

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT



ICAO/IFATCA SAFETY CULTURE WORKSHOP

19-22.05.2026



CISM

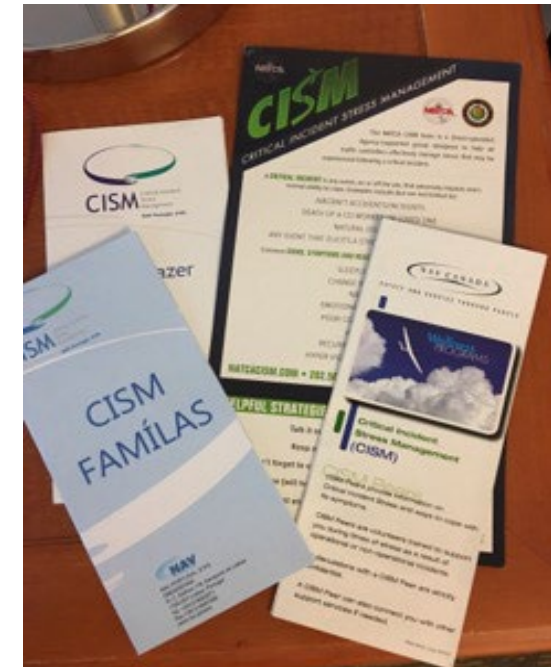
CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT

CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAMME DEVELOPED TO HELP
MANAGING TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

CRITICAL
INCIDENT

CRISIS
INTERVENTION

PEERS
SUPPORT





CRITICAL INCIDENTS

- UNUSUAL OR POWERFUL EVENTS THAT CAN OVERWHELM COPING CAPACITY OF THOSE EXPOSED TO THEM.
- **NORMAL REACTIONS TO ABNORMAL EVENTS**
- PATTERNS OF CRITICAL STRESS REACTIONS MIGHT BE DIFFERENT IN QUALITY AND INTENSITY FROM ONE PERSON TO OTHER
- REACTIONS DEPEND NOT ONLY ON THE INCIDENT BUT ON THE INDIVIDUAL MENTAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITION
- STRESS REACTIONS CAN SHOW IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE INCIDENT AND UP TO SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

POTENTIAL STRESS REACTIONS



PHYSICAL

- Headaches
- Excessive sweating
- Sleep disturbances
- Nausea
- Disorientation
- Increased heart rate

EMOTIONAL

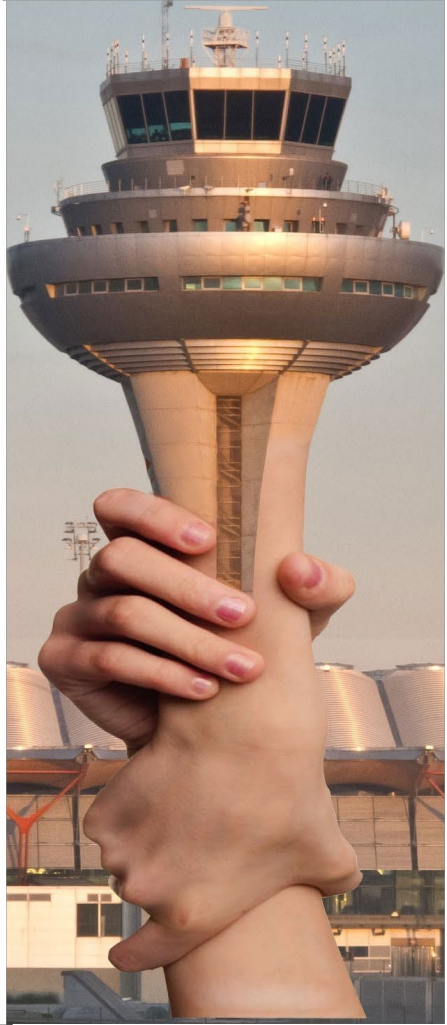
- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Sadness
- Fear
- Self doubt
- Irritability

COGNITIVE

- Concentration problems
- Poor attention
- Memory problems
- Flashbacks
- Tunnel vision
- Confusion

BEHAVIOURAL

- Increase in alcohol / tobacco consumption
- Loss of interest
- Change in eating habits
- Increase of interpersonal conflicts



CRISIS INTERVENTION I

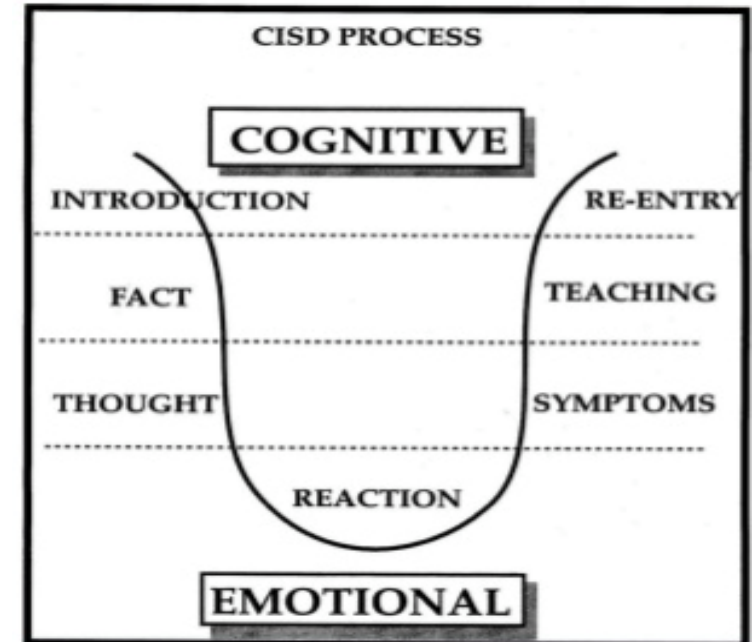
- **CISM** AS AN INTEGRATED MULTI-COMPONENT INTERVENTION SYSTEM.
- MAIN GOALS:
 1. MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF TRAUMATIC EVEN
 2. FACILITATE NORMAL RECOVERY
 3. RESTORE INDIVIDUAL/GROUPS TO ADAPTATIVE FUNCTIONS
 4. IDENTIFY PEOPLE WHO WOULD NEED SUPPORT SERVICES OR REFERRAL FOR FURTHER EVALUATION



CRISIS INTERVENTION II

TYPES OF CRISIS INTERVENTION MODELS:

- ONE ONE ONE (SAFER-R MODEL)
- SMALL GROUP (DEFUSING)
- LARGE GROUP (DEBRIEFING)
- FOLLOW UP/REFERRAL



PEERS SUPPORT



WHY

- COLLEAGUES ARE BETTER ACCEPTED
- BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE FACTS
- SPEAK SAME PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE
- EASIER TO UNDERSTAND THE FEELING OF “*GUILT*”

WHAT

- VOLUNTEERS TRAINED TO SUPPORT AT TIMES OF STRESS
- PROVIDE INFORMATION ON CIS AND WAYS TO COPE WITH ITS SYMPTOMS
- CONFIDENTIALITY IS A KEY POINT
- IF NEEDED CAN PROVIDE CONTACT WITH FURTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

BENEFITS:

SEVERAL **ICISF** AND **ANSP**'s STUDIES SHOW TWO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF BENEFITS:

1. DIRECT IMPACT ON THE INDIVIDUAL: BENEFITS WHICH ALLOW HIM/HER TO RECOVER ITS FUNCTIONALITY
 2. DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACT O THE ORGANIZATION: BENEFITS THAT CAN BE QUANTIFIED IN TERMS OF FINANCIAL GAINS FOR THE ORGANIZATION
 - LESS SICK LEAVES
 - LESS PERSONNEL TURNOVER OR PREMATURE RETIREMENT
 - LESS DISABILITY CLAIMS AGAINST THE EMPLOYER
 - IMPROVEMENT OF INTERNAL IMAGE
-
1. SUCCESS DEPENDS ON **OPERATIONAL STAFF, STAFF REPRESENTATIVES** WORKING TOGETHER WITH **MANAGEMENT**





CISM AND IFATCA

- GREAT ADVOCATE FOR THE CREATION OF CISM PROGRAMMES IN ATM
- IFATCA POLICY ON TPM, 2017, MED 9.2.4 page 4228
- WORKSHOPS/ SEMINARS IN COLLABORATION WITH ECTL/DFS/SKYGUIDE AND ICISF

MED 9.2.4 CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT

IFATCA policy is:

Stress prevention at the work place has proved particularly effective in combating stress, by attacking its roots and causes, rather than merely treating its effects.

The Federation recognises the importance of stress management for air traffic controllers and recommends that, at regular intervals, air traffic controllers be provided with up-to-date information on stress management techniques.

The Federation urges MAs to bring to their administration's attention the stress-inducing potential of their work environment in order that particular consideration is given to ensure that the work environment is suitable and as stress-free as possible.

The Federation endorses the use of professionally trained peers in the provision of critical incident stress management (CISM) to colleagues experiencing critical incident stress (CIS).

(Critical incident stress management (CISM) is a wide range of programmes and intervention strategies which have been designed to mitigate the impact of stress in personnel and to assist them in managing and recovering from significant stress. (Adapted from Jeffrey Mitchell Ph.D.) [San José 86.C.6-8, amended Taipei 97.C.6].

Comprehensive and confidential support services should be available at all times for air traffic controllers, support staff and their families.

Professional critical incident stress support services should be made available to air traffic controllers involved in ATC incidents / accidents and any other occurrences that have potential to create critical stress reactions influencing the ATCO's performance. It is the controllers' choice whether or not to take advantage of these support services.

See: WP 158 - Istanbul 2007

See also: WP 89 - Kaohsiung 2006, WP 160 - Taipei 1997 and WP 24 - San José 1986



SURVEY (IFATCA A55 MANUAL, 2016)

YES

-AUSTRIA
-BELGIUM
-CANADA
-CROATIA
-DENMARK
-GERMANY
-ISRAEL
-ITALY
-LATVIA
-MUAC
NETHERLANDS

-NEW ZEALAND
-PORTUGAL
-SOUTH AFRICA
-SPAIN
SWITZERLAND
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
-UK
-USA

NO

-AUSTRALIA*
-CHILE
-CYPRUS
-KENYA
-LITHUANIA
-MEXICO
-ROMANIA

26/ 126

