

## Chapter 44 – Index

44.	<a href="#">Critical Incident Management</a>
44.1	<a href="#">Definition</a>
44.1.2	<a href="#">Policy Statement</a>
44.1.3	<a href="#">What constitutes a Critical Incident</a>
44.1.4	<a href="#">Planning for a Critical Incident</a>
44.1.5	<a href="#">Critical Incident Management Packs</a>
44.1.6	<a href="#">Recognising and Declaring a Critical Incident</a>
44.1.7	<a href="#">Managing a Critical Incident through the Command structure</a>
44.1.8	<a href="#">First Steps</a>
44.1.9	<a href="#">The Role of the Command and Control Unit</a>
44.1.10	<a href="#">Command Structure</a>
44.1.11	<a href="#">Decision Logs and Scribes</a>
44.1.12	<a href="#">The end of an Incident</a>
44.1.13	<a href="#">Final Steps</a>
44.1.14	<a href="#">Debrief</a>
44.1.15	<a href="#">Further Information</a>
44.2	<a href="#">Support services for those involved in an incident</a>
44.2.1	<a href="#">First Aid</a>
44.2.2	<a href="#">Counselling</a>
44.2.3	<a href="#">Compensation</a>
44.2.4	<a href="#">Legal advice</a>
44.2.5	<a href="#">Responsibilities of line managers during Enforcement Operations</a>

## 44. Critical Incident Management

### 44.1 Definition

Any incident where the planning, event, outcome or consequence of that incident is likely to result in:

Serious harm to any individual,

Significant community impact

Or

A significant negative impact on the confidence of the public in the UK Border Agency.

[Return to top](#)

## 44.1.2 Policy Statement

The work of the UK Border Agency inevitably comes at a risk. All areas of work throughout the Agency should include a comprehensive risk assessment, but there is always the potential for undesirable events and incidents to occur and when they do, tragic results can ensue. There is also the possibility that legal action will be taken either against the Agency or against individual managers, when the management of the incident will be examined in detail and managers could be held personally accountable for their actions. Most importantly, we have a responsibility to our staff, colleagues and those with whom we come into contact to handle such incidents as professionally and effectively as possible.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that in the event of a critical incident occurring, there is a clear system in place for all officers to follow in order to ensure that the incident is managed appropriately and in a consistent manner which will stand up to the scrutiny of any subsequent investigation. Many other Government departments, such as the Police and other Emergency Services have already adopted the Gold, Silver and Bronze command structure as a model to follow and the UK Border Agency has done the same.

Within this system, the Bronze, Silver and Gold Commanders have specific roles. **Gold** holds ultimate responsibility for the handling and outcome of the incident and sets out the **strategy** for dealing with it. **Silver** formulates a **tactical** plan to achieve Gold's strategy, and passes this to **Bronze** who takes the **operational** decisions necessary to implement it.

This policy is to be implemented throughout the UK Border Agency, and across all grades.

[Return to top](#)

## 44.1.3 What Constitutes a Critical Incident

In the wider context, Critical Incidents for the UK Border Agency are incidents and events outside of the usual business, with serious consequences. They can be both operational and non-operational. What follows are examples, but these lists are by no means exhaustive

Operational

Death of any person  
Serious injury to any person  
Hostage taking of any person  
Attempt or threat of suicide  
Self harm or attempted self harm  
Assault  
Escape  
Encounter with serious crime  
Riot/public disorder  
Media presence/involvement  
Multi-agency “blue on blue” incident

Non operational

Whistleblower  
Legal action  
Breach of procedure  
Corruption, misdemeanour or crime

Unexpected immigration crisis e.g. the Chinese cocklers at Morecambe Bay  
A specific high profile case e.g. one involving public figures or one which brings the UKBA in to adverse media attention

Many of these examples on their own would not necessarily constitute a critical incident (breach of procedure for example) but the outcome of that breach, or its consequences may.

There are four stages to a CI:

- ◆ Planning for a Critical Incident
- ◆ The recognition and declaration of a Critical Incident
- ◆ Managing the situation and preventing any further escalation of events through the command structure
- ◆ Managing a return to normality (recognising when an incident is no longer critical and a debrief

[Return to top](#)

#### **44.1.4 Planning for a Critical incident**

The best way to avoid the escalation of any incident is to be well prepared for any eventuality. All areas of our business should be thoroughly risk assessed. Any enforcement activity should also be subject to a detailed Operational Order and a Community Impact Assessment. A local command structure should be set up in advance of any operational visit.

[Return to top](#)

#### **44.1.5 Critical Incident Management Packs**

A CI Management Pack should be readily accessible, and up to date. It should contain, as a minimum:

- ◆ A copy of this guidance and checklists
- ◆ Contact details:
  - Command and Control Unit
  - Local management
  - Other business areas (ports, LEOs, intel offices etc)
  - Local emergency services
- ◆ Up to date staff lists with next of kin details
- ◆ Up to date duty lists
- ◆ Decision logs

As part of the preparation for a critical incident it is advised that you meet with your local emergency services and establish contacts which you keep up to date and adapt as necessary.

A CI Management Pack should contain as much information as you consider relevant, but should be portable.

[Return to top](#)

## **44.1.6 Recognising and Declaring a Critical Incident**

Anyone can declare a critical incident, but doing so confers responsibility. Whilst an incident should not be declared critical lightly, it is much better to do so, take the appropriate action and then “undeclare” it, rather than do nothing and increase the potential for escalation.

The actions taken earliest during a critical incident (“the golden hour”) are often the most crucial, so it is important that an incident is declared as soon as potential for a critical situation is perceived. You do not require evidence, or for an event to have already occurred to recognise its potential.

[Return to top](#)

## **44.1.7 Managing a Critical Incident through the Command structure**

### **44.1.8 First steps**

Early communication of the event is crucial once a critical incident is declared. If the incident is centred around an event where a local command structure is in place – an enforcement visit for example – you must alert the appointed Bronze, Silver and Gold commanders immediately.

[Return to top](#)

## **44.1.9 The Role of the Command and Control Unit**

The Command and Control Unit (CCU) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All our staff have received Bronze and Silver commander training and a number are also trained as Gold commanders.

### Low level incidents

Even if an incident is to be handled locally, you should advise CCU that an incident has occurred/is occurring. This ensures that CCU is involved from the start should an incident escalate and valuable time is not wasted passing on information later in the event. The CCU will be there to

provide support, advice and specialist knowledge, and can assume a command role should events escalate or continue over a long period.

### High level incidents

CCU should be informed immediately of any incident with national or serious implications for the UK Border Agency. CCU will support and advise any existing commanders (eg operational enforcement visits), or assist in establishing an appropriate command structure if none exists. In all events the CCU will respond to appropriate tasking within the Gold/Silver/ Bronze structure and ensure clear communication channels between senior managers and those handling the incident.

### The Independent Police Complaints Commission

Any incident that needs to be referred to IPCC must be referred to CCU in the first instance. For further information, including details of those incidents that will need IPCC involvement please refer to further information held in this chapter.

### All incidents

The CCU maintains detailed and up to date critical incident packs which can be viewed by other offices as required. We can also take responsibility for the following in any event:

- ◆ Liaison with the emergency services and establishing who should take primacy
- ◆ Media handling – the CCU will liaise with the Chief Executive's Office to ensure that accurate and up to date information is communicated effectively and appropriately, particularly to Press Office.
- ◆ Liaison with Legal Advisors Branch to ensure the response to any incident is proportionate and legitimate
- ◆ Liaison with Independent Police Complaints Commission
- ◆ Liaison with the Employee Assistance Programme

[Return to top](#)

## **44.1.10 Command Structure**

The Bronze Silver Gold (BSG) Command structure is role based rather than grade based. Status is allocated according to skill, expertise, location and competency. All grades can cover all roles, subject to having had the requisite training.

### Gold Commander

Gold sets out the strategic plan for the handling of the incident to achieve the desired outcome. There can only ever be one Gold commander at a time, but they may wish to employ strategic advisers. Gold should be easily contactable and in a place where they have all the necessary tools and staff to manage the incident effectively. They have ultimate responsibility for the events during any incident for their period of tenure.

### Silver Commander

Silver is responsible for producing the tactical plan following the strategy set out by Gold. There can be more than one Silver, but each must have a clearly defined and logged remit.

### Bronze Commander

Bronze takes the operational decisions necessary to accomplish Silver's tactical plan. Bronze should be at the scene of any incident wherever possible. As with Silver, there can be more than one Bronze as long as each has a clearly defined and logged remit.

[Return to top](#)

## **44.1.11 Decision Logs and Scribes**

Accurate, complete and detailed decision logs are crucial to the successful management of any critical incident. Every decision, however minor, must be logged ensuring that the rationale behind the decision is also noted legibly. At the conclusion of any incident, these logs will be made available to the debriefer, and if appropriate, to the investigating authorities and the courts. Their importance cannot be stressed enough. The practical difficulties of managing an incident, making decisions, relaying those decisions whilst taking advice and all the time maintaining full and accurate notes is not lost however, and it is recommended that wherever possible, commanders should appoint scribes. The commander remains ultimately responsible for the contents of the logs, and must ensure they are of a standard that would allow the commander to return to them up to seven years later, and know instantly why a decision was made, and defend that decision if necessary. Blank log books can be obtained from Command and Control Unit.

[Return to top](#)

## **44.1.12 The end of an Incident**

### **44.1.13 Final Steps**

Once the seriousness of an event has receded and the strategy devised by Gold has been achieved, Gold should declare a formal end to the incident. This must be relayed immediately to Bronze and Silver, and all commanders should note it in their logs. If the incident is not being managed by CCU, this decision must also be relayed to CCU. If CCU has been managing the incident, CCU will pass back responsibility for returning the business to normal to the local business area. All paperwork relating to the incident, including extraneous notes should be collected and retained locally for seven years. Copies should be sent to CCU as soon as practicable after the event.

[Return to top](#)

### **44.1.14 Debrief**

A debrief, led by Gold, but involving all those who played an active part in the incident (including CCU) must be held as soon as is practical following the end of an incident. This is essential to allow the business to return to normal, to highlight any lessons learned in preventing a similar incident occurring in the future, and to air any difficulties or grievances over the handling of the incident. The advice of the Employee Assistance Programme should be sought to establish if there is a need for a psychological debrief for any of those involved, but it should be remembered that participation in such a debrief is voluntary and should not take place until all the legal requirements (such as statement taking) have taken place. There should be a detailed written record of the debrief.

[Return to top](#)

### **44.1.15 Further information**

Training in Critical Incident Management including the command roles is available and it is the responsibility of all Assistant Directors to ensure their staff receive the relevant training.

[Return to top](#)

## **44.2 Support services for those involved in an incident**

### **44.2.1 First Aid**

- ◆ If an incident does occur in or near the premises, first aid may be required for a member of staff or a resident.
- ◆ Official cars must be equipped with a first aid kit.
- ◆ Identify any person who is qualified to provide first aid (police officers and arrest team members are all trained in first aid).
- ◆ Inform colleagues as soon as possible when first aid is required.
- ◆ Where necessary seek further medical assistance as soon as possible i.e. call for an ambulance.
- ◆ Inform the duty CIO of any incident where first aid or other medical assistance is required.
- ◆ Officers are responsible for obtaining and updating immunisation protection against communicable diseases such as hepatitis B and tuberculosis. There is no requirement for anyone to undergo immunisation and individuals should discuss this with their GP.
- ◆ Any officer at risk of HIV infection as a result of exposure to an infected person should be offered appropriate prompt medical treatment as well as counselling.

[Return to top](#)

### **44.2.2 Counselling**

- ◆ Where an incident occurs which results in any suggestion of the need for counselling, the line manager or duty CIO/HMI (whoever is available sooner) will ensure that staff are aware of the

availability of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). The EAP provides a 24/7 support helpline.

- ◆ Any incident, no matter how minor, should be reported in the first instance to the duty CIO.
- ◆ Where care teams are available in local offices, these should be used as the first point of contact for after care.

[Return to top](#)

### **44.2.3 Compensation**

- ◆ If clothing or personal property is damaged as a result of an incident at work an officer may make a claim for compensation. See HO notice 123/97.
- ◆ If injured, the officer may be entitled to seek recompense from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

[Return to top](#)

### **44.2.4 Legal advice**

- ◆ IS will consider all requests to assist an officer with any legal proceedings he wishes to pursue or is being pursued against him.
- ◆ Even if IS or the police are not taking any legal action the officer involved may be able to take out a private prosecution for common assault against the alleged assailant.

[Return to top](#)

## 44.2.5 Responsibilities of line managers during Enforcement Operations

- ◆ To ensure that all staff have received the appropriate level of training, prior to undergoing enforcement visits.
- ◆ To authorise visits only when satisfied that a sufficient risk assessment has been carried out and all hazards evaluated and either eliminated or controlled to an acceptable level.
- ◆ To ensure that staff wear PPE on all enforcement visits.
- ◆ To ensure that staff wear other PPE when the risk assessment has shown it as a necessary control measure.
- ◆ To establish a communication procedure with staff prior to their departure from the office.
- ◆ To ensure that, where staff have been identified as unfit to drive through fatigue, alternative arrangements are in place to ensure their safety.
- ◆ To maintain contact with staff that are on duty but out of the office.
- ◆ To ensure that those on visits have reported the outcome and their safe return to the office or a police station.
- ◆ To advise staff of the services available from the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) where the need is identified.
- ◆ To follow up any reported incidents, whether verbal or in writing, completing the appropriate accident report forms and investigating the incident.

**Note: All the suggested actions listed above are to be used as an aide memoir for personal safety on enforcement work. The points covered are not exhaustive and common sense should be applied at all times.**

[Return to top](#)