomplished.**
26. **Indicate the date of the debriefing.**
27. **Enter the number attending the debriefing.**
28. **Indicate if an EAP Professional was present at the debriefing. (As mentioned before an EAP professional may not always be present except for the highly impact incidents. Most SWD EAP contracts specify a maximum of three onsite responses per year.)**
29. **Enter the number of one-to-one sessions. (This will include individual "SAFE-R", defusing, and debriefing categories of interventions.)**
30. **A member of the CIPMT will probably carry out 30-day follow-up check on the EAP. (The follow-up entails just a phone call to the person or persons associated with specific interventions. In this way the EAP repeat an offer for professional services, if appropriate.**
31. **A member of the CIPMT will also probably do an anniversary date follow-up. (The purpose of an anniversary date follow-up is to check if there are any significant "triggers" arising from the anniversary date.)**
32. **Enter CIRT TDY costs here.**
33. **Enter estimated CIRT labor costs here.**
34. **Enter estimated other costs here. An example would be the procurement of a meeting room offsite, if required.**
35. **Enter total costs here. Document cost computation on the continuation sheet.**

D. The second page of the report is for either continuing comments from page 1 or for personal observations that will help evaluate or make recommendations for program improvement.

E. The CIPMT is here for your support and aid. One of the major problems to be on guard from is getting in over one's head. When in doubt, consult with others. ***In addition, always take care of number "1".***

CIRT DEPLOYMENT EVENT RECORD

Record Control Number:

1. Requesting Location Symbol & Name:	
2. Number of Employees Involved:	
3. Voice Phone:	4: FAX Number:
5. Date of Notification:	6. Name of Supervisor:
7. **Office Supervisor Notified of CISM Activation: Yes?** ☐	
8. Office Supervisor Notification Date: Time	
9. Enter Event Description and Comments: (retain anonymity)	
10. CIMPT Member(s) Notified:	11. Deployment Decision: Yes ☐ No ☐
	12. Deployment Remarks Enter Intervention Type if not Defusing or CISD:
13. Peer(s) Deployed:	14. EAP Phone # In Hand: Yes ☐ No ☐
	15. EAP Phone Number:
	16. EAP Name:
	17. EAP FAX Number:
	18. EAP Contract Rep Contact: Yes ☐ No ☐
19. EAP Support Requested: Yes ☐ No ☐	20. EAP Onsite Date:
21. Onsite Assessment Accomplished: Date Time	
22. Defusing Conducted: Yes ☐ No ☐	23. Defusing Date:
24. Number Participating in Defusing:	
25. Debriefing Conducted: Yes ☐	26. Debriefing Date:
27. # Participating in Debriefing:	28. EAP Present: Yes ☐ No ☐
29. # of One & One Sessions:	30. 30 Day EAP Follow-up:
31. Anniversary Follow-up: Yes ☐	32. TDY Costs:
33. Labor Costs:	34. Other Costs: / 35 Total Costs:

CIRT DEPLOYMENT EVENT RECORD	**Record Control Number:**
Deployment Evaluation and Recommendations:	
Continuation of Comment from Page 1:	