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## CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

### Introduction

#### WHAT IS A CRITICAL INCIDENT?

A critical Incident may be defined as follows:

*'A tragic or traumatic event or situation affecting a student or staff member which has the potential to cause unusually strong emotional reactions in the campus community.'*

Examples of Critical Incidents in the International Student arena would include, but are not limited to:

- **Death** (including death of a dependant residing in Australia)
  - Accidental
  - Suicide
  - Result of an injury or terminal illness
  - Murder
- **Serious Illness** which causes the deterioration of the student/staff member's health over time.
- **Serious Injury** which prevents or severely affects the student's ability to continue with or complete the course.

Serious illness or injury would probably not be considered a critical incident in the broader campus community.

However, considering the relatively 'close knit' nature of most international student communities, and their physical isolation from the familiar support networks they grew up with, critical incidents of this nature can have a wide reaching, sometimes devastating and usually long lasting effect on a student's ability to cope with their studies.

(Source: ISANA: Critical Incident Kit)

## Legislation

The National Code 2007

Standard 6.4

## Procedures

All staff should not the following contact details for critical incidents

### SERO Institute Contact Phone Numbers

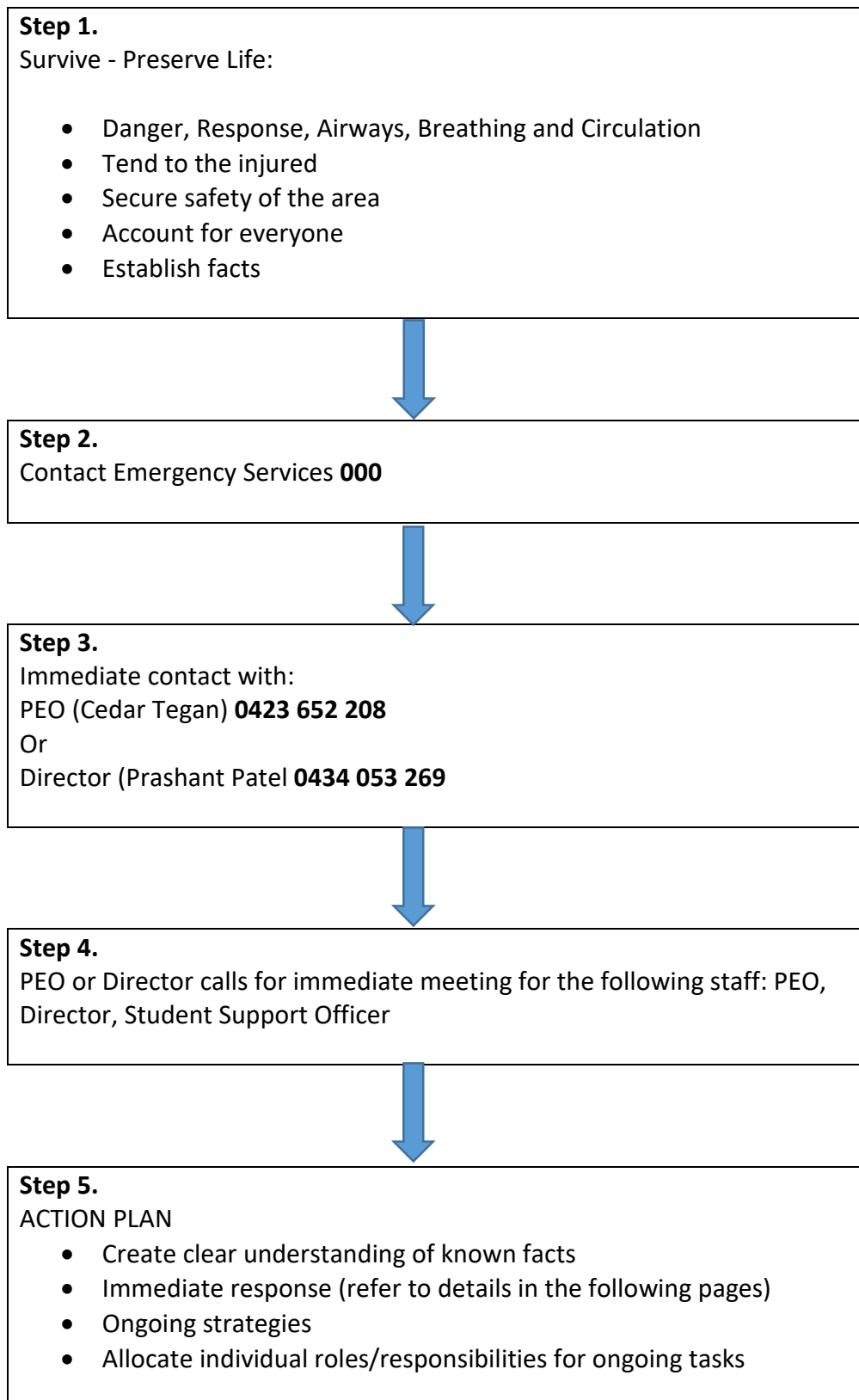
Contact	Name	Business hours	After hours
Emergency	Police, Fire, Ambulance	000	000
Reception		3229 6000	0423 652 208
PEO	Cedar Tegan	1800 206 010	0423 652 208

### Initial Contact with the PEO

When first contacting the PEO of a serious incident include the following information:

- Name of victim
- Number of victims
- Suspected injuries
- When, what, where did it happen
- Current location of victim
- Victims present condition
- What is happening now
- Estimated time of next communication and method of communication

## Critical Incident Management Flow Chart



## Critical Incident Plan in more detail

## Procedure

### STEP 1

- Preserve Life: Danger, Response, Airways, Breathing, Circulation.
- Ensure safety
- Tend to the injured
- Account for everyone

### STEP 2

- Contact emergency services: Ambulance, Fire Brigade and Police – 000

### STEP 3

- When a Critical Incident has been identified: A staff member receiving the news immediately contacts the PEO Cedar Tegan or the Director, Prashant Patel.

### STEP 4

- The PEO calls an immediate meeting with the following staff to make decisions as to how to proceed:
  - Director
  - Student Support Officer
  - Others (if needed)

### STEP 5

- **Planning**

At the initial meeting of the Critical Incident Team, the task is to:

Create for themselves a clear understanding of the known facts

Plan an immediate response

Plan ongoing strategies

Allocate individual roles/responsibilities for ongoing tasks

- **Immediate Response**

Issues to be considered:

1. Organise one member of the team to scribe for the meeting and keep records of content and decisions
2. Gather information on the student, including the following:
  - colour photograph
  - copy of passport including number, photo page and visa page.
  - Student's homestay parents address and telephone number
  - Student's religion
  - Emergency contact telephone, with next of kin details, agent or sponsor (if applicable)
  - Any other identification details – student ID, course details, medical conditions, allergy information, etc
3. Inform other stakeholders in line with CIP
4. Arrangements for informing staff and students

5. Guidelines to staff about what information to give students
6. A written bulletin to staff if the matter is complex
7. Briefing reception and delegating a staff member to deal with telephone/counter enquiries
8. Managing media/publicity
9. Identification of those students and staff members more closely involved and therefore most at risk
  - Those directly involved
  - Personal friends/family of those involved
  - Others who have experienced a similar past trauma
  - Other students, staff, supervisors, etc
10. Arrange a time and place for an initial group/individual debriefing session with Counsellor/s. In this session, an opportunity is given to share the impact of the event, discuss various interpretations of the event in cultural/ethnic terms, and resulting sense of vulnerability, the experience or painful emotions and the normalisation of reactions.
11. Organise a tasks timetable for the next hour/day/etc.
12. Plan ongoing feedback and regular meetings so that the team is continually in touch and working together
13. (In the case of death) contact enrolments to put a stop on the student's record.
14. Prepare report and enter all details into the Critical Incident Register for review.

#### **ONGOING and FOLLOW UP RESPONSE**

These issues may need to be discussed at subsequent meetings.

- WHO is the DECISION MAKER?
- WHO will FOLLOW UP?
- Availability of mobile phone
- Notification of and liaison with sponsor/agent if applicable
- Arrangements for visits to/from family
- Liaison with police, doctors, hospital staff
- Hiring independent interpreters
- Death notices
- Funeral/memorial service arrangements
- Refund of student's fees to pay repatriation or associated expenses
- Copy of death certificate
- Consideration of personal items and affairs (household and academic)
- Insurance matters, OSHC coverage, ambulance cover
- Formal stress management interventions required for students and/or staff (release from classes, leave, rescheduled assessments of exams)
- Liaison with academic staff or supervisors
- Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required
- Liaison with immigration if studies will be interrupted
- Fees issue to be resolved if student cannot continue with their studies
- Legal issues – helping students get access to legal assistance, right to sue, etc
- Arrangements for further debriefing sessions for groups/individuals as required
- Follow up condolence letters to family
- Roster of students for hospital visits