

## **SECTION 17**

# **CRITICAL INCIDENT DEBRIEFING TEAM FOR THE FIRE SERVICE**

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**1. INFORMATION ON CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS:**

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- 1.1 Research has shown that only a *small percentage* of emergency service workers are actually *not* affected by stress.
  - 1.2 All that is necessary is that the incident, regardless of type, generates unusual strong feeling in the emergency workers. e.g.:
    - Death or suicide of co-worker(s).
    - ; from an emergency operation.
    - Multiple casualty incidents.
    - Excessive or critical media coverage.
    - igh powered events.
    - Death or violence to a child.
  - 1.3 Incident Team conducts either debriefing or a defusing.
  - 1.4 Formal debriefings by the team are best conducted 24 to 72 hours following an incident.
  - 1.5 Defusings are mini-debriefings conduct for small groups within 4 to 8 hours after an incident.
  - 1.6 Signs and symptoms that may be observed with critical incident stress are:
    - Difficulty concentrating.
    - Tunnel vision
    - Irritability, anger and or guilt.
    - Flashbacks
    - Withdrawal
    - Increase use of alcohol or drugs.
    - Profuse sweating and/or nausea.
- Note: *These symptoms may indicate that the emergency service worker is suffering from critical incident stress. These are normal reactions, by a normal person, to an abnormal event.*

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**2. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- 2.1 If a person may be affected by a critical incident and they do not want to activate the C.I.S. Team, they may feel more comfortable working with their company (E.A.P.) employee assistance program.
- Contact your company representative if the E.A.P. is to be used.
- 2.2 The Fire Service Critical Incident Team will only assist municipal and industrial fire service personnel in and around Lambton County, and areas immediate to Port Huron Michigan.

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**3. LOCAL CRITICAL INCIDENT TEAM CONTACT:**

- 3.1 The team can be contacted locally for such things as pamphlets and phone numbers