

## **FSC OPERATIONAL CODES OF PRACTICE**

### **No. 10: MAJOR INCIDENTS**

**Essential for:** All FSC Employees

**Discretionary:**

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#### **1. Definitions**

1.1 A major incident is taken as a serious event involving personnel or property which constitutes one or more of the following:

- a. A threat to life.
- b. A fatality.
- c. Serious damage to or destruction of property.
- d. A serious criminal offence or the possibility thereof.
- e. Certain RIDDOR incidents [see FSC OCoP No. 21].
- f. Any other accident or incident which jeopardises or threatens the reputation of the organisation.
- g. A non-H&S event which jeopardises or threatens the operation of a Centre or Centres or FSC staff.

1.2 In the context of section 1.1:

‘Personnel’ are regarded as being one or more of the following:

- a. Employees of the FSC.
- b. Bona-fide visitors and guests of the FSC or its employees.
- c. Employees of contractors and subcontractors carrying out work on FSC premises.
- d. Representatives of other organisations or bodies who have a bona-fide reason for being present on FSC premises.

'Property' is regarded as being one or more of the following:

- a. Premises and all items associated with those premises which are owned by the FSC or for which the FSC has a legal responsibility.
- b. All items which are owned by FSC employees or for which they have a legal responsibility.
- c. All items which are owned by bona-fide visitors and guests of the FSC or its employees, or for which they have a legal responsibility.
- d. All items, owned by contractors and sub-contractors or for which they have a legal responsibility, which are being used on FSC premises.
- e. Items owned by other parties in circumstances where personnel [as defined above] have or may have been involved in the serious damage / destruction of the items.

## **2. Immediate Actions**

- 2.1 These are actions which **must** be taken, as appropriate to the nature of the incident, by the FSC employee who first becomes aware that a major incident has taken or is taking place, or that there is the possibility of such an incident.
- 2.2 There is one exception to the procedure given in sections 2.3 and 2.4 below. In the event that there are clear indications of injuries or fatalities or threat to life [either as a result of hostile actions by known or unknown personnel, or self-inflicted] the Police **must** be contacted and informed by means of a 999 telephone call and their subsequent instructions followed.
- 2.3 It is impossible to be prescriptive in stating an order of priority for actions since much depends upon the nature and circumstances of the incident. It is accepted that staff can only use their best judgement at the time.
- 2.4 The following is a list of actions:
  - a. FSC staff to ensure that there is no further risk of injury either to themselves [in going to the incident site] or to personnel who are at the incident site. If necessary, personnel **must** be moved to another safe location unless such action is contra-indicated by injuries.
  - b. Administer immediate first aid as necessary.
  - c. Ensure that emergency services are summoned as necessary.
  - d. If dictated by the nature of the incident or by other emergency procedures, ensure that a roll call of all personnel is being carried out.

- e. If serious damage to property has taken place, but without placing either themselves or other personnel at risk, try to ensure where possible that further damage is prevented.
- f. When serious damage to property has taken place, try to ensure that other personnel do not enter the area.
- g. Ensure that the UM [or their deputy] is informed.

### 3. Actions to be taken by UM when informed of Major Incident

3.1 The UM **must** check that a Major Incident has taken or is taking place.

**Guidance Note:** If a Major Incident has **not** taken or is **not** taking place, the UM should carry out such actions as they deem necessary.

3.2 If a Major Incident has taken or is taking place, the UM **must**:

- a. Check that first aid has been and is being administered as necessary.
- b. Check that emergency services have been summoned as necessary.
- c. Check that a roll call of all personnel has been or is being carried out as necessary.
- d. Ensure that arrangements are being made to supervise all personnel at safe locations as necessary.
- e. Ensure that any other immediate actions as they deem necessary are carried out.
- f. Contact one of the following Senior Officers of the FSC, using the telephone numbers given in Appendix 1.
  - i. During working hours:

Contact Head Office in order to ascertain the location and availability of:

    - CEO
    - Secretary
    - Director of Communications and Marketing
    - Director of Operations
  - ii. Outside working hours contact a Senior Officer of the FSC at home / mobile number.
- g. All personnel, involved in the incident, must be offered support.

**Guidance Note:** FSC and accompanying staff should be briefed as necessary for them to give such support.

**Guidance Note:** If personnel may later be required to provide witness evidence to the incident, consideration should be given to separating them from other personnel. They should, however, still be provided with support.

It should be remembered that personnel, particularly those directly involved in the incident, may be suffering from traumatic shock. Appropriate first aid treatment may be necessary.

It may be of benefit that the personnel providing the support are familiar to those personnel being supported.

Consideration should be given to those occasions when the gender / race of the personnel giving support may be of importance to the support process.

- h. If personnel from an accompanied group are involved, inform the accompanying member of staff and support them in the implementation of their own emergency procedure.
- i. If personnel from an unaccompanied group or individuals of school age are involved, contact the nominated person [usually the organiser who made the booking, but see guidance note below] or the police.

**Guidance Note:** If the nominated person has an emergency procedure, it is essential that the nominated person is requested to keep the Unit informed of progress and developments so that the Unit is aware that the procedure is being followed through.

**Guidance Note:** As part of the information requested from organisers [who arrange attendance for unaccompanied groups or school-age individuals], Units will have been provided with a 'contact name and procedure'. Units should seek to ensure that any such contact name or procedure will be available during the entire time of the course, ie. at night; over a weekend; during school holidays. In this respect, having only the organiser's name and school / daytime telephone number is insufficient.

- j. If individual adults are involved, contact the police or next-of-kin.

**Guidance Note:** If serious injuries or fatality is involved, it is recommended that Units liaise with their local police [who will then, if necessary, contact the police in another area]. This approach is considered better than making any initial contact with next-of-kin directly by telephone from the Unit. The effect of such 'news' will be traumatic and is best done in person by a police officer who will then be able to provide support to the recipient.

- k. Keep the Senior Officer of the FSC, who has been contacted, informed of progress and developments.

3.3 In the event of a Major Incident, the UM should as soon as possible contact the owners of any land, premises or other property which may have been involved.

#### 4. Dealing with the media

- 4.1 **Guidance Note:** In the event of a Major Incident, particularly if there has been a fatality, threat to life or a serious criminal offence involving personnel, the media will quickly become involved and almost certainly arrive in the area of the incident. All media personnel are looking for a news story. In this respect, local media frequently act as agents for or sell stories to national media who may then decide to cover the story as well.
- 4.2 If approached by a media representative, FSC personnel are to be polite but firm. They **must** state that they are not authorised to give specific details on the incident and direct the media representative to the UM. They **must not** give any details of the incident particularly if a criminal offence may be involved. [They can state the obvious nature of an incident, eg. a fire has occurred.] They **must not** give any specific details with regard to names or numbers of casualties, nature and extent of injuries involved, etc.
- 4.3 The UM, after consultation with the Senior Officer, may handle all enquiries from local media giving due consideration to their likely links with national media.
- 4.4 All enquiries from national media **must** be handled by the UM and/or referred to the Senior Officer. However, national media involvement [given the implications of and possible outcomes from their 'interest in the story'] reinforces the requirement that, once a Major Incident has been 'declared, the UM **must** contact a Senior Officer of the FSC as soon as possible. The UM and the Senior Officer **must** then agree how any national media enquiries will be handled and by whom.

#### 5. Presence of Senior Officer of the FSC

- 5.1 In the event that a Major Incident involves one or more of the circumstances given in 5.2 below, serious consideration **must** be given to a Senior Officer of the FSC [and / or other members of the Operational Management Team] arranging to get to the Unit as soon as possible.

**Guidance Note:** It is not simply a matter of being available to deal with the national media. Experience of other major incidents involving an organisation or business has shown that the presence of an organisation's senior official at the incident does much to reassure employees and relatives of any victims. In short, it clearly indicates to all that the organisation is both concerned about the incident and cares about the people who have been involved.

It should also be considered that senior Unit staff may have been directly involved in any incident or may be suffering traumatic shock as a result of the incident. Aside from any support that a Senior Officer of the FSC would be able to offer such staff, the presence of a Senior Officer of the FSC may be necessary in order to 'take charge of the situation'.

- 5.2 The possible incidents are at least the following:
- a. Fatal injury to either an employee or a visitor.
  - b. Severe injuries to several people.

- c. Abduction of either an employee or a visitor.
  - d. Any act of terrorism.
  - e. Murder, sexual assault or similar offence or attempted offence either of, or by an employee or a visitor.
  - f. An accident or incident likely to be of interest to the national media.
- 6.** 6.1 In order for FSC to respond to a Major Incident adequately, there should always be a member of OMT, who is contactable, to act as the Senior Officer.
- 6.2 If the Major Incident is sufficiently serious to require a Senior Officer to attend, then the Chairmen of the Executive Committee and the Health, Safety & Hygiene Committee should be informed as soon as is practicable.
- 6.3 FSC Head Office should have in place contingencies to create an 'Operations Room' where an incident may need ongoing intensive management, eg. FMD outbreak.
- 6.4 FSC Head Office should have in place contingencies to provide alternative temporary office accommodation in the event of serious damage or destruction of the existing Head Office premises.
- 7. Other related and relevant FSC OCoP's which must be read**
- a. FSC OCoP No. 4: Missing Personnel in Field
  - b. FSC OCoP No.11: Summoning Emergency Services
  - c. FSC OCoP No.12: Missing Personnel in Unit
  - d. FSC OCoP No.13: Fire Alarm Procedure