

# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

## *Procedure: Critical Incident Response Plan*

*Date Modified: August 2021*



## INTRODUCTION

---

Assumption College (the College) is committed to ensuring the effective management of critical incidents that:

- protect the employees, students, families and other stakeholders
- protect the College assets and environment
- ensure continuity of teaching and learning
- protect the College reputation.

The College has established and maintains an Emergency Management Committee to oversee the development and effective implementation of the College response plans to critical incidents and emergencies.

The EMP has established a CIMT to respond to emergencies and critical incidents. This structure takes into account the size and layout of the College as well as the number of students enrolled.

Critical incidents are a specific type of business continuity disruption event, that not only usually disrupt normal college operations and activities, they also pose immediate and significant danger to life, property and/or the environment.

## DEFINITIONS

---

**Critical Incident Management Team:** The team responsible for providing executive decisions and strategic direction on College priorities and responses to critical incidents.

**Critical Incident:** Any incident has the potential to start as or escalate into a critical incident. Incident types include, but are not limited to:

- crisis events such as fire, explosion, chemical spill, gas leak, pandemic, natural disaster, international critical incident, power outage, violent attack, fatality or serious injury
- issues or events such as health concerns, serious breach of policies and procedures, serious staff or student misconduct

**Critical Incident:** A critical incident is any event that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm usual coping strategies. A critical incidents can be sudden, shocking and outside the range of ordinary human experience. However, it may also be an event that has a specific personal significance to the individual and may result in strong emotional and/or physical reactions which impact the wider community eg, a student threatening suicide or a violent/ aggressive person on site.

**Emergency:** is a situation with a high level of uncertainty that disrupts the core activities or credibility of an organisation and requires urgent action and cannot be controlled through the College standard procedures.

A critical incident may or may not lead to or require an emergency response, the CIMT Leader will determine the appropriate response plan (emergency, critical incident or both).

# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

## *Procedure: Critical Incident Response Plan*



An emergency response is required when the incident and the aftermath has potential to overwhelm the business and cause significant physical damage or destruction, loss of life or sometimes permanent change to the natural environment.

This procedure refers to the incident response, refer to the Emergency Response Plan for emergency situations.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

---

#### Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) - Members & Contact Details

<b>CIMT Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Secondary Telephone Contact</b>
<b>CIMT Leader</b>	Members of Leadership Team	Deputy Principals		03 57835000
<b>Alternate CIMT Leader</b>	Jennifer Dean	Business Manager	jennifer.dean@assumption.vic.edu	03 57815302
<b>External Communications Co-ordinator</b>	Kate Fogarty	Principal	Principal @assumption.vic.edu.	03 57835000
<b>Internal Communications Co-ordinator</b>	Kate Fogarty	Principal	Principal @assumption.vic.edu.	03 57835000

<b>CIMT Role</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>
<b>The Principal - CIMT Leader</b>	Provide the CIMT with leadership; Direct formulation of Critical Incident Management Plan; Direct decision making; Direct the communications strategy; and Allocate responsibilities to CIMT members.
<b>Alternate CIMT Leader</b>	Assume the Team Leader position in his/her absence; Provide assistance to the Team Leader as required; and Lead implementation of Critical Incident Management Plan as directed.

# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

## *Procedure: Critical Incident Response Plan*



<b>Internal Response Co-ordinator</b>	<p>Provide all necessary assistance to the CIMT Leader in formulating and implementing the internal response strategy. This may involve organising meetings of staff and students, liaising with the Heads of House and organising for assistance from external organisations; and</p> <p>Maintain an up to date all staff text message and email group to facilitate rapid dissemination of communications.</p>
<b>External Communications Co-ordinator</b>	<p>Provide all necessary assistance to the CIMT Leader in formulating and implementing the external communications strategy. This may involve co-ordinating staff to make one on one telephone calls to parents/carers, preparation of mass email communications, leading co-ordination with media outlets and other authorities.</p>

## **FORMULATING & IMPLEMENTING a CRITICAL INCIDENT MGT PLAN**

---

Whilst each critical incident and/or traumatic event will have its own unique circumstances and management issues, the following basic guidelines apply when formulating and implementing a Critical Incident Management Plan.

It is important to note that these steps do not need to be undertaken in order and that one or more of these steps may be in operation simultaneously. Major incidents may require the engagement of external parties to assist in co-ordinating the college's response.

### ***Step 1 - Contact the Principal (CIMT Leader)***

### ***Step 2 - Initiate the Crisis Incident Management Team (CIMT) Meeting***

It is critical that CIMT members have each other's contact details entered into their mobile phones to ensure that there are no delays in co-ordinating the initial CIMT meeting.

At the initial CIMT meeting an initial Critical Incident Management Plan will be developed having regard to the steps outlined in this policy.

### ***Step 3 - Initiate Communications with Relevant People/Authorities***

In some circumstances it will be necessary to contact relevant people or authorities, such as the police or other emergency services, to establish the most up to date information relating to the relevant situation as this may have a bearing on the response plan that is to be undertaken. The schools governing body, Marist Schools Australia (MSA) will be alerted to the incident and the incident will be reported on Complispace.

### ***Step 4 - Establish an Incident Support Team/Support Team Centre (If Required)***

In some circumstances it may be necessary to draw on additional personnel/resources and establish a specific incident support team and support team centre. This is particularly important where multiple critical tasks are to be co-ordinated simultaneously and the situation is ongoing.

### ***Step 5 - Staff Briefing***

# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

## *Procedure: Critical Incident Response Plan*



All college staff should be briefed as to the situation as quickly as possible to ensure that they are in a position to respond appropriately to any queries raised by students or parents/carers. Depending on the nature of the situation this briefing may be via email, text message or a staff meeting.

To ensure that all staff can be contacted as quickly as possible, a college mobile phone or other facility should be set up with a group contact including each member of staff's mobile phone number. This staff group contact will enable text messages to be disseminated rapidly. An up to date all staff email group should also be established and maintained, to allow more detailed communications to be disseminated as required.

### ***Step 6 - Communicate with Students/Parents & Carers***

A communications strategy should be established to ensure clear and accurate communications with both parents/carers and students. Refer to Critical Incident Communication Strategy Guidelines.

### ***Step 7 - Arrange for Counselling Services***

The need for counselling services will be dependent on the nature of the incident and the extent of its impact across the college community. Where it is necessary to engage external assistance this will be co-ordinated through the CIMT.

### ***Step 8 - Refine Crisis Management Response Plan***

During major ongoing incidents it is likely that the Crisis Response Plan will be updated frequently. The CIMT will be responsible for refining the Crisis Management Response Plan and communicating relevant information to key stakeholders as required.

### ***Step 9 - Post Event Follow Up***

The effects of traumatic events can have long term consequences which require long term monitoring and response. Once the initial Critical Incident Response Plan has been implemented, it is important to monitor and respond to the requirements of the college community over time.

## **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION & CONSULTATION**

---

It is critical that effective communication is maintained throughout all stages of managing a critical incident and consultation is undertaken with key stakeholders.

The following guidelines are designed to promote effective communication and consultation:

### ***Planning:***

Plans for communication and consultation should be developed at an early stage;

### ***Quality:***

High quality communication and consultation is required because critical incidents can involve ambiguity, are often complex and may involve extreme events that are outside normal human experience;

### ***Confidentiality:***

Communication and consultation should take into account legitimate needs for confidentiality;

### ***Two Way Communication:***

# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

## *Procedure: Critical Incident Response Plan*



Communication should be a two way process so as to confirm that questions, ideas and information have been transferred successfully. Where practical it is important for students and parents/carers to be able to ask questions as well as receive college communications;

### ***Accurate & Authoritative:***

Throughout the course of an event, communication that is accurate and authoritative can provide both reassurance and information to stakeholders. Provided that it gains respect for its currency, quality and accuracy, such communication can be an important form of risk treatment for critical incidents;

### ***Media:***

The likely interest and needs of the media should be taken into account in the communications plan. All media correspondence is to be directed to the Catholic Education Office who can be contacted on 03 9267 0228.

### ***Knowledge & Experience:***

Consultation with stakeholders and others can provide access to relevant information and experience that will assist in the management of critical incidents;

### ***Context:***

Consultation should be undertaken in a way that ensures that those being consulted understand the context in which their responses are likely to be applied. They should be given sufficient contextual information and time, in order to provide considered input; and

### ***Perception:***

The views of stakeholders may include judgements about the event based on their perceptions which may reflect personal or college values, needs, knowledge, assumptions, concepts and concerns. Such perceptions should be taken into account.

## **LIST of KEY STAKEHOLDERS for COMMUNICATION**

---

Accurate and timely communication is critical during a major incident.

To assist in the achievement of this objective the college has formulated the following strategies for managing communications with key stakeholders during a critical incident.

Key Communication List	Communications Strategy
Crisis Management Team	CIMT members' details are published on the college intranet. Each member of the CIMT has the contact details for all other CIMT members saved on their mobile phone as a phone contact group, under 'Critical Incident Management Team'.
College Executive	Details of all executives are published on the college intranet. Each executive has the contact details for all other executives saved on their mobile phone as a phone contact group, under 'Executives'.

# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

## *Procedure: Critical Incident Response Plan*



All College Staff	Up to date contact details of all staff are maintained by the PA to the Principal and on staff mobile phones in a phone contact group.
Council	In the event of a critical incident, the Council must be notified. The CMIT leader and alternative leader have saved the contact details of all the members of the Council on their mobile phones in a phone contact group.
College Parents/Carers	Up to date contact details of all parents/carers are maintained in SAS/SIMON.
Students	Up to date contact details for all students are maintained in SAS/SIMON.
Education Department	In the event of a critical incident the Catholic Education Office can be contacted on 03 9267 0228 or the Department of Education on (03) 9637 2000.
MSA	Regional Director will be notified and kept up to date with all aspects of the critical incident.
Media	All communication with the media should be managed through the Principal. Refer to our Media and External Communications Policy.

## POTENTIAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

---

The way in which communications are to be made will largely depend upon the nature of the incident, the intended recipients of the communication and the speed in which the communication needs to be made.

The following are communications channels that have been identified that may be utilised in any particular set of circumstances:

- Text Messaging;
- Email;
- Telephone;
- Intranet Message Board;
- Public Website;
- Establishment of a Hotline and Interactive Voice Response;
- Staff briefings (in person, videotaped or broadcast);
- Meetings (either for specific groups or for the public);
- Press Releases;
- Paid Advertising;
- Broadcast or Print Media;
- Newsletters;
- Social Media.

## REVIEW

---

Next review February 2022