



Critical Incident Management Framework

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1 Introduction

Purpose

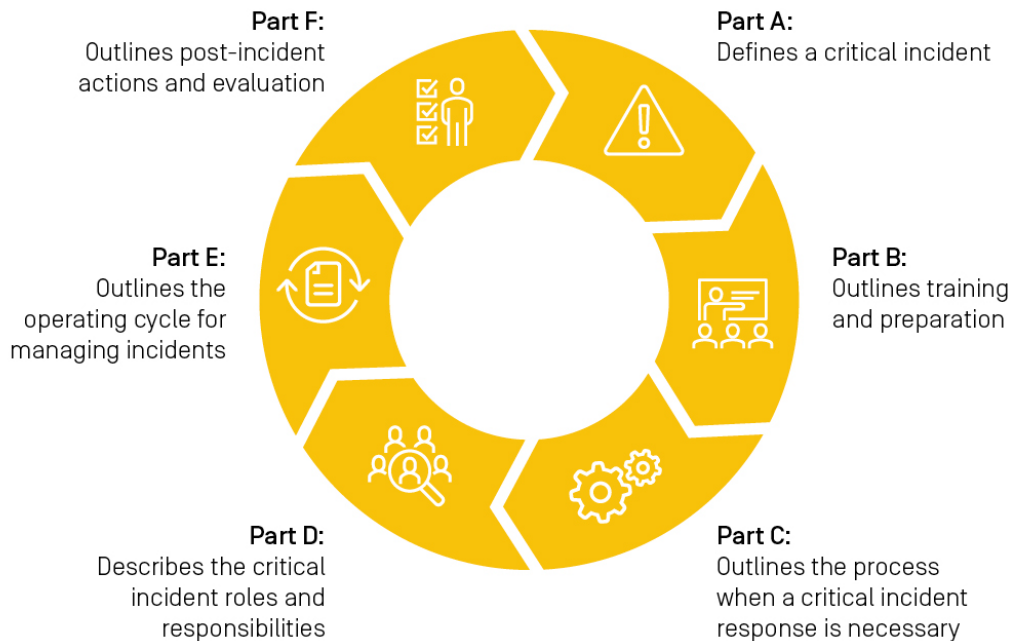
- 1.1 A critical incident relates to any event that has resulted in, or is likely to result in, significant harm (physical or psychological) to Softball Australia personnel or significant harm to Softball Australia business operations. The incident is likely to attract media interest and potentially have negative consequences for the reputation of Softball Australia and individuals/teams.
- 1.2 Softball Australia recognises that effective planning and preparation, communication, and the appropriate use of resources are the keys to successful management of a critical incident.
- 1.3 Softball Australia has established this Critical Incident Framework (**Framework**) for use by Softball Australia when responding to and managing a critical incident. This Framework outlines the systems, processes and responsibilities that guide Softball Australia's planning for and response to a critical incident.
- 1.4 Nothing in this Framework limits the application of Commonwealth, state/territory or foreign laws and Softball Australia will cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies and other Australian and foreign government agencies in connection with actions taken in response to a critical incident.

Scope

- 1.5 This Framework is designed to direct the response of Softball Australia to all critical incidents involving:
 - 1.5.1 Softball Australia personnel (including officers, athletes, coaches, team support staff, officials, employees and other authorised personnel) (Softball Australia personnel)
 - 1.5.2 Softball Australia teams
 - 1.5.3 Softball Australia business activities
 - 1.5.4 competitions, events, training and tours, both within Australia and overseas, in which:
 - (a) Softball Australia teams are participating, and/or
 - (b) Softball Australia staff are working.

2 How to use the Critical Incident Management Framework

2.1 This Framework sets out how Softball Australia will manage critical incidents:



2.2 The Framework is supported by a Critical Incident Management Plan (Management Plan) and a Critical Incident Communications Plan:

2.2.1 The Management Plan acts as a user guide for Softball Australia personnel. The Management Plan provides Incident Response Plans (IRP) and the templates, checklists and tools in an easy-to-access format to guide the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) through a critical incident.

2.2.2 The Critical Incident Communications Plan has been developed to assist Softball Australia prepare, respond and manage the dissemination of communication during a critical incident. The Critical Incident Communications Plan provides Softball Australia communications team and or communications coordinator/nominated representative with practical templates, checklists and tools to manage internal and external communication strategies during a critical incident.



3 Part A: What is a critical incident?

3.1 A critical incident is any event that:

- 3.1.1 results in immediate serious harm (physical or psychological) to Softball Australia personnel and/or event attendees
- 3.1.2 results in one or more fatalities to Softball Australia personnel and/or event attendees
- 3.1.3 materially threatens the integrity and reputation of Softball Australia or the sport of softball within Australia
- 3.1.4 materially threatens the financial/property assets of Softball Australia, and/or exposes Softball Australia to material liability or threatens its business continuity.

3.2 A critical incident may include, without limitation:

- 3.2.1 a serious illness or injury
- 3.2.2 a serious wellbeing incident
- 3.2.3 a security issue, and/or
- 3.2.4 a natural disaster.
- 3.2.5 This list is not exhaustive.



4 Part B: Training

- 4.1 This Framework should be reviewed and updated as required:
 - 4.1.1 at least every two years, or
 - 4.1.2 following a debrief of the management of each critical incident covered by the Framework.
- 4.2 Softball Australia should ensure the arrangements under the Framework are tested regularly through scenario-based critical incident simulations.
- 4.3 For effective management and resolution of critical incidents under this Framework, Softball Australia personnel should:
 - 4.3.1 understand their individual role, including Softball Australia personnel acting as members of the CIMT, and the role of other Softball Australia personnel under the Framework.
 - 4.3.2 be trained to manage critical incidents in line with the process outlined in this Framework.
 - 4.3.3 have their contact information checked and updated in the Management Plan.
- 4.4 To prepare for and/or prevent critical incidents, Softball Australia should:
 - 4.4.1 identify and mitigate situations that have the potential to become critical incidents.
 - 4.4.2 communicate this Framework to Softball Australia personnel.
 - 4.4.3 train all relevant Softball Australia personnel on their responsibilities under the Framework, including the responsibility to notify the CIMT Leader of any incident, and the responsibilities of Softball Australia personnel acting as first responders and as members of the CIMT under this Framework.
 - 4.4.4 ensure all resources required to support the process outlined in this Framework (including the Management Plan and Communications Plan), are prepared and available in hard copy format.



Pre-planning for events and tours

This Framework is designed to be used for the management of a critical incident of any nature. However, hosting domestic events and sending teams on overseas tours provide particular risk points for a sport's critical incident planning.

Overseas

When identifying and planning for overseas tours or events, check [DFAT'S smartraveller website](#) to assess whether a country is safe to travel to.

- If *smartraveller* advises: *Do not travel*, then do not travel. The safety of staff and athletes is paramount. You may need to contact your international federation or the host organising committee and explain your decision. Travel to a destination that is listed as 'Do not travel' on the *smartraveller* website may result in the inability to obtain, or claim on, your insurance.
- If *smartraveller* advises: *Reconsider your need to travel*, contact the [Australian Consulate/Embassy of the country you intend to visit](#) for advice on whether it is safe to travel.
- When the decision has been made to travel, notify the Australian Consulate/Embassy of the country you are visiting. The following details should be provided:
 - Reasons for visit
 - Dates of the tour
 - Team configuration (athletes / athlete support personnel / friends / family / numbers / gender and ages).

Domestic

If planning to bid for, or host, a major sporting event in Australia, contact the Major Events and International team at the Australian Government Office for Sport (within the Department of Health). They can assist with coordinating the management of Australian Government security protocols and safety for the event.



5 Part C: Critical incident management

Assessing a critical incident

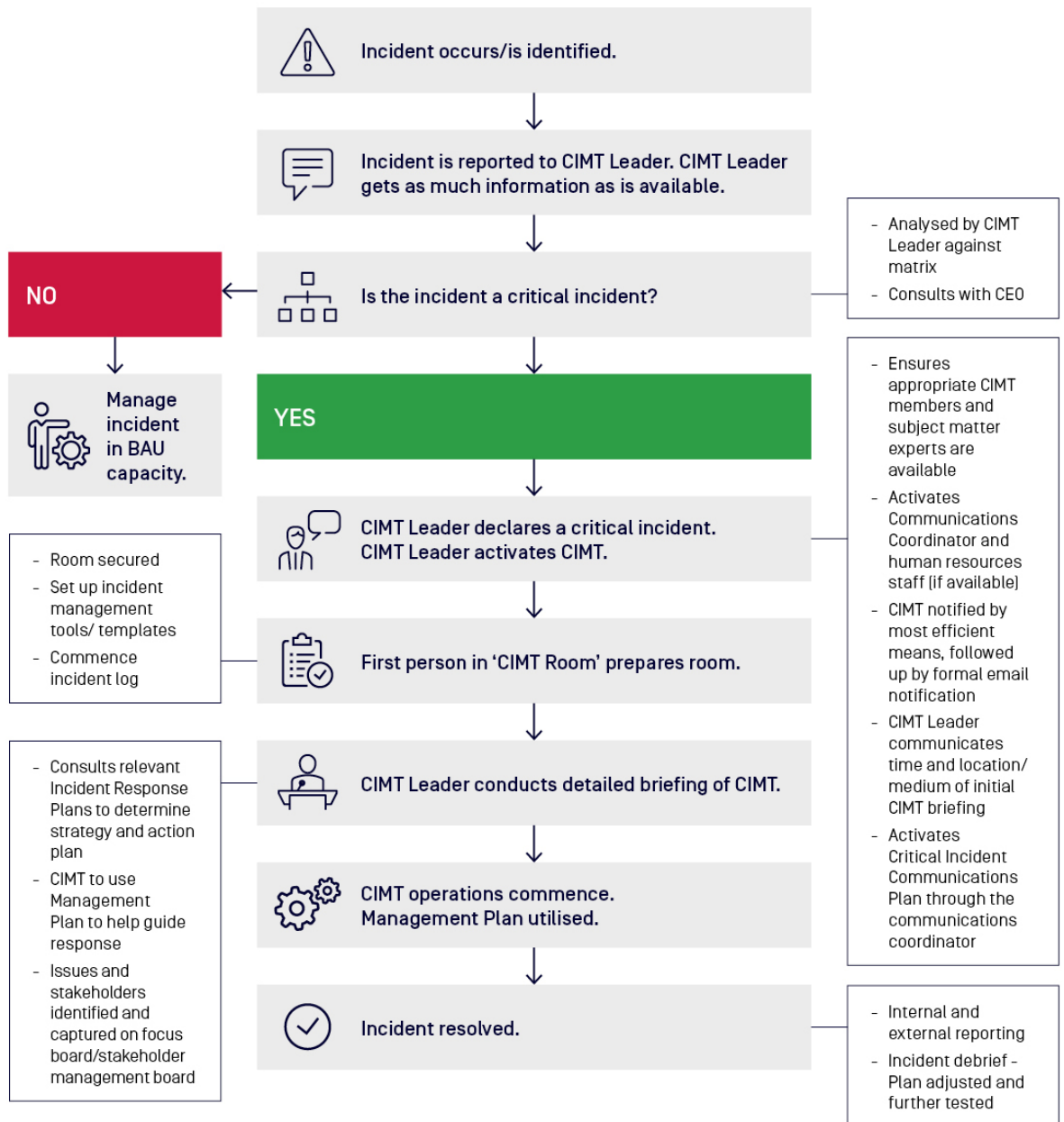
5.1 Use the following matrix to assess whether a critical incident response is required or whether an incident can be managed through the application of 'business as usual' functional resources.

5.2 Any incident that is assessed as being '**Significant**' or '**Major**' will be considered a critical incident and must be managed in accordance with this Framework. An incident that is not assessed as a critical incident can usually be managed through existing functional resources.

Level	Impact	Incident type	Organisational response
1	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local work teams under normal supervision can effectively cope, with little or no adverse effects on Softball Australia and its stakeholders. This level of incident need not be declared, as it can be managed as part of normal operations. 	Functional Team/Emergency Response Team
2	Significant	<p>Can be managed at the site level but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may need external resourcing over and above that which is usually used by the work team, and/or the actual or potential impact on the organisation, its stakeholders and the environment is more widespread, and requires the activation of a higher-level management team to manage strategic and stakeholder impacts and a site-level management team to manage the operational impact. 	Critical Incident Management Team
3	Major	<p>Incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> requires off-site coordination with major levels of external resourcing and support causes or has the potential to cause a major impact on the organisation, its stakeholders and the environment requires activation of the CIMT to manage the broad range of corporate and strategic issues that may emerge from the event. 	Critical Incident Management Team

Critical incident procedure

5.3 Softball Australia expects that each critical incident will be managed in line with the following model to ensure a consistent, coordinated and efficient response:





6 Part D: Critical incident roles and responsibilities

Critical incident response structure

6.1 Softball's organisational response to a critical incident comprises a three-tiered structure featuring:

6.1.1 Softball Australia personnel on-site who act as 'first responders'

6.1.2 the Critical Incident Management Team

6.1.3 the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

6.2 This structure should be supported by a communications coordinator, while human resources support should be mobilised if available. A Softball Australia staff member or a contractor may be co-opted to act in these roles. This structure is represented below:

Role	Focus	Responsibilities
First responder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People • Environment • Assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure immediate safety and wellbeing of people • Manage initial on-site response—ensure security, reduce immediate threat and secure incident site • Notify and follow directions of local authorities
CIMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business continuity • Reputation • Liability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the overall response to the critical incident, including strategic issues related to reputation, liability and business continuity • Brief and liaise with the CEO • Coordinate internal/external communications (supported by communications coordinator) • Manage human resource issues (supported by human resource staff if available)
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board • Executive Team • Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage Executive Team and Chairman/Board • Provide strategic advice to CIMT Leader • Be the public face of the organisation • Liaise with stakeholders (AIS, Member Associations National Institute Network, other Government Agencies)



Key roles and responsibilities

First responder(s)

- 6.3 In the case of a serious physical incident or threat to Softball Australia personnel, Softball Australia assets or the environment, or a major physical incident at a Softball Australia event, first responders are primarily responsible for saving life, administering first aid, extracting (or organising the extraction of) Softball Australia personnel and reacting to the immediate threats of an incident when and where it occurs.
- 6.4 First responders do not always have authority to manage the situation further than an immediate response and should follow reasonable directions of local authorities, emergency services personnel and/or the AFP or DFAT.
- 6.5 Once the CIMT has been activated, first responders shall provide the necessary assistance and support as directed by the CIMT.

Rules of engagement for first responders

- 6.6 First responders should:
- 6.6.1 keep personal logs of all actions and communications and ensure this information is provided to the CIMT
 - 6.6.2 not engage in any media interviews or provide a statement without the express permission of Softball Australia
 - 6.6.3 be supported by Softball Australia in any interview with regulatory authorities, including with appropriate legal representation.

Critical Incident Management Team

- 6.7 The CIMT provides technical, logistic and services support to the first responders and/or makes operational plans to mitigate the effects of a critical incident. The CIMT also manages matters relating to reputation, liability and business continuity for Softball Australia. Members of the CIMT should refer to the Management Plan to help guide the CIMT response to a critical incident.
- 6.8 Composition of the CIMT may change from time to time in response to the type of critical incident that has occurred, and immediate availability of staff. The CIMT should include the following roles and responsibilities for all critical incidents, although certain CIMT members may be stood down or added depending on the nature of the critical incident:

Position	Responsibilities
CIMT Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead response to critical incident in collaboration with other CIMT members and first responders • Confirm releasable information and communications strategy in line with Critical Incident Communications Plan • Liaise with, update and take direction from the CEO on strategic issues arising from the critical incident • In consultation with the CEO, decide (i) when, if and how to activate



Position	Responsibilities
	the CIMT and (ii) when to stand down the CIMT
CIMT Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish/maintain CIMT operations and process hard copy tool kit and CIMT Room operations Maintain or facilitate a detailed chronological log of all events that occur in response to the critical incident, with relevant timings/entries Provide support to CIMT Leader
Athlete Wellbeing Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and support the welfare of athletes and high performance personnel, including issues relating to victims and their families/next of kin Provide support to the CIMT Leader on all matters directly related to the wellbeing of athletes and high performance personnel
Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage internal/external communication messages and strategy in line with the Critical Incident Communications Plan Manage media stakeholders
Human Resources Coordinator (where available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage human resources and employee relations issues, including those relating to victims and their families/next of kin Facilitate dedicated Employee Assistance Program
Subject Matter Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist CIMT Leader by coordinating functional response (examples: legal, high performance, medical, wellbeing, AIS)

- 6.9 Contact details for the standing members of the CIMT and their alternates are set out in the Management Plan.
- 6.10 Each CIMT member has a nominated alternate who will automatically assume their role if the primary member cannot participate in the CIMT.
- 6.11 Absent, ill, intoxicated and/or fatigued CIMT members will not be activated, including members who are considered likely to be too distressed due to the nature of the incident to act effectively in the circumstances (for example, if the incident involves a relative or close acquaintance). Instead, their alternates should be activated.
- 6.12 The CIMT will be led by the CIMT Leader unless:
- 6.12.1 the CIMT Leader is unable to perform their role, in which case their alternate will act as the CIMT Leader, or
- 6.12.2 the nature of the critical incident requires that a person with a specific skill- set, expertise or functional knowledge be leveraged as part of Softball Australia response, in which case that person will be seconded into the role of CIMT Leader.

CEO

- 6.13 In most critical incidents, the CEO will be involved in the CIMT. However, this will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident and the resource capability of Softball Australia at that time.
- 6.14 If the CEO elects to remain separate from the CIMT, they will still have a role to play in providing input via the CIMT Leader into decisions on whether to activate the CIMT and on



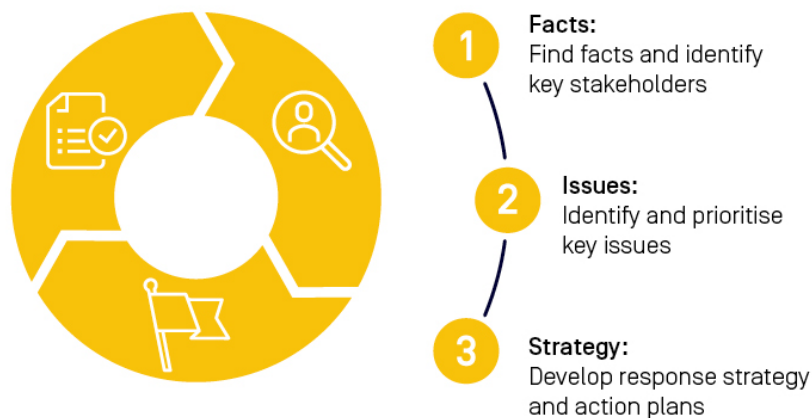
strategic and action plans to resolve the critical incident, and will continue to operate as the conduit of incident information to the Board/Chairman as necessary.

- 6.15 Softball Australia may also consider that the CEO remain separate from the CIMT because:
 - 6.15.1 the CEO will be the public face of the organisation during the ongoing management of the critical incident, and
 - 6.15.2 the CEO will need to oversee ongoing operations of the organisation rather than be solely focused on the critical incident response.

7 Part E: Critical Incident Management Team Operation

Operating cycle for managing incidents

- 7.1 While the specific response to each critical incident will depend upon the circumstances or be guided by an incident-specific Incident Response Plan, the CIMT is to follow the operating cycle set out below until the incident is controlled.



Step 1: Find facts and identify key stakeholders

- 7.2 **Key facts should be established and verified as soon as possible**, especially if dealing with casualties. It is common for there to be conflicting information and even information voids in the early stages of an incident. Decisions and actions may need to be taken long before a complete picture emerges.
- 7.3 **Information gaps** should be identified as soon as possible. Detailed facts can be collected by utilising the 'Fact gathering sheet' checklist; in the Management Plan.
- 7.4 **Impacted stakeholders** should be identified and captured in the 'Stakeholder Matrix' template in the Management Plan.

Step 2: Identify and prioritise issues

- 7.5 Once key facts are verified, the CIMT **must determine the key issues**. These should be recorded on the 'Focus board' template in the Management Plan. The CIMT should establish which issues are **key priorities** requiring an immediate response, and which can be left to a later time or managed in a timely manner.
- 7.6 Once the CIMT has agreed on priority issues, a strategy should be formulated that captures key actions to address each issue.

Step 3: Develop and implement Critical Incident Management Strategy

- 7.7 The CIMT should determine a **response strategy** to each of the issues identified on the Focus Board.

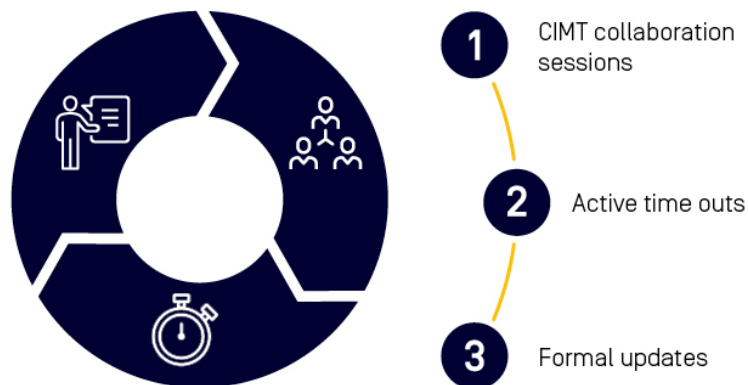
7.8 The strategy should encompass a series of planned actions to mitigate the impact of the critical incident, with each action assigned to a CIMT member. Generally, these actions should cover off at least the following categories:

- 7.8.1 Medical/wellbeing management
- 7.8.2 Media updates
- 7.8.3 Stakeholder updates (including Board, Member Associations, International Federation, AIS/Sport Australia, NIN, Australian Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia, Commonwealth Games Association)
- 7.8.4 High performance (athletes, coaches, high performance staff) actions
- 7.8.5 Team operations/scheduling actions
- 7.8.6 Commercial issues
- 7.8.7 Insurance/liability mitigation.

7.9 All agreed actions must be regularly reviewed by the CIMT. New facts and issues may emerge, while priorities may change as the incident progresses.

Operating rhythm

7.10 The CIMT should operate using the standardised, three-step methodology described below which should be applied continually until the incident is controlled:



7.11 The operating rhythm requires the CIMT members to engage as follows:

- 7.11.1 **Step 1 - CIMT collaboration sessions:** the CIMT will collaborate to find facts and identify key stakeholders, identify and prioritise issues, and develop a response strategy and action plans.
- 7.11.2 **Step 2 - Active time outs:** CIMT members will break from these collaborative team sessions to convey information to their team members, collate further information and implement elements of action plans for which they are responsible.
- 7.11.3 **Step 3 - Formal updates:** CIMT members will re-engage as directed by the CIMT Leader and refocus by formally updating the CIMT on relevant matters,



while receiving a formal incident status update from the CIMT Leader before resuming CIMT collaboration.

CIMT rules of engagement

Rules of engagement for CIMT members

- 7.12 CIMT members must observe the following rules while acting in response to a critical incident:
- 7.12.1 Only the CIMT Leader (or a delegate) is authorised to deal with the CEO on matters relating to the critical incident (in circumstances where the CEO is not part of the CIMT)
 - 7.12.2 CIMT work should be prioritised over business as usual work—phone calls and emails unrelated to the critical incident should be deprioritised
 - 7.12.3 The communications coordinator (if applicable) must provide direct guidance and supervision to the CIMT in relation to the preparation of media/stakeholder releases on the basis of approved releasable information. The CIMT Leader must sign off on all publicly releasable information, having taken into account the relevant advice of other CIMT members and the CEO
 - 7.12.4 Releasable information should be updated at least twice a day. If releasable information does not change in the day, this must be communicated to relevant personnel (including the communications coordinator)
 - 7.12.5 The only employees authorised to speak to media are those set out in the applicable Softball Australia Media Relations Policy
 - 7.12.6 CIMT members must maintain strict confidentiality at all times.



8 Communication support

Preparation and planning

- 8.1 A key part of Softball Australia's incident response is how communications are managed internally and externally with stakeholders. Poor communication can lead to commercial and reputational impact. All internal and external communications during a critical incident will be managed through the CIMT and the staff member acting as the communications coordinator. However, **the CIMT Leader must approve all formal statements.**
- 8.2 To optimise the communications response to an incident, Softball Australia will have a clear communications protocol that includes:
- 8.2.1 a Critical Incident Communications Plan: Describes ideal communications actions, timings and responsible person. This will be a live plan and will evolve as the incident evolves.
 - 8.2.2 draft prepared **template statements**: To adapt for the incident at hand (as set out in the Management Plan). Template statements should be regularly reviewed and updated if required. Additional templates based on likely incident scenarios should be developed and referenced in existing and future Incident Response Plans.
- 8.3 When responding to the media, messages should cover the '3 Cs': **concern, control and commitment**. For example:
- 8.3.1 Concern: Softball Australia is concerned that there has been an incident in[place].
 - 8.3.2 Control: Softball Australia's CIMT has been activated and is working to manage the situation in accordance with the Softball Australia Management Plan.
 - 8.3.3 Commitment: Softball Australia is committed to ensuring that everyone is accounted for and safe.
- 8.4 Media statements should also provide answers to as many 'who, what, when, where, why and how' questions as possible.

Communication roles and responsibilities

- 8.5 In the event of a critical incident, the CEO is the primary Softball Australia spokesperson responsible for all external communications unless otherwise directed. The key alternate spokesperson is the Communication Manager, while other employees authorised to speak to media are those set out in the Communications Protocol.

Human resources support

- 8.6 In the event of a critical incident, there is the probability of psychological, emotional and social impacts on athletes and staff.
- 8.7 Softball Australia and the CIMT may require human resources to:
- 8.7.1 provide support for issues such as casualty and nominated emergency contact/next of kin management.



- 8.7.2 facilitate provision of an Employee Assistance Program by service provider (if applicable), the AIS Mental Health Referral Network and any additional psychological support.



9 Part F: Post-incident actions and evaluation

- 9.1 Following resolution of a critical incident the Softball Australia, in consultation with the AIS where appropriate, should:
- 9.1.1 conduct a post-incident evaluation that includes an assessment of:
 - (a) the operations of the CIMT including the skill set of the CIMT, the performance of CIMT members, whether the templates and tools were effectively used, any gaps in the incident response, and what could be done differently in future
 - (b) the adequacy of the Framework and related documents, and whether any documentation or procedures need to be refined or updated, in particular the Management Plan and Critical Incident Communications Plan
 - (c) ongoing potential for legal or reputational liability
 - (d) the adequacy of insurance policies and whether additional cover is required for future incidents.
 - 9.1.2 complete any necessary internal/external reporting, including a comprehensive incident debrief for the Softball Australia audit and risk committee and/or Board
 - 9.1.3 assess any long-term clinical treatment requirements for individuals involved in the incident
 - 9.1.4 consider with the nominated Softball Australia communications coordinator a media strategy that covers any ongoing media activities that occur in relation to the incident and/or rebuilding the organisation's reputation
- 9.2 Where practicable, Softball Australia should meet with the AIS Athlete Wellbeing and Engagement team to debrief on the incident as part of a 'lessons learned' exercise.
- 9.3 The adequacy, or not, of the CIMT processes and any gaps that were identified in the handling of the incident should be discussed with a view to reviewing and improving the handling of critical incidents across the high performance sport system.



Document control

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