

Critical Incident Policy and Procedures

Purpose

The Sydney International School of Technology and Commerce (SISTC) recognises that critical incidents need to be managed effectively due to their potential impact on the physical and psychological well-being of employees and students. Incidents have the capacity to affect SISTC's ability to maintain operations and provide continuity to students' learning and support services. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure SISTC is prepared to respond effectively to such incidents and situations through the appropriate mobilisation of expertise and resources, in order to minimise the potential impact.

Scope

This Policy applies to all staff and clients, including sessional staff, and is a focus of the School's induction process for both staff and students.

Definition

A critical incident is defined as one that is either in play or imminent and has the potential to threaten the health, safety and welfare of people (primary concern) and SISTC assets (secondary concern). This Policy is intended to deal with sudden and unexpected emergency/crisis situations which require an immediate response to defuse or ameliorate the immediate threat they represent to people. Moreover, within the terms of this Policy, a critical incident is one that requires a structured and co-ordinated response.

Critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- bomb threat;
- terrorist incident;
- chemical, radiation or biological spill;
- threatening behaviour by client (student) or member of the public;
- death or medical emergency on part of staff member or client (student);
- civil disobedience or disorder (directly or indirectly);
- assault (physical or sexual);
- robbery;
- suspicious mail/package/backpack etc;

- threat from emergent incident relating to facilities (for example, exposed electrical wiring, burst water pipe, loss of lights/power, window breakage, spot fire, lift malfunction, door lock malfunction);
- venomous creatures;
- pandemic and/or infectious disease outbreak.

SISTC’s response to unexpected crisis situations, critical incidents associated with the elements or fire and flood, also require a systemic and integrated response across human and non-human domains and are covered under the *SISTC Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Policy*.

Governance, Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors carries first line responsibility and accountability for critical incident management and response. This Policy is approved by the Board and subject to annual review. In the day to day operation of the Policy the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has the Board’s delegation to implement the Policy and Procedures as outlined. In the absence or unavailability of the CEO, this delegation is conferred in accordance with the *SISTC Delegations Policy and Framework*.

The CEO is responsible for promulgation of the Policy; for ensuring relevant key staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities under the Policy in the event of a situation; and for arranging annual review of the Policy with the Board. The Director of Operations is responsible for ensuring all staff and students are aware of the Procedures in the event of a situation; for scheduling of relevant training and inclusion in induction programs; and for arranging critical incident procedure ‘drills’ not less than annually.

Other staff have responsibilities as set out in the Procedures and/or as delegated in the absence of the officer with primary responsibility.

Response Framework and Procedures

The *SISTC Critical Incident Policy* recognises that a comprehensive approach to critical incident response and management has four components:

1. INITIAL RESPONSE (IMMEDIATE LEVEL)

Position	Responsibility
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess situation, determine level of threat and appropriate response • take lead role in directing response • ensure immediate safety/well-being of affected people (staff and students) with emphasis on

	<p>immediate removal of people from the immediate area and/or cause of threat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure bespoke arrangements are organised immediately for assistance to students and staff with disabilities and/or who are under reasonable adjustment and/or graduated return to work (staff) provisions in respect of a disability or impairment alert relevant authorities manage situation until can be handed over to relevant authorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mobilise medical emergency response facilities (e.g. on-staff trained personnel/ambulance etc) alert Board Chair of situation and response/strategy
Director of Operations (in conjunction with CEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provision of general alert and instruction to people not in the immediate area of threat but who potentially may be affected, either by their entering the area of threat or by the threat itself spreading or becoming more intensive implementing and overseeing evacuation procedures when and if appropriate manage media contact (with CE as spokesperson)
Senior staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assisting roles as directed by the CEO or Director of Operations
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow directions of delegated officers (as above)

2. DEBRIEFING AND SUPPORT (IMMEDIATE TO SHORT TERM LEVELS)

Position	Responsibility
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mobilise professional advice and assistance to assess situation and appropriate response mobilise resources and funds to support provision of immediate counselling and support for affected staff and clients

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor situation at an individual and work group level • determine with appropriate professional the mid to longer term support strategy • prepare comprehensive Board report
Director of Operations (in conjunction with CEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mobilise necessary resources in support of CEO strategy (above) • manage ongoing briefings/updates to Board of Directors • act as on-going contact point for authorities • monitor on-going staff and student reaction in conjunction with relevant academic and administrative managers
Director of Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare Critical Incident Report for Board of Directors (through the CEO), including details of the incident and any corrective action taken or planned

3. OPERATIONAL ADJUSTMENT (IMMEDIATE TO SHORT TERM LEVELS)

Position	Responsibility
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overall direction of review of the incident and effectiveness of response • review relevant corporate policies, in particular <i>SISTC Risk Policy and Risk Register</i> and <i>SISTC Delegations Policy and Framework</i> • advise Board as necessary
Director of Operations (in conjunction with CEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interviews with relevant parties to establish effectiveness of their level of preparedness and clarity of responsibilities • review of Critical Incident Procedures as required • review of operational aspects (e.g. access, security, safety, communications, liaison with authorities) and propose adjustments where necessary • changes to ongoing arrangements as necessary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review with authorities the response effectiveness and adjust procedures as necessary • take responsibility for ongoing staff support and adjustment strategy • ongoing Board briefing
--	--

4. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT (MID TO LONG TERM LEVELS)

Position	Responsibility
CEO	As per 4.2 with clear review and adjustment timeframes
Director of Operations (in conjunction with CEO)	As per 4.2.

5. RECORD-KEEPING

Position	Responsibility
Director of Operations	A copy of the Incident Report to be maintained as part of SISTC records for 2 years following the incident

Relevant Legislation and Standards

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Domains 2 and 6.

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (“the National Code 2018”) Part D, Standard 6.

Key Related Documents

AAEG Delegations Policy and Framework

AAEG Risk Policy and Risk Register

SISTC Disaster Recover and Business Continuity Policy and Procedures

SISTC Health and Safety Policy and Framework

Notes

Responsible Officer	CEO
Approval Authority /Authorities	Board of Directors
Date Approved	25 February 2020
Date of Commencement	
Date for Review	Annual
Documents Superseded by this Policy	None
Amendment History	<p>V1.0 updated with the SISTC logo July 2020.</p> <p>V1.1 has been updated with pandemic/infectious diseases outbreaks in the definition of a critical incident and approved on 5 February 2021.</p> <p>V1.2 amended with the approved changes to the senior management structure on 28 April 2021.</p> <p>V1.3 updated with the changes to the HESF 21 1 July 2021</p>