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## LifeNet

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ICISF is a non-profit, non-governmental  
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### CISM: Wellness and Peer Support

By: Rick Barton, Chief Executive Officer, ICISF

The leader of a department or agency came to recognize that the incidents faced by their team ultimately takes a toll on the employees. It may take a while for the symptoms to emerge, until the slight becomes enormous. Absenteeism, poor conduct, sloppiness, tardiness, cynicism, and worse. The leader wonders what to do, where to turn.

They might latch onto common current buzz words or phrases such as peer support or wellness. They might include CISM in the narrative as another option. They perhaps don't know, and need to learn, that CISM includes peer support and any worthwhile wellness program should include a CISM component. In fact, it can be asserted that wellness is part of CISM, not the other way around.

As members of the ICISF, as interested parties, it is essential that you help get this word out into the world. The ICISF is increasing efforts to attend relevant professional conferences, to provide exhibits and to make presentations. We need your support and help carrying this message. Otherwise, well-meaning leaders may latch onto the first thing that comes along, a bargain, a simple solution, and then they move on to the next problem that challenges their department.

A golden opportunity exists right now. Leaders know there is a problem. The question to be answered is what they plan to do next, and where they turn for help. Please help us help them.

### Revitalized Rural CISM Team Embraces Five-T Strategic Planning Formula

By: Michael Bausano, ICISF Member

**BACKGROUND:** As an active volunteer member of a rural two-county Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team, a series of public school responses this year served as poignant reminders to the team about the critical importance and value of strategic planning as a key element in preparation for an effective CISM deployment.

Both school related responses involved the unexpected and heartbreaking deaths of two high school age students, both of whom were male.

# 2020 REGIONAL TRAINING SCHEDULE \*

**January 30 – February 2 | Pittsburgh, PA**  
Hosted by Pittsburgh CISM Team

**February 19 – 22 | Nashville, TN**  
Hosted by Nashville Fire CISM Team

**April 30 – May 3 | San Antonio, TX**  
Hosted by District 7 Fire Rescue

**June 10 – 14 | Baltimore, MD**  
Hosted by ICISF

**September 17 – 20 | Portland, ME**  
Hosted by Tri County EMS CISM Team

*\* Dates subject to change.  
Please check website for more information.*

# 2020 ONLINE COURSE SCHEDULE

**CISM Practical Review & Update**  
Jan. 27 – Feb. 14 | April 6 – 24  
June 15 – July 3 | Sept. 21 – Oct. 9

**Law Enforcement Perspectives  
for CISM Enhancement**  
Feb. 10 – 28 | June 1 – 19  
Sept. 14 – Oct 2 | Nov. 23 – Dec. 11

**Managing School Crises:  
From Theory to Application**  
April 6 – 17 | Nov. 9 – 20

**Suicide Awareness: An Introduction  
for Crisis Responders**  
Jan. 6 – 17 | Apr. 6 – 17  
July 6 – 17 | Oct. 5 – 16

**Techniques for Delivering Bad News  
for Crisis Response Personnel**  
Jan. 6 – 17 | Mar. 15 – 27  
July 13 – 24 | Oct. 19 – 30

**ONGOING:**  
Visit [ICISF.org](https://www.icisf.org) for more information

Psychology of Terrorism and  
Psychological Counter-Terrorism

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## Connecticut CISM Team Welcomes K9 McDonald as Team Member

On Wednesday, September 11th, the CT CISM Team voted in its newest member – a 2 year old Labrador Retriever. The service dog was trained and has been supported by “Puppies Behind Bars,” a New York based organization who trains dogs for wounded war veterans and first responders as well as explosive detection K9s for law enforcement. Dogs enter the program at the Bedford Hills (NY) Women’s Prison at the age of 8 weeks and live with their “puppy raisers” for approximately 24 months.



McDonald is one of the first of its kind service dogs for first responders. He is named after the late NYPD Detective Steven D. McDonald who died on January 10, 2017, succumbing to complications from gunshot wounds received on July 12, 1986. The inmate trainers chose the name after having met Detective McDonald during one of the visits to the prison where he shared his story of forgiveness and rehabilitation. Several members of the NYPD along with Detective McDonald’s wife Patti Ann and son Connor, an NYPD sergeant, attended the pup’s graduation. Watch a video of the graduation and tribute to Detective McDonald at [www.puppiesbehindbars.com](https://www.puppiesbehindbars.com).

McDonald is partnered and handled by Groton (CT) Officer Heather McClelland. Their training culminated with an intensive 14 day training regimen at the Bedford Hills Correctional Center with their inmate puppy raisers. McDonald will accompany Officer McClelland in her daily duties. Team “Mac and Mac” (McClelland and McDonald) will have the primary duty of providing assistance to the officers and staff at the Groton Police Department. In addition to community outreach programs, Officer McClelland will bring McDonald with her as she responds to incidents and training activities as a member of the Connecticut Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CT CISM Team).

Members of the CT CISM Team unanimously voted McDonald in as a member at the monthly meeting, including verification of his “paw-print” signature on the application form. Team Operations Coordinator Charles Epstein noted “K9s are a wonderful addition to CISM teams and services during stressful situations.” CT CISM Team Region IV Coordinator Pat Moody remarked how pleased she was to have team Mac and Mac in her area.

Additional information and sources for this article can be found at The Town of Groton (CT) [www.groton-ct.gov](https://www.groton-ct.gov), Puppies Behind Bars [www.puppiesbehindbars.com](https://www.puppiesbehindbars.com), or the CT CISM Team [www.ctcism.org](https://www.ctcism.org). Article submitted by Robert Norton, Jr., Education Chair CT CISM Team.

## ICISF Welcomes Two New Employees: Sarah Gray and Trish Brandau

### Sarah Gray

Sarah worked for the Maryland Park Service, large and small law firms, a yarn store, a national zoo accreditation association, and an international blindness prevention NGO. In her work life, Sarah enjoys cleaning up databases, working with spreadsheets, and creating more efficient ways to capture data. She spends her free time volunteering as the Adoption Coordinator for the local chapter of the House Rabbit Society. Sarah will be working with the Approved Instructor Dept. and is excited to be a part of the ICISF family.



*Sarah Gray (left) and Trish Brandau (right).*

### Trish Brandau

Trish comes from a 27-year career in the finance industry. She is a mother to twin sons and step-mother to two young men. She has been active in her community as a volunteer in sons' school, community association, and church. Trish will be working with the finance department and is excited to start a new chapter helping to support the men and women who defend and protect us every day.

## CISM and the Workplace: A Firefighter's Experience is a Valuable Resource

*By: Jeffrey Cartwright CTR, CWT, Philip Ross Agencies Ltd.*

I began my career at 21 years old as a paramedic and a volunteer firefighter. I knew from the first day I put on bunker gear and hopped on the truck that I had found my calling. I wanted to help people, put out fires, utilize my first aid skills and the excitement didn't hurt. There was more to it though, I really felt like it was my calling not just a job. I enjoyed the teamwork, constant development of skills and the feeling of going home at night knowing that I had made an impact in someone's life. I know that sounds like the cliché response from a first responder but ask anyone who makes a career of this and you will get the same answer, "I didn't know I would feel a loss of identity when it came to end." My self-identity throughout my career was "I'm a firefighter", I wasn't just Jeff with a job.

When I retired from the Fire Service I knew I wanted to continue to help people. After all, it's the only thing I've known since I was a young man starting out 28 years ago as a Paramedic. I am an instructor at the Fire Academy working with new recruits and teaching the Fire Officer Program. I am also a facilitator at the Institute's Center for Crisis and Counselling where I teach the CISM Certificate Program and other CISM related courses. In doing so, I was slowly finding my calling as a Crisis Management Specialist with the civilian work force and corporate industry.

I had advanced my education in the CISM field while in the fire service. I was certified as a Trauma Responder with the Association of Traumatic Stress Specialist (ATSS) and

was invited to join the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress (AAETS).

I received an unexpected call one day and was asked to join the Crisis Response Team for one of the largest EAP programs in Canada. They said they felt that I brought a level of experience that they were missing and that I could approach crisis response from a different angle. I was honoured by that call as it was an acknowledgment of all my hard work and dedication in crisis response. It also started my career of responding to large organizations across North America to deal with the aftermath of a traumatic workplace event. My reputation grew and before I knew it I was facilitating workshops on Trauma, Conflict, Mental Health, Respectful Workplace and many others to these same institutions.

My point is not to tell you that there is a career outside my first love, the fire service, but to tell you that as first responders we are valued by civilians in crisis. We have "street cred" with the public and we know how to deal with people in times of crisis. First Responders have an experienced understanding of emotions and reactions that people are dealing with on possibly the worst day of their life.

CISM response is about knowledge, experience and skill sets used to carry out defusing, debriefings, one on one support and the many other tools that we possess.

## The Positive Effects of CISM

By: Jacob Dyck, ICISF Member

I am a Christian, and a Volunteer firefighter with Delisle & District Fire and Rescue. As a volunteer firefighter I'm also getting started on becoming fully CISM certified. CISM is absolutely great tool in the emergency field. It does not matter whether you are a paramedic, police, an individual working in a hospital, or a firefighter. CISM when used in the right manor is highly effective!

I'll share some of my experiences with CISM, and the results I've had with it. What I've found is when CISM is used with the intention to help individuals the results can be very positive! I had the opportunity to help a fellow firefighter using CISM after we both attended a motor vehicle accident scene involving a fatality. With talking to this individual I found that when you get them to open up it is extremely important to have them realize the positive and build from there. What I'll usually do is ask this question once they are comfortable and opening up.

I'll ask; what was the most positive thing in either their day or the situation? Then depending on the answer I receive I'll try and build from there. I've found that getting them to realize the positive sets them up for success in overcoming the difficulties related to the scene and what they have seen at accident scene. Then I'll take and try to build them up on their strengths by having them tell me usually 3-5 things that are easy for them to do to rely back to. Then I'll try and find what was the hardest or most difficult for them. Because I've found when you can get them to realize and open up about the most difficult, then you have found the source that is causing them stress and anxiety. But be very careful how you react cause it will either allow you to help them, or it will make it difficult for them to receive help from you or in the future.

So on the positive if you can take what they share with you and use it to find the positive and build on their strengths you can really reduce the effects of the event on the individual. Also make sure when you are listening to their story that they feel like you actually heard them. My instructor for CISM made a comment that has stuck with me. He said it takes a lifetime to build a reputation, but only moments to ruin or break it down. In my experience so far I've only helped one individual but it has been tremendously positive! So much so that when the individual had an experience that triggered them back to the trauma. Because of the foundation of trust I was able to build with them.

To let you know I did ask them permission to refer to them and their experience for the purpose of sharing it in this article. Another important thing to do is to as quickly as possible back and responding to calls to help them reconnect the event.

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I'll try and explain what I mean by sharing some of my story about the same event. I was posted on traffic duty on a small black top road that we were diverting traffic on to when I had an event that shocked me and shook me up. I was giving directions to someone in a minivan standing on their left hand side when a semi-tractor without a trailer on came through the traffic control area doing roughly about 100-110 km/hour. A few weeks prior to this happening to me I had attended a fellow firefighter's funeral from another department who been accidentally hit by a semi-truck at a scene of a call he was at. With that fresh on my mind when this semi sped past by me; feeling the wind as he flew through the diverted traffic area. What went through my mind was having to call on my radio a mayday call. Fortunately the truck driver didn't hit me! It was a great lesson for me to look at and learn from.

Then the next morning early in the morning we got dispatched to another motor vehicle accident call on the highway. I was once again stationed on traffic but this would turn out to be the greatest thing that could've happened because as I was directing traffic I was right beside a semi-truck that was waiting for us to attend to the accident scene. There were three more semi-trucks lined up behind him waiting. As I'm standing there listening to the engine of the semi all four truck drivers get out of their trucks and walk over to me and thank me and my fire department for our service and what we do! What those four gentlemen did that day they probably didn't realize how they had just significantly helped me reconnect to and build myself up from an event that had happened the day before. I cannot fully explain that what those gentleman did for me that day was awesome. It helped me build up my strengths and helped me deal with a new fear that had come across my path. What I had been taught in my CISM course a couple months prior to this helped me tremendously!

I'm hoping the little bit I was able to share in this article will be helpful to the individuals who read this.



## Support for Rural Healthcare Staff

By: Philip Cox, Ph.D., ICISF Member

A group of veteran OB nurses spend time and tears second-guessing everything they did when a baby dies in delivery. Over and over again they question what they could have missed that would have warned them that something was wrong. They reassure each other that every precaution and protocol was followed, yet a baby did not make it into this world alive. They are trained and geared to ensure these deliveries go well for mother and child, and when it doesn't, they suffer their own loss.

First responders in rural areas find that their calls could easily involve a former high school classmate or a child's teacher. In an area where everybody knows everybody any motor vehicle injury or ATV fatality could involve friends or family. Many times these responders are also volunteers, doing these tough jobs because they care about their communities and have deep roots in the area. I arrived at a local ambulance district garage, asking what incident they needed to talk about, only to learn there had been three incidents in a week and a half that were causing various members issues they couldn't shake. The most impressive part was that some of those present had been to none of those calls, but were there to support those who did.

An accident involving a pregnant woman brought together in the trauma room a combination of disciplines that none of them may ever see again. The trauma team performed CPR on the woman while the OB team performed a caesarian section at the same time in an effort to save the baby. Neither one survived. As I followed up the next day and other days with various small groups and individuals, the magnitude of the event seemed to grow. One nurse anesthetist (CRNA) said it was only when he attempted to document afterward what he had done that he realized what he had done. His voice broke and he seemed stunned again as he recalled that moment.

My own part in the case came the following day when the woman's parents came to town to view their daughter and make arrangements for her to be transported for her funeral in another city. Our staff carefully arranged the victim in a vacant room in a bed, with the tiny infant tucked in next to her head. The woman's father could not stay in the room, and I followed him as he found the nearest exit out of the building. I stayed about 10 feet behind him to give him space. Finally stopping at the corner of the building, he just stood and spoke softly to me about how to make the necessary arrangements.

We tell ourselves, "This is what we do," but we also hurt. We carry on, but we also drag the sights and sounds and smells with us. We say, "This is my job," but it's also our burden.

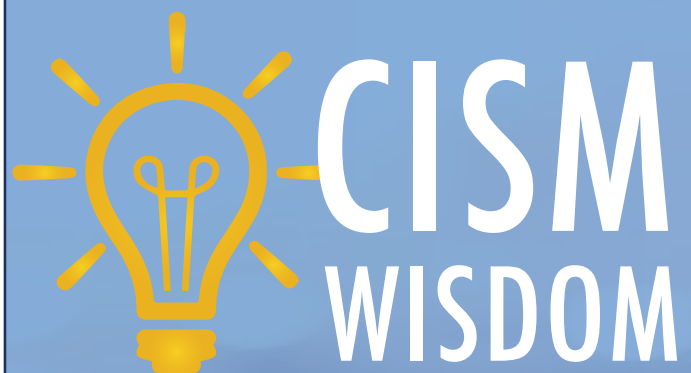
When the burden gets too heavy, we still have a hard time saying so.

As in all these cases, we are not startled by the incident, but startled by how we are affected. We can also be shocked by the accumulative effect of a series of less serious incidents that suddenly trigger a surprising reaction. We are confused by what seems to be small things. Time spent with co-workers and perhaps a third party can be valuable in putting together a picture of a large developing burden that has been developing unattended over a period of time.

We are learning in our hospital environment to make use of each other's ability to listen. Using the basics of CISM, we have developed a HEAL Team (Helping Employees After Loss). Trained through ICISF, I have been able to pass along some basic principles of allowing staff members to talk through the incident and offer support to each other, while being alert to those who may be avoiding the group, or isolating in other ways.

During regular meetings with our HEAL team, we have identified the need for formal CISM training for development of a team, especially since no formal teams are listed in the south central Missouri area. The support we could offer our six-county area could greatly expand our strategic goals of overall care in our area. Many first responders in our area are volunteers, yet handle a high volume of incidents from a major north/south U.S. highway and east/west interstate in a university town.

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## CISM Serves as a Vital Tool for Seamen's Church

By: The Rev. Kempton D. Baldridge, ICISF Member since 2004

Imagine yourself as the pilot of an 80' harbor tug in one of the busiest and most treacherous stretches of the Lower Mississippi River. The river is well above flood stage and you are exhausted after a long day of "making tow", using all of the vessel's 900hp to assemble 30+ barges into a cohesive wired-together "tow" (with 'tow' used as a noun instead of a verb).

After turning over the watch to your relief and downing a midnight snack, you head to your cabin, strip off your clothes, crawl into your bunk, and drift off for some much needed sleep. About 3 am, you are tossed from a sound sleep out of your bunk to the floor. But it's not the floor you are on but the bulkhead (wall). You stagger for a moment, disoriented in the darkness and confusion. Groping in the dark for your radio or cellphone, you hear the engines racing uncontrollably.

Grabbing hold of the sink to steady yourself, you slip into the icy cold water now rising all around you. Just then, you hear loud voices outside your cabin. As you struggle to stand, the door suddenly bursts open, and hands reaching in from the dark are grabbing your arms, legs and torso, and people shouting, "C'mon!! C'mon!" The hands belong to your crew, to whom you normally give the orders – but not now. The icy water keeps rising, and they keep yelling, "C'mon! Hurry!" Finally, the crew manages to lift and pull you from the vessel, out into the dark night and its freezing cold air. You're squinting and can't see where you are from the blindingly bright searchlights.

Behind you, you see your boat, tilted grotesquely on its side, held up by a single face wire. You hear the sound of someone's teeth chattering despite all the yelling and commotion. Then you realize the chattering teeth are yours, as you stand barefoot in 30 degree temperatures, watching your vessel sink, wearing nothing but a pair of Jockey underwear.



This entire episode took less than three minutes from start to finish. So, how was your day at work?

A sinking vessel is just one of many hazards, hardships, difficulties and demands faced by professional mariners and for which Seamen's Church Institute chaplains and chaplain associates must be both knowledgeable and well prepared.

Thankfully, awakening to find oneself trapped on a rapidly sinking towboat is a very rare occurrence. Rare, but such nightmarish events can and do happen.

Only last year three tugs from the same company sank in a single night (though all 11 crew were rescued).

Tough times. Bad days. Nightmares. Hellscape. And worse. These "worst days" are also known as "Critical Incidents."

A *CRITICAL INCIDENT* is an uncommon event likely to produce an emotional reaction, now or later. Examples include:

- accidental death in the line of duty
- death or grave injury to a child/loved one
- exposure to human remains
- shipmate's suicide
- natural disasters, extreme weather
- threat of deadly force or violence
- seeing or suffering gruesome injuries
- acts of terrorism, manmade disasters
- vessel collision/allision
- vessel sinking/abandon ship
- 'man overboard'
- fire onboard vessel

Preparing for mariners' "worst days" lies at the heart of SCI's commitment to ensure its chaplains and chaplain associates are confident, capable and careful practitioners of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM).

For the past twenty years SCI river chaplains have responded faithfully to tragic events up and down the river system wherever and whenever possible. After a mariner dies onboard or a vessel crew experiences a life-threatening episode of some sort, SCI chaplains are trained to employ CISM techniques to speak with those affected, assess their needs, help them connect to trustworthy support structures to help mitigate the worst effects of the trauma. In recent years chaplains have conducted CISM interventions following an armed attack by pirates, a deadly shipyard explosion, a fatal lightning strike, as well as after numerous vessel sinkings, line-of-duty deaths, suicides, drownings and traffic accidents.

# Managing Critical Incidents: It's Not "If," But When

By: Tim Hobart, MBA, CEAP, ICISF Member

Is your organization prepared for the critical incident that may be just around the corner? Your response will determine whether the critical incident will help or hurt your organization.

Over the past 35 years I've been involved in managing hundreds of critical incident responses (CIR's). I've witnessed both effective responses from leaders and many others not so effective. If I've learned one thing it is the unfortunate and damaging lack of timely, effective, and compassionate responses from leadership and C level executives following a critical disruptive incident in their workplaces. This has stuck with me, and quite frankly troubled me, for many years.

Certainly critical incidents demand a plan that underscores the urgency to protect the organization's reputation, employees, brand and earnings. But the plan needs more; the plan must always include;

1. An assessment of the critical incidents impact on employees and;
2. An action plan to reassure them that they are valued. Indeed, your response to the critical incident may be the ideal time to express your clear, empathic message of trust and gratitude to your employees.

## CIR MISTAKES

It's discouraging to construct a well-planned and impactful critical incident response for a client organization and then have it completely undermined by the lack of support or worse, no response at all from leadership.

From small organizations to large corporations, what leadership says, does or fails to do following a disruptive critical incident will leave a lasting impression on employees. The impact will be seen in turnover, absenteeism and reduced productivity.

A number of years ago I was managing a critical incident response at one of our corporate clients. Our therapists were busy seeing employees individually, following a group debriefing. One of the corporate execs popped his head in on a session and asked them to hurry it up because there was an activity planned for that space soon. One employee got up, immediately left the building, and tendered her resignation the next day.

In another incident a regional bank manager passed out fast food gift cards to the employees at a branch bank that had just experienced a traumatic robbery, with the intended message



*“From small organizations to large corporations what leadership says, does or fails to do following a disruptive critical incident will leave a lasting impression on employees.”*

of “get back to work”. The employee's reactions were swift and not forgotten. In his attempt to “do something good” for the branch employees, he made a troubling incident even more upsetting, which eroded respect and credibility.

The nation's most recent example came from one of our country's largest and most admired corporations. Boeing's failure to step out in front of the 737 MAX crisis cost them profoundly in the loss of revenues, respect and results.

Kelli Matthews wrote in [Quartz](#) March 26, 2019:

“A crisis creates a vacuum, an informational void that gets filled one way or another. The longer a company or other organization at the center of the crisis waits to communicate, the more likely that void will be filled by critics. One thing I know for sure is that in crises in which there's loss of life, it's important to be compassionate, empathetic, and careful.”

Whether it's an industrial accident or an in-the-line-of-duty death, there must be timely and compassionate response to all employees.

Matthews continues, “The key problem with Boeing's approach is that its response was initially too defensive, slow, and passive, suggesting a lack of openness and accountability. Boeing could have adopted a proactive approach, such as by taking the initiative to ground its own planes.”

Paul Cahill, founder & CEO of [Byte Media Group](#) wrote in [PR lessons from Boeing's poor handling of the 737 MAX crisis](#):

“Boeing may not be at blame here, there's still an investigation going on, but that doesn't explain how it came to pull what seems to be one of the costliest PR mistakes in aviation history.”

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## CISM in Conservation Law Enforcement

*By: Scott McIntosh, Lead Chaplain for Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept., Law Enforcement.*

I couldn't have been more than twelve years old. I had gone with some of my friends in my old Austin neighborhood into the woods where there was a small pond surrounded by woods on all sides. It had a swimming hole where we'd swim, wait a while, swim some more, wait a while, then fish. Our "stove" was an old coffee can propped up by stones and a small fire build beneath. It wasn't much, but for kids, it was a hearth and a home in the middle of nowhere. The incident that happened at this site has been a memory I haven't ever forgotten and hope never to do so. It was on a summer's day that I learned what it meant to be given grace and, in turn, to give grace to the one who suffered in the instant of the ugliness of man's hearts. A group for kids with BB guns and pellet guns is no match for anything smaller than a rabbit, and we were on the hunt for anything in that size range that moved. It's not that we were on the hunt, it was more that if anything moved, it deserved to be shot!

Not long after we set up behind fallen trees and berms, something caught our attention in the leaves below the trees. As we watched, a small animal began to stir ruffling the leaves and making the smallest of sounds. Before we could get set up well, a little, ugly, unwashed and matted dog came into view. Because I wanted to be the "hunter of hunters," I laid a bead down on this animal and pulled the trigger. Instantly, the most horrifying of yelps filled the air. It was one of the worst sounds I had ever heard, from then to now. It continued at a piercing level until we could fully see what it was I had shot. At my personal horror, but at the cheers of my comrades in arms, this little thing came out still yelping. I didn't want to believe it but it was unmistakable. It was a small dog.

Promptly, this dog - still yelping - slowly crawled up to me and put his little matted head down on my shoe. It was a lesson I'll never forget. It was a lesson in grace and mercy. It was a lesson in how to give hope to something or someone who meant it harm but who needed the lesson in what it means to care for something that was in danger, hurting, lost and in need of comfort. It was probably that one instance that gave me the lifelong desire to help the ones who are hurt by the ugliness of the human condition. As tears ran down my face, I knew something had changed in me. I learned great lessons that day about grace, forgiveness and giving hope to another. CISM is a practical and innovative way to both illustrate and exemplify these same lessons for others.

In the State of Texas, at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Law Enforcement Division, our CISM program is basically two-tiered, and relatively new. With 550 Game Wardens across a very large land mass, it is sometimes difficult to get to a situation quickly, either for Peers (Game Wardens who are in the Critical Incident Team) or for Chaplains. I serve as the Lead Chaplain and have ten volunteer chaplains around the state in each of our Regions to help me. Each of these chaplains are trained in CISM and the plan is to retrain with or without the Game Warden Critical Incident Team (CIT) on a regular basis to keep up with our training. The CIT program is made up of Game Wardens who serve as peers to other Game Wardens and the Chaplains serve in a spiritual/relational role. However, in most situations, because of the abundance of Game Wardens and the small size of our Chaplain Corps, the CIT will almost always be on the scene before the Chaplains. In those cases, the Chaplains will come in one or two days later and do emotional and spiritual (if asked for) follow-up, either in person (which is best) or over the phone if a chaplain cannot get to the Game Warden in a timely manner.

There have been, out of necessity, many things we have all learned along the way as CISM partners. Of course, flexibility was one of our first lessons. In a critical incident, there is a real difficulty in trying to "plan" anything. Therefore, CIS Planning and Management are essential. Our one-on-one, SAFER-R, is done on the moment in any safe and near location. Getting those who have experienced a critical incident in one place is like, and I mean this only in the sense of chaos, herding cats. From our perspective it seems to be easier to get trained first responders to a CIS Debriefing than the general public and might possibly be the most difficult. Perhaps one of the more positive outcomes by having so many people in one Department trained in CISM is that, though Game Wardens have less incidents than our State Troopers, Sheriff Offices or city Police, our Game Wardens are often called on by other Law Enforcement Divisions to help lead Debriefings, Defusings and the like. As our CIT and Chaplain Corps does more and more to help other officers, these officers are helping to get their own Departments into the world of CISM training for their personnel.

There is very little that is as inspiring than watching dedicated Game Wardens do peer to peer work after a critical incident.

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## CISM and the Workplace: A Firefighter's Experience is a Valuable Resource

*(continued from page 3)*

CISM goes further than just a group debriefing following a horrific event, it has now gained popularity in the workplace for other uses. I have been at corporations that are laying off a huge number of their workforce, industries trying to overcome a nasty strike by the union, employees being asked to go for treatment for mental health issues, the list goes on and on.

Many times, my role is simply as a trusted support for people to vent to. Other times it allows them to talk about everything else that is going on in their life. I don't give counselling or therapy, I just listen and validate that they are hurting. I teach about resiliency, mindfulness and put them in touch with the support they need if they do want to get therapy for their troubles. I often tell the supervisor or HR person that brings me in that they have shown their employees that they are valued simply by acknowledging that the event warranted support. This fact remains whether I am inundated with requests for support or hardly utilized that day.

There is a larger picture that I have encountered in the hundreds of deployments that I have had over the last couple of years and I'll let you in on the secret. Show up to these workplaces and be kind, empathetic and a good listener. That's it.

When we respond to crisis, the people we are there to support are not ready for counselling or therapy that day. They need validation, empathy and guidance to foster resilience or direction to get the follow up help they need. This is where many clinicians responding to events drop

the ball. This is not to detract from clinicians at all, they are a very important part of CISM in the big picture.

I often describe crisis response as the "band aid" to stop the bleeding. We are the initial response to a cut in a person's skin, we stop the bleeding and give them a chance to start the healing process. The next day when you pull that band aid off the cut may be scabbed over and the healing is going well. There is no sign of infection and with time you will only have a small scar to remember the trauma that you experienced. There are times that, despite the initial first aid that we performed with the band aid, you will find that there is infection, more bleeding or possibly the need of some stitches. This is when you seek further medical treatment from doctors, this is where the therapy or counselling comes in. CISM is the initial care and education to allow people to foster their own resilience or become aware that they are not healing and understand that they need to get professional help.

If you are a first responder and you TRULY care about helping people through crisis and trauma, I encourage you to get educated in CISM and Crisis Response. This is not a field where you go to school, get a degree and you are good to go. One does not apply for a job like this, you are sought out and requested, it takes time and successful deployments to build peoples' trust. This is a field where all the attributes of a kind, caring person can connect on a human level and help an individual understand that following a crisis we can heal. This is a field custom built for our personalities, for our natural instincts, for our kind . . . for first responders.

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## Lesson Learned Using CISM

By: Ron Gonzalez, ICISF Member

As a pastor of a church for two decades, I've learned there are always opportunities to come alongside congregants experiencing life, whether it's the birth of a child, a health challenge, or the loss of a loved one. I've also learned that in spite of all the training I received in seminary and other courses I've taken over the years, there are times I feel woefully inadequate to address some of the needs that arise. (This is just a nice way of saying, "I really don't have a clue at times!") When that happens, I have to trust that peoples' needs will be met whether because of me, in spite of me, or by someone else through an appropriate referral.

Last year, one of our congregants reached out to inform us that her best friend and her family lost their home to a fire. As painful as an experience like that can be it was even doubly painful and traumatic for this family consisting of seven females who made every effort to save their home by attempting to extinguish the fire until they had to flee for their lives. Thankfully, all were able to get to safety without injury or harm.

As a church, we immediately offered to come alongside the family to assist in any way possible. This offer included grief counseling which the entire family was open to. As we prepared to meet with the family, I was reminded that earlier in the year I along with more than a dozen other members of our congregation had taken the CISM Group Crisis Intervention course. Our intention was to form a CISM team that could serve our congregants and members of the surrounding communities in the event of a crisis or disaster. When we realized that the family met all the criteria for a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, we

immediately adjusted our perspectives and prepared for our first CISD.

The ages of the female family members ranged from two teens, two young adults, two moms, and one senior citizen, who is the matriarch of the family, who, by the way, spoke very little English. After a cordial introduction, we began the process. Everyone had an opportunity to share and willingly did so in most if not all of the phases. I was deeply impressed by the strength and resilience displayed by the members of this family which stemmed from their faith and close bond with one another.

To say that the family was genuinely and practically served using the 7-phase CISD process is an understatement. I was amazed at how fluid, therapeutic, and truly helpful the process was. Not that I was a skeptic, but you really never know for sure if the tools you acquire in training courses actually work. These tools actually work!

At the end of CISD, and after some good healthy emoting, we prayed (after all, we were at the church and I am a pastor!). Afterward, we stayed in touch with the family for 3-4 weeks. It did my heart good to find out that everyone seemed to be recovering well and adjusting to the loss of their home. Needless to say, I am sold on CISM and am more motivated than ever to do what's required to apply to be certified as a CISM team. I'm grateful for all the research that went into formulating all the CISM tools and for the excellent training we received that prepared us to make a difference.

Thank you ICISF!

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## Events Unfold as Opportunities for Better and Greater Learning

By: Louvel Panalagin, ICISF Member

Ken and I have been medical doctors in the Philippines for 15 years. He is a surgeon and I am a pediatrician. The healthcare condition of our country pressed us to survive and thrive in the barest necessities and most often lack of resources.

Besides the fact that nearly 20 tropical storms hit the country yearly, we are also devastated by epidemics of deadly infectious diseases. In 2018, the Philippines ranked top 10 among the countries “most impacted by terrorism” and the “war on drugs” had been ongoing for more than 2 years. These events greatly affect and paralyze families and children with fear by witnessing violence directly and indirectly at home, within the community and in social media. In addition to all of these, gunshot and stabbing incidents and vehicular accidents jam packed emergency rooms and wards of government hospitals. Perpetual poverty grips the nation. Seeing all of these makes me think that crisis has become a common day to day life. And sadly, it is unrecognized, underestimated, and unaddressed. It concerns me that constant exposure to these events can eventually erode the inner core of the nation to irreparable exhaustion.

As of 2016, The Philippine National Statistics have shown that the doctor - population ratio is about 1 for every 33,000 Filipinos. In a hospital, the nurse to patient ratio is about 1:50 and can go as high as 1: 80 patients. Furthermore, 6 out of 10 Filipinos die without seeing a healthcare professional. Unknowingly, it has become a vicious cycle of deterioration for the caregiver, the patient, and the healthcare system. This condition applies as well to all other sectors of our nation's man power.

While digging related literatures for my research study on helping children of parents with drug addiction, I was able to come across with a website that helped define my desire and purpose - “to assist people in crisis”. Getting to know the heart of ICISF gave me wisdom that an empowered individual can have a ripple effect to empower other individuals that can empower communities which can empower a nation.



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I dreamed of coming to America when I was a child because of the many amazing things I read in books and I saw in movies. I am fascinated that they have many super heroes that made them a “super power nation”. ICISF opened my state of reality that the strength of America is in its people. The everyday American who invest his or her life serving the country. And that investing in the lives of its citizens is investing for the nation's future. This gave me a vision and conviction to pursue the training in CISM and invest in the lives of my country's manpower.

My first time to attend an ICISF conference and be in America is a proof that educating people creates powerful convictions that produce powerful actions. It propelled us to travel despite the odds. The training was comprehensive. The knowledge and protocols presented were remarkably founded on extensive literatures and experiences. I have learned that beneath the facts, lies the priceless gift within us to connect, to care and to give life.

To the ICISF staff, my appreciation and sincere gratitude. Do not grow weary in doing good for you just don't realize how much you impact the world.



## CISM Serves as a Vital Tool for Seamen's Church

(continued from page 6)

"SCI chaplains go out to mariners on their worst days, standing by them amidst challenges and struggles in order to seek the best outcomes possible. Beginning in 2010, we began incorporating Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), a well-established comprehensive, multicomponent crisis intervention system, into our crisis response protocols. Utilizing CISM techniques—combined with our own training, education, experience and judgment—we assist mariners coping with traumatic loss, stressful events and critical incidents."

- Chaplain Kempton D. Baldridge, Fall 2016 "SCI Lookout"

"This gathering of eleven Seamen's Church chaplains attending CISM Training (ICISF Nashville Regional Training) was absolutely invaluable. These past three days provided us an opportunity for the incredible networking and collaboration that took place. Our main charge was to complete the CISM training, laying the foundation for excellence we seek to maintain on the rivers, Gulf, or wherever else we encounter crises along our pathways. Finally, we had the occasion to be embraced and affirmed by Seamen's Church leadership, (Chaplain David Rider), topping off what was a truly awesome experience together."

- Pastor Robert L Green

"I am continually amazed at the exquisite spiritual quality of the people God sends us as new chaplain associates. And from my own experiences on the river I know it also takes courage to step into a crisis situation to try and produce a better outcome."

- Chaplain Don Reusch



"When I go up to the Wheelhouse, or down into the engine room, I know that I am moving into sacred ministry. It is just as profound as entering the Cathedral."

- Chaplain Dave Guilfoyle

"The chaplains of the Seamen's Church Institute are a great spiritual presence of service for the men and women who labor...on our inland waterways and... ocean-going vessels. I feel more prepared today to meet the challenges of tomorrow with my brother and sister chaplains of the Seamen's Church Institute...using this CISM training for those times of crisis (whether) on the river or in parish ministry."

- Chaplain Charles Uhlik

"We Chaplain Associates never know when our phone will ring with news of a critical incident on a river boat. Going through CISM training helps us build our skillset so that we can respond helpfully."

- Chaplain Sue Sommer

"...feeling both proud and grateful to be a small part of SCI's tradition of meeting the unique needs of mariners in unique and sometime dire circumstances, 'wherever the waters flow.'"

- Chaplain John Drymon

"We are here because we are not all there. Seamen's Church chaplains are not individuals doing ministry in isolation. We are a chaplain force that is cultivated into spiritual power when we come together for training and fellowship. The deeper our connection with one another, the more expansive and lifegiving this ministry becomes."

- Chaplain Tom Rhoades





## CISM Lessons Learned in 32 Years of Service

By: Steven P. Sandoval, Police Det. (Ret), ICISF Member

How time flies, it seems just recently that I was a young twenty-something wet-behind-the-ears police rookie. The city in which I worked was a moderately sized city of approximately forty thousand inhabitants, give or take twenty thousand or so during the workday. In my thirty-two years of service as a law enforcement officer, my involvement has afforded me the unfortunate experience of witnessing the dark side of human behavior. Please, don't get me wrong, I am not implying that in all my years of service there was doom and gloom, on the contrary, I likewise experienced the gentle and noble side of humanity.

Having said this, in my impressionable years, I perceived a distancing amongst our rank and file with the death of one of our own, who after his retirement fell ill and died. Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "Go oft to the house of thy friend, for weeds choke the unused path." I hardly knew my colleague, moreover on the day of his funeral, as I scanned the horizon at the burial site, the scarcity of police personnel was evident.

I pondered for a moment and asked, why was there not an honor guard present or the posting of colors, anything tangible to acknowledge a fallen comrade. With the help of other like-minded police officers in the department, we decided to organize our first police honor guard, and in the years that followed, we created our first critical incident stress management team. Shortly after, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc., as well as the OnSite Academy presented our CISM team members with posttraumatic stress disorder education.

Colleagues of mine soon found posttraumatic stress disorder instruction with ICISF and the Onsite Academy a worthwhile venture. Our training paid-off straightaway, and as the years advanced, our CISM team performed duties in ways that served both community and our police department family. Sadly, we did however experience the loss of two of our beloved law enforcement members to suicide. Had it not been for our ICISF education, and the support of the Onsite Academy, the sensitive period of developments that followed in each facet of the suicide incidence may have become a disordered mass of embarrassing events.

Moreover, many who are trained as ICISF members in Worcester County and who were closely connected to several critical incident stress management teams, instinctively came to our aid, besides, as a result of the harmony of PTSD education through the ICISF pedagogy,

every team member assigned directly to our misfortune knew what role they would play in helping mend our fatigued spirits.

Suffice it to say, that throughout the years the number of occurrences requiring CISM intervention is so numerous to compose in my allotted 1500 words or so, that I can hardly express the importance of the quality education provided by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc. Simply put, without ICISF's commitment to educating the members of Fire, EMS, and Law Enforcement personnel in posttraumatic stress disorder and other forms of trauma; I am convinced that members of our police family would have been frustrated in piecing together every facet involving unspeakable episodes of human tragedy needing CISM intercession amongst our rank and file.

Kudos goes out to those of the ICISF staff who are committed in team building of like-minded individuals of our police family and other emergency response organizations, all of which in my many years of service, I have personally witnessed an unsurpassed heart of compassion for their fellow confidants who have suffered as a result of work-related suffering in the performance of helping in times of human tragedy. Likewise, critical incident episodes involving children, motor vehicle crashes, drug overdoses, suicide, and personal struggles have all had their influence on the psyche of our police department personnel. The good news means organizations such as the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc., in my humble opinion, remains on the cutting-edge of PTSD education and service to the community, and undoubtedly has benefited our police CISM team on more than one occasion.

Lastly, before I close, I need to mention one more critical incident involving two of our finest police officers. Late in the evening, approximately two decades ago, sometime in early to mid-fall, our two officers followed up on a home alarm. Each found the garage door open and made the decision to investigate further but no sooner had the second officer crossed the threshold of the garage door, a lone person rose up from the opposite side of the car and began shooting his gun at the two officers.

The police officer that entered the garage last was immediately struck in the chest and was seriously injured, and as a result, quickly retreated. Only feet away from one another, the width of the car, the first officer who entered the garage, traded gunfire with his attacker.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

## From the Regional Training Department

As a benefit of Hosting a Regional Training, ICISF awards Certificates of Appreciation in recognition of outstanding contributions in the field of CISM.

ICISF would like to thank Kimble Richardson, Patsy Hendricks and Chaplain Dan Coffey for their support of ICISF and CISM at ICISF's Indianapolis Regional Training held September 4 – 8, 2019.

***Congratulations on being chosen for the Certificate of Appreciation Award!***



*Pictured left to right: Kimble Richardson, Lindi Holt, Jeff Mitchell, Patsy Hendricks, Father Daniel Coffey and George Everly*

ICISF, Kimble Richardson and the entire Indiana CISM Network have shown their appreciation for Patsy Hendricks, Daniel Coffey and Lindi Holt for their hard work in ensuring that the Indianapolis ICISF Regional Training was a success.



### **PATSY HENDRICKS**

In an era where they just "toughed" it out, Patsy Hendricks realized and recognized that a new program developed by Dr. Jeff Mitchell, a clinical psychologist with Baltimore Trauma, the Critical Incident Stress Management Curriculum was now available. This program must be established locally to meet the emotional and psychological needs of the area's First Responders including Police, Fire, EMS, and Dispatchers when they were emotionally struggling after a particularly heart breaking or frightening call. She went to Baltimore and became an instructor. She came back and proceed to shape, develop, nurture, and manage the local Critical Incident Stress Management team. She also was instrumental in developing and participating in a State-wide Team. That was 30 years ago. This Non-Profit Team is still in existence today and busier than ever. Patsy has served as a founding member, President, Clinical Manager, Mental Health Representative, Treasurer, in fact she has served or held every position in on the Team.

A few of the distinguishing characteristics and attributes that sets Patsy apart from many is that she lives and shares, is her commitment to better mental health in First Responders to reduce suicides, substance abuse, PTSD, and to share her skill

set. The entire ~25-member team has been taught by Patsy, in fact many teams in the area have been taught by Patsy. She ventured with an Indiana Team to support the Hurricane Katrina First Responders in New Orleans and area.

Patsy's name is well known by the local Police Chiefs/Sheriff, Fire Chief, and EMS COO. She over the years have conducted 100's of Debriefing Sessions in Allen and surrounding counties. She is held in high regard for her personal and professional skill and abilities as she leads the Team through the death debriefing of a fellow fire fighter, a child, a family or even a canine.

She is well known in the Public Service community for her abilities of leadership, understanding of mental health issues, empathy, mentor-ship, and problem-solving abilities.

When the time comes, and it does, for all Public Service servants to experience an emotional crisis or situation that causes the responders to ask for help...discussion goes out and the, oh so familiar phrase goes out, "Call Patsy." That is an honor that few can say they represent in a critical time.

As the team and I reflect on the 30-year career of Patsy and the CISM team she developed, words like: proud, needed, prepared, educated, and organized. appear. As the nearly ~1500 evaluations from Fire, Police, EMS and other public service agencies, they reflect in positive comments and thank you's from those whose are struggling with traumatic emotions, maybe for the first time in 30 years they can talk about it. They say it all: Patsy is the glue that binds the team and actively still is the driving force to protect the First Responder's Mental Health.

She has a tremendous positive impact on those we call at our worst times.

## From the Regional Training Department *(continued from page 14)*

### FATHER DANIEL COFFEY

Father Daniel Coffey has served Public Safety professionals since 1993 when he became the employed chaplain for the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Police Department. That same year he also became a member of the Northeast Indiana Critical Incident Stress Management Team which serves emergency responders in nine (9) counties in Northeast Indiana. After maintaining his stellar reputation and earning the trust of the law enforcement culture, he was deployed to the World Trade Center to assist the Port Authority Police Department following the terrorist attacks on 9/11/2001.

In September 2006, he became employed as the lead chaplain of the Indiana State Police (ISP) and, in that capacity, he leads the ISP CISM Teams throughout the state. In 2018, Father Coffey and colleague Patsy Hendricks, RN revitalized the Indiana CISM Network and has overseen the infrastructure and resurrection of close to 40 CISM teams across Indiana. Not one to ever rest on his laurels, Father Coffey earned the prestigious Diplomat Credential in July 2019 from the International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC) and is one of only about 55 to have ever received this credential since the inception of the ICPC in 1973.

### KIMBLE RICHARDSON

Kimble Richardson, M.S., LMHC, LCSW, LMFT, LCAC is a native Hoosier with 32 years of experience in healthcare and 25 years of affiliation with CISM/ICISF. He is one of

the leaders of a large, healthcare-based CISM team that operates 24/7 and has a team roster of close to 100 trained peer and mental health employees. He is the co-coordinator for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's District 5 Mental Health Team, the Fishers (Indiana) Police Department CISM Team, and the University of Indianapolis Crisis Response Team.

He is an ICISF instructor for Assisting Individuals in Crisis, Group Crisis Intervention, and Advanced Group Crisis Intervention. He has been a presenter at four ICISF World Congress's (including a plenary presentation in 2013) and has responded to approximately 600-700 CISM requests. Kimble was the committee chair for the ICISF Indianapolis Regional Conferences in 2017 and this past September 2019. With approximately 1 ½ - 2 years of prep work before each conference, the multiple tasks are doable with a great committee and the assistance from the caring and knowledgeable ICISF staff. Kimble described his primary tasks as the committee chair as scheduling the committee meetings and establishing the agendas, facilitating the meetings, assigning action items to committee members, maintaining contact with ICISF staff, helping to secure conference sponsorships or in-kind services, and being the champion/cheerleader for the group.

## From the Approved Instructor Department

*Congratulations to the Approved Instructor Program participants who completed the following programs!*

Assisting Individuals in Crisis – September 2019 – Indianapolis, IN

Group Crisis Intervention – September 2019 – San Francisco, CA

Pastoral Crisis Intervention – October 2019 – Atlanta, GA

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schedule will be posted to our  
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**Stay tuned for more details.**

## CISM in Conservation Law Enforcement

*(continued from page 8)*

These men and women speak the same language; they know the same issues they confront day to day. Even when another Game Warden has not gone through some incident like their peer has, there's an automatic trust factor that enhances the conversation and informs the understanding between them. In the immediate aftermath of a critical incident though, a Chaplain can be of help, but there's no one who can implement the debriefing or defusing as well as another peer. Of course, there might be some issues if there is a mismatch in rank, but even then the peer to peer can be both useful and helpful in stress reduction.

While this is going on, and where possible when a Chaplain is present, those who have been the victims of an incident or have had the unfortunate situation forced on them by being present during a critical incident, this is where the Chaplain can be most helpful. Game Wardens are on scene to do a job. Yet, those who have been witnesses to the incident need some help, as well, i.e. a family. The Chaplain, trained in immediate care for those who are in emotional shock and asking questions of a deep spiritual nature, can keep a distance between the Wardens working an event and the family who wants to know everything about the situation. Serving as a liaison and a "buffer" gives needed distance so the incident can be attended to in a timely manner by Law Enforcement officers.

In full disclosure, my part in debriefings has been very small. I'm a recent former pastor. I have history and training as a military chaplain with the Texas State

Guard serving as a chaplain for the Texas Army National Guard, as well, while the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had been underway. However, most of my training has been in pastoral counseling in churches. So, when the opportunity to serve as a chaplain for the Texas Parks and Wildlife, Law Enforcement Division came up, it began for me a learning curve similar to a rocket going straight up. In the military our chaplains have CISM training and are excellent in immediate emotional and spiritual care very soon after an intense situation outside the wire. However, the chaplains are not always given access, due to regulations and the freedom of the soldier to refuse help, and therefore cannot meet with the soldier in some capacity.

The issues with military personnel coming home long after one or more critical incidents, often a "helmet" full of critical incidents, and the Law Enforcement critical incidents that happen almost monthly, means I knew a little, but not the best ways of dealing with incidents that come up regularly. CISM with Law Enforcement has given me a new chance to understand how immediate issues must be dealt with after an incident.

We continue to strive and grow in our vision of giving those finding themselves in critical incidents a hand up, heart(s) that care and passion to dissipate the ugliness of the world, at times. Working together, CIT and Chaplains have made positive inroads into touching lives in positive ways that have been affected in negative ways through CISM. That is our hope; that is our goal.

## CISM Lessons Learned in 32 Years of Service

*(continued from page 13)*

The suspect escaped from the garage without being injured and injuring the officer, however, found himself face to face with the police officer he had wounded just moments earlier. Once again another exchange of gunfire took place just outside of the garage on the front lawn.

The attacker was seriously wounded as a result of being struck twice by bullets from the wounded officer's firearm. The assailant later succumbed to his injuries and died at the scene. The good news was our disabled officer survived his injuries but unfortunately had to retire due to his wounds.

Because of our CISM training, members of the team sprung into action and followed protocol, calling for other CISM

team members from nearby communities. Had it not been for our critical incident stress management training, we would have been lost and most certainly failed to control the situation relevant to CISM intervention.

Now retired, I have entered another chapter in my life; I am no longer with my CISM team at the police department, and furthermore, I find myself looking through different CISM lenses, thus taking on a slightly different role, one that finds me as a member of the critical incident stress management team in Princeton Massachusetts. I remain a member of ICISF and look forward to my journey in helping anywhere I might be asked. Indeed, I will keep up with the vanguard of ICISF education.



## Managing Critical Incidents: It's Not "If," But When

(continued from page 7)

By showing immediate compassion to everyone affected by the incident allows leadership to get out in front of potential criticism and shows a level of care and concern that communicates confidence.

Cahill suggested Boeing Re-visit the corporate vision statement:

["To Connect, Protect, Explore and Inspire the World through Aerospace Innovation."](#)

"But you don't need to incur an expensive mistake to understand what not to do with PR. As we continue to move forward into our hyper-connected world, stepping ahead of any problem, taking extreme ownership, and leveraging your vision is the only way to get your PR and your message off the ground."

Both of these examples point to the acute need to have a well-defined CIR plan.

Leadership faces a minefield of potential costly missteps in navigating a critical incident, large or small. Typically, Human Resources are the point people managing an initial crisis. All too often leadership steps back trusting that HR has the CIR under control. However the most important step is to impress upon leadership that employees want to and deserve to hear from them regarding the incident. The message needs to be swift, empathic and compassionate. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, this can be done by a brief visit to the site of the event, a direct tech outreach to impacted employees, and or assurances to follow up with timely updates.

Leadership must articulate high regard for the employees who help the organization grow and prosper. Most often it is expressed in an organizations mission statement... "employees are our most important asset". Unfortunately, all too often, leadership inadvertently conveys a profits before people attitude in their CIR statements.

### ONE DRAMATIC LESSON

One of the most dramatic and atypical lessons regarding this idea of balancing economics with empathic concern for employees happened 32 years ago when Paul O'Neill was appointed CEO at Alcoa. O'Neill had been Secretary of the treasury, Chairman at the Rand Corporation and a native of my home town St. Louis. His actions are forever burned into my printed circuits and I admire O'Neill greatly.

Here's the story as told by [Drake Baer](#) Apr. 9, 2014 Business insider.

"Back in October 1987, Paul O'Neill gave his first speech as CEO of Alcoa. Investors were nervous, since Alcoa had

faltered with failed product lines. But O'Neill didn't talk about profit margins, revenue projections, or anything else that would be comforting to Wall Street ears."

"I want to talk to you about worker safety," he began. The room went silent.

"Every year, numerous Alcoa workers are injured so badly that they miss a day of work."

"I intend to make Alcoa the safest company in America. I intend to go for zero injuries."

"I'm not certain you heard me," O'Neill continued. "If you want to understand how Alcoa is doing, you need to look at our workplace safety figures."

For the new CEO, safety trumped profits.

Investors ran out of the room as soon as the New York-based presentation finished. One sprinted to a payphone and called his 20 largest clients. "The board put a crazy hippie in charge, and he's going to kill the company, I ordered them to sell their stock immediately, before everyone else in the room started calling their clients and telling them the same thing. It was literally the worst piece of advice I gave in my entire career."

The emphasis on safety [made an impact](#). Over O'Neill's tenure, Alcoa dropped from 1.86 lost work days to injury per 100 workers to 0.2. By 2012, the rate had fallen to 0.125. Surprisingly, that impact extended beyond worker health. One year after O'Neill's speech, the company's profits hit a record high.

### LESSONS LEARNED

The worlds of First responders, uniformed personnel, EAP Professionals and organizational leaders are exceptionally demanding and competitive. The key is to strike the right balance between economics and empathy to advance a win-win result.

Leaders like Paul O'Neill shouldn't come along just once in a generation. The leadership necessary to successfully navigate a critical incident is potentially in every organization. Put your CIR on the best possible footing that leads to the best solution.

Whether you are a fire chief, police commander, corporate CEO or small business owner, investing in the human side of your organization will always pay big dividends. Stepping up and stepping out ahead of a critical incident with empathic and compassionate words and actions focused on employees will always be a good move.

## Revitalized Rural CISM Team Embraces Five-T Strategic Planning Formula

(continued from page 1)

Although the students were of similar age and gender, the events—one a drowning, the other a suicide—occurred months apart in separate school districts. Given the distinctive variables associated with each event, a strategic planning approach using the “Five-T” Strategic Planning Formula was used to identify specific intervention tactics that were based on the unique factors associated with each crisis event.

An overview of the strategic planning process used to support the CISM response with the drowning incident is highlighted in the following summary:

### DROWNING SCENARIO

**Theme:** Three teen-age males were out walking on an ice covered river. At some point all three broke through the ice with one of the trio being swept away under the ice by the river’s current. After a series of search efforts both at the scene immediately following the event and extending weeks later into the spring season, the teenager’s body was eventually recovered through a coordinated search some distance away from the actual accident site.

**Target(s):** Homogeneous groups - The two teen-age males on the scene at the time of the incident. First responders at the scene. Heterogeneous groups – extended family, close friends, school peers and school staff. Informational groups – community members.

**Types:** Using the “Five-T” model and the bonus of extensive planning time brought about by an unexpected series of “snow days,” during which time the school district was closed because of inclement weather--both preceding and immediately following a weekend period--a very effective CISM response was developed and executed for students and staff members. CISM tactics and tools utilized were developed to support the range of targets impacted by the event and those choosing to participate with the CISM team to include: Individual Crisis Intervention, Crisis Management Briefing, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, Follow-Up Services and Referrals, and Animal Assisted Crisis Response (Comfort Dogs).

**Timing:** CISM services were preceded by a memorial service over the weekend, with a coordinated CISM response executed on the first day school was back in session following the weekend and snow days. A follow-up CISM response was planned and successfully executed several weeks later the day following the recovery.

**Team:** CISM team members were selected based on their availability, skills, experience and needs of the identified targets. Delivery of CISM tactics and tools were delivered by

a team of trained school and community agency staff.

### LESSONS LEARNED

Vernon Law, former Major League Baseball pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates is quoted as saying, “Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson after.” Using Vern’s Law, our team strives to make the best use of strategic planning before, during and following a CISM deployment. We seek to learn from each CISM deployment and embrace all experiences as an opportunity to learn and build team capacity.

The following bullet points reflect a few “take-away” ideas generated from a recent facilitated team meeting that merge quite nicely with concepts taught through our ICISF trainings:

- It’s important to take the necessary time up front for strategic planning.
- Align the appropriate CISM tactics and responses with that of the identified target(s) and need.
- Create a plan, implement the plan with fidelity, stay flexible, debrief afterward using a post action staff support.
- Match team resources with the implementation plan.
- When in doubt, take time to assess and reflect...trust the model.
- Remember...Individual (1:1) Crisis Intervention is a both great primary and “fallback” intervention.
- Always create time and opportunity for individual sessions and follow-up.
- Build individual and team capacity through regular practice scenarios.
- Create opportunities to build awareness of CISM with community members.

### CLOSING COMMENTS

Requests from both local schools and from members of our first responder community continue to generate an increasing number of CISM referrals. We see this upsurge in requests primarily as an indicator that our responses are meeting an important need in our community. Going forward our team continues to actively recruit interested volunteers. We see the merger of committed community members with the high quality training and support provided through ICISF as a winning combination for both our team and for those whom we serve.

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