



State of Montana
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Critical Incident Management

Document Type: Policy	Issuing Authority: DNRC	First Issued: 9/11/13
Number: PR-DNRC-OP-014	References: <i>Montana State Agency Suggested Safety Program Parameters (Montana State Fund, June 22, 2009)</i>	Effective Date: 9/11/13
Approval Signature: /s/ John E. Tubbs, Director		Last Revised: 9/11/13

Policy Purpose: *Montana State Agency Suggested Safety Program Parameters* published by Montana State Fund recommends every accident be investigated; and, that complete investigations be submitted to a safety coordinator with corrective measures and accountability for completion. The purpose of this policy is to ensure a thorough and timely response to critical incidents by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), including those that may involve a serious injury or fatality. The policy is intended to make certain that the emergency care of involved personnel in a critical incident is the top priority. It is also intended to provide guidance and direction for scene protection, managing the critical incident, conducting appropriate levels of analysis, providing training, and capturing lessons learned related to critical incident response.

I. Definitions

- A. "Accident prevention analysis (APA)" means a formal process appropriate for the investigation and analysis of an accident, serious accident, or serious near-miss.
- B. "Critical incident assessment flowchart" displays the various steps necessary to meet the policy requirements for critical incident assessments.
- C. "Chief of Party" means the person responsible to the sending unit dispatcher until the destination is reached. Chief of Party is responsible for all personnel traveling together on DNRC business..
- D. "Critical incident" means a fatality, serious injury, or other event that may have serious long-term adverse impacts on DNRC, its employees, their families, or a community. Examples of critical incidents include, but are not limited to vehicular accidents (including ATVs), confined space injuries (i.e. inside a dam), and wildland fires.
- E. "Critical incident stress debriefing (CISD)" means an adaptive short-term assistance process that focuses solely on an immediate and identifiable problem to enable affected individuals to return to their daily routines more quickly and with a lessened likelihood of experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- F. "Critical incident first response checklist" provides DNRC managers, Line Officers, and those employees who may be an Incident Commander or Chief of Party at an incident with a list of steps to take and items that need to be addressed or completed in order to effectively react to and meet the policy requirements for a critical incident.
- G. "Critical incident pocket card" provides all employees with the key steps and items necessary to address in the response to and management of a critical incident.
- H. "Delegation of Authority" is a statement provided to the Incident Commander by the agency executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility for an incident. The Delegation of Authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed.
- I. "Facilitated learning analysis (FLA)" is a process used to create a culture in which errors and/or contributing factors are openly identified and discussed. The FLA provides employees and DNRC with a non-judgemental process for learning from the incident.

- J. "Incident Commander (IC)" means the person responsible for overall management of the incident who reports to the Agency Administrator for whichever agency has incident jurisdiction. This position may have one or more deputies assigned from the same agency or from an assisting agency(s).
- K. "Initial assessment report" provides the Line Officer with a short, quick way to determine if an incident meets the definition of a critical incident (which would trigger meeting requirements of the policy), and whether there is a need to initiate investigation actions for possible violations of policy, rule, or law.
- L. "Liaison officer" means the person responsible for serving as the incident point of contact for coordinating with agency representatives from assisting and cooperating agencies. The position reports to the IC and is a member of the Command and General staff. This position may have one or more assistants assigned.
- M. "Line Officer" means the person who is the managing officer (or designee) of the agency, division, or jurisdiction which has statutory responsibility for incident mitigation and management.
- N. "Safenet/Safecom" is a means of capturing and disseminating important safety-related data for a common data base at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) to help determine long-term trends and problem areas. The Safecom database fulfills the Aviation Mishap Information System (AMIS) requirements for aviation mishap reporting for the Department of Interior agencies and the USDA Forest Service.
- O. "Serious Accident Investigation (SAI)" means an investigation that gathers and interprets information to help managers understand how and why an accident or incident occurred. Recommendations can then be developed for corrective actions that will mitigate hazards and prevent future injuries and property damage.

II. Training and Planning

- A. DNRC personnel whose jobs include working or responding to situations where a critical incident may occur will be trained periodically in Critical Incident Response and Management consistent with this policy. Appropriate reference materials and job aids should be provided as a part of this training (*see Appendix A: Reference Materials*).

III. Care of Involved Personnel

- A. The first priority for all critical incidents is to initiate appropriate life saving procedures, including applying first aid and/or requesting emergency services for the injured or afflicted person(s). This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. medical care for all personnel involved or affected at the incident; and
 - 2. the opportunity for a CISD Team to assist those who may not be physically injured. Key CISD factors to consider by first responders are included in the *Critical Incident First Response Checklist (see Appendix A)*.
- B. A decision on whether the incident is a life-threatening emergency or non-life-threatening emergency event is critical.
 - 1. The IC or Chief of Party at the scene needs to determine what level of treatment is required, as well as the means of transport needed.
 - 2. The decision must be based on the best available information and recommendations of the most qualified medical personnel present.
- C. Notification
 - 1. Care for involved personnel includes proper and timely notification to immediate family members, next of kin, and involved agencies.
 - 2. Those in charge at the scene are expected to notify the Line Officer at the first possible opportunity after a critical incident has occurred.
 - 3. The Line Officer is then expected to follow the notification procedures outlined in the *Critical Incident First Response Checklist*.

IV. Scene Protection

- A. Once appropriate life-saving measures have been accomplished, protection of the critical incident scene becomes an agency priority.
- B. The IC or Chief of Party is responsible for taking control of the critical incident scene.
- C. As soon as it is safe to do so, the IC or Chief of Party must secure the critical incident site.
 - 1. All critical incident sites must be physically secured on a 24-hour basis to preserve the scene and protect personal and government property.
 - 2. Access to the incident site must be limited only to personnel authorized by the jurisdictional and/or protection Line Officer(s) or Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) IC.
 - 3. Only the jurisdictional and/or protection Line Officer(s) have the authority to order the removal of scene protection measures.
- C. As part of scene protection, communication must be controlled to guarantee the privacy of involved personnel.
 - 1. Key communication factors to consider by first responders are included in the *Critical Incident First Response Checklist*.
 - 2. A spokesperson should be designated by the Line Officer(s) to speak to the media and interested parties immediately after the Line Officer(s) notification of a critical incident. In the case of a fatality, a liaison officer should be designated by the Line Officer(s) to communicate and coordinate with the family members.
 - 3. If more than one agency has personnel involved in the critical incident, a liaison officer should also be designated by the Line Officer(s) within the first 12-hour period to communicate and coordinate with the other agencies.

V. Incident Management

- A. Within the first 12-hour period following a critical incident, the IC or Chief of Party and Line Officer should finalize the *Critical Incident First Response Checklist* that identifies key actions needed and assigns individuals responsible for completing key actions.
 - 1. The *Critical Incident First Response Checklist* should be provided to agency Incident Commanders, chiefs of parties, Line Officers, and Line Officer representatives.
 - 2. If a Safenet/Safecom is filed in correlation with a critical incident, the *DNRC Critical Incident Assessment Flowchart* (see *Appendix A*) provides the decision framework for the agency response.
 - 3. If the critical incident is coupled with another incident, such as a fatality occurring in a vehicular accident, timely decisions must be made about:
 - a. management of the primary incident (e.g. ATV accident);
 - b. management of the critical incident (e.g. a fatality); and
 - c. coordination between the two. The primary goal is for DNRC to safely and effectively deal with the situation at hand. Key coordination factors to consider by first responders and Line Officers are included in the *Critical Incident First Response Checklist*.
 - 4. It is acceptable during a critical incident (e.g. a fatality) for the responders working on a primary incident (e.g. ATV accident) to simply withdraw and regroup.
 - 5. The *Critical Incident First Response Checklist* includes a quick analysis of the key factors that must be addressed in order to ensure safe and effective management of both primary and critical incidents.
 - a. Primary incident resources should not re-engage until the *Critical Incident Response Checklist* is completed.
 - 6. A Public Information Plan and Media Strategy should be completed by the Line Officer (in consultation with the DNRC Information Officer) within the first 24 hours of a critical incident. At a minimum, the plan and strategy should:

- a. identify the process, protocols, and key messages for press releases and responses to media inquiries related to the incident; and
- b. clearly identify the individuals responsible for preparing press releases and responding to media inquiries related to the incident.

VI. Critical Incident Assessment and Investigation

A. DNRC Line Officers are responsible for completion of an assessment and/or investigation associated with a critical incident..

B. Assessments and Investigations Conducted by Non-DNRC Entities

1. This policy ensures the right and authority of DNRC to participate in any investigation, APA, FLA, SAI, Safenet/Safecom, or any other assessment or investigation that involves a DNRC incident or a DNRC employee.

C. Assessments Conducted by DNRC

1. DNRC will complete an initial assessment for all critical incidents. The local Line Officer at the level of DNRC unit manager or higher will be responsible for forming or ordering an initial assessment team.
 - a. The assessment team must receive a thorough briefing and DNRC expectations must be clearly spelled out in a written Delegation of Authority (*see Appendix A*).
 - b. In the case of a fatality, the Division Administrator, Area/Regional Manager, or Bureau Chief will serve as the Line Officer.
 - c. Assessment teams should make every attempt to arrive at the incident within 24 hours of being ordered.
2. Recommended assessment team compositions and assessment requirements are to be based on complexity of the critical incident. The *Critical Incident Assessment Flowchart* provides Line Officers with the sequential and/or escalating types of assessments and corresponding team needs.
3. Assessment teams should complete an initial assessment within 48 hours of receiving their Delegation of Authority.
 - a. If, based on the initial assessment there is a need to do additional or continued assessment(s), the need must be identified and delineated in the *Initial Assessment Report*, and signed off on by the Line Officer.
 - b. The sole purpose of the preliminary assessment is fact finding. Subsequent or additional assessments may occur based on the results of the initial assessment, as determined by the analysis of the CIMT, an assessment by another entity or as determined upon completion of the assessment flowchart.
 - c. If no violation of policy, rule, or law has been identified during the initial assessment, the report should make recommendations related to conducting a FLA or other process to identify the lessons learned from the incident.

D. DNRC Investigations

1. DNRC shall investigate all critical incidents when the Line Officer, Division Administrator, Deputy Director, or Director believes there may have been a violation of policy, rule, or law.
 - a. Since DNRC does not have law enforcement capabilities, the local Line Officer at the level of DNRC Unit Manager or higher will be responsible for ordering an initial investigation team that will determine the nature and extent of the violation(s).
 - b. The investigation team must receive a thorough briefing and the DNRC's expectations must be clearly spelled out in a written Delegation of Authority. In the case of a fatality, the Division Administrator, Area/Regional Manager, or Bureau Chief (or their designee) will serve as the Line Officer.
 - c. The investigation team should arrive at the incident within 24 hours of being ordered.

- d. Investigation teams should complete and produce an initial investigation report within 48 hours of receiving their Delegation of Authority.
 - i. If there is a need to do additional or continued investigation(s), it must be identified and delineated in the *Initial Investigation Report* and approved by the Line Officer.
 - ii. The sole purpose of the initial investigation is fact finding. Subsequent or additional investigation(s) may occur based on the results of the initial investigation, or as a result of investigations completed by other entities (e.g. law enforcement).

VII. Lessons Learned

- A. As appropriate, DNRC will use a FLA (or other DNRC-approved process) to identify, validate, and analyze the key factors that influenced how risks were perceived, understood, and managed before the incident occurred. The goal of the "lessons learned" process is to identify what individual employees and DNRC should learn from the accident; and, what policies/procedures should be modified as a result.

VIII. Budget Centers

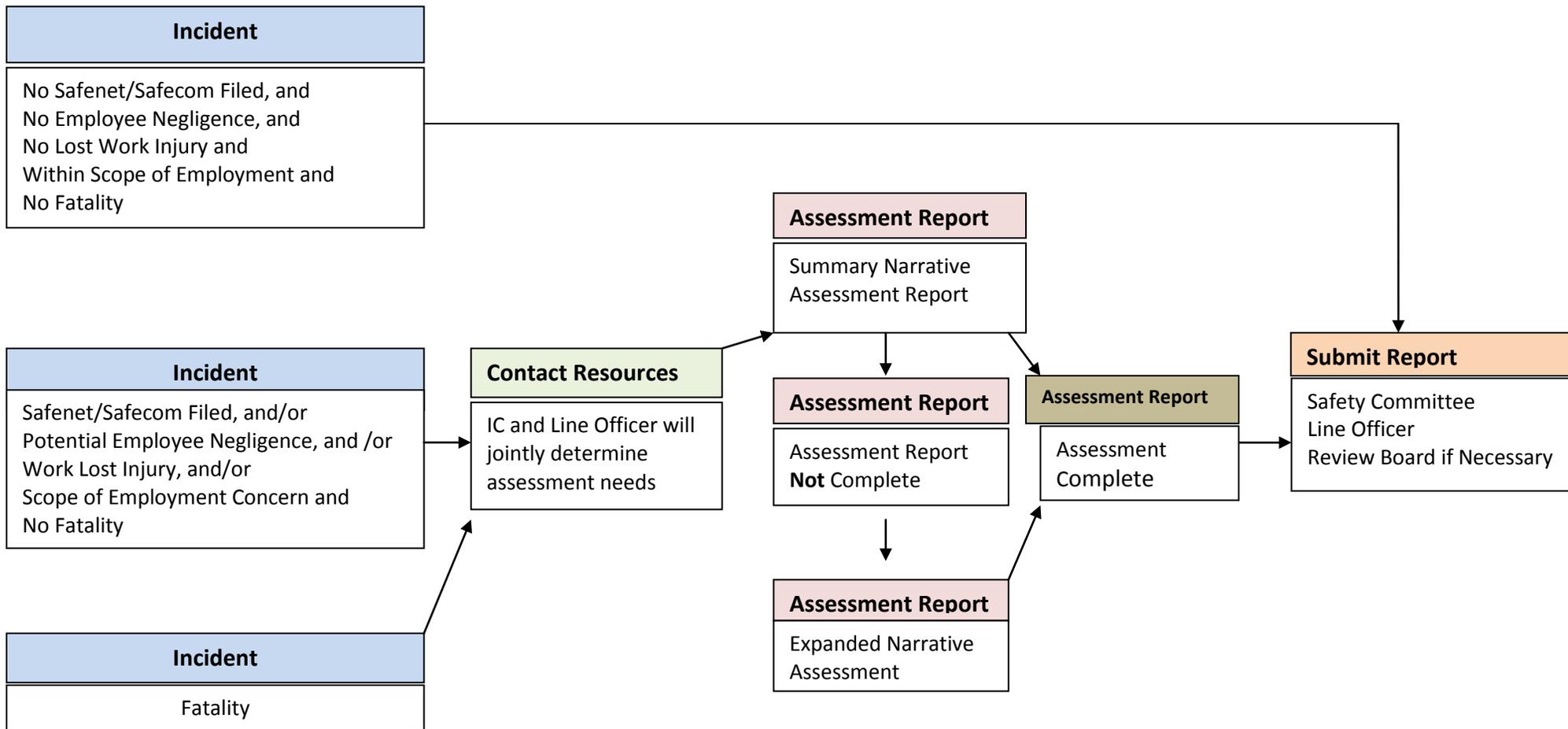
- A. All critical incident costs will initially be paid directly from the affected divisions' budget. If the critical incident is related to wildland fire suppression activity, the costs will be charged to the corresponding fire suppression organizational number.

IX. Authority

- A. This policy supersedes all previous DNRC policies related to critical incidents.

History: NEW: 9/11/13.

**Appendix A
Reference Materials:
Critical Incident Assessment Flowchart**



*If a rule, policy or law appears to have been violated, initiate an investigation using appropriate legal entity.

Appendix A
Reference Materials:
Critical Incident First Response Checklist

The following is a checklist designed to provide all personnel with a protocol to be used in the event of a critical accident or injury. The plan addresses life-threatening emergencies and non-emergency injuries/accidents, burnovers, entrapment, or fatalities. This document must be completed by both the Incident Commander (IC) or the Chief of Party (CP) and the unit Line Officer (LO) within the first 12 hours.

Initial Response Protocol

Incident Commander or Chief of Party must take control of the scene. Withdraw and regroup if personnel are not able to safely continue with assignment.

The most qualified person available will initiate appropriate life saving measures; apply first aid and/or request emergency services.

Notify appropriate dispatch center of situation.

Content of Notification

Do NOT release name(s) of injured over the radio.

Is this a life-threatening emergency or non-emergency event?

Description of injuries

What services are immediately needed? (EMS, Law Enforcement)

Brief description of how incident occurred

Incident Location

Name of person making notification

Determine need for air space restriction over the incident and initiate if needed.

Establish check-in schedule with dispatch, and relay actions taken.

Assign someone to documentation, and document everything.

Expectations for the IC/CP

- Withdraw and regroup if personnel are not able to safely continue with assignment.
- Identify need for operational control of the primary incident and the critical incident.
- Order or re-assign resources needed to accomplish operational control.
- Record witness contact information
- Secure and preserve on a 24 hour basis the scene and all pertinent evidence.
- Maintain communication with the proper dispatch center.
- Brief your supervisor on the situation.
- Identify a spokesperson until one is assigned by the line officer.
- Isolate injured party from the Media.

In case of fatality

- Do not disturb the deceased unless required for the safety of others.
- If necessary, cover the deceased with blanket.
- Isolate all personnel involved from the media.

Appendix A
Reference Materials:
Critical Incident First Response Checklist

- Ensure that the Coroner notifies the next of kin, with a DNRC representative

Critical Incident First Response Check List

Line Officer

- Incident Commander or Chief of Party assigned to take control of the scene.
- Confirm IC/CP has cared for all affected personnel and secured the scene on a 24 hour basis.
- Determine who would be allowed on scene and notify IC/CP.
- Confirm notification of county coroner, in case of a fatality.
- Call dispatch & restrict airspace, if necessary.
- Contact the Chief Pilot for incidents involving DNRC aircraft.
- Identify spokesperson
- If other agency(s) is involved, a Liaison Officer (s) must be assigned by the Line Officer.
- Follow assessment flow-chart and complete the *Initial Incident Assessment/Investigation Checklist*.
- Order Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team, if necessary.
- Brief your supervisor on the situation.
- Evaluate the Incident Management organization to determine whether you need to make changes in the management of the incident.

Incident Analysis.

Yes ___ No ___ Existing management has not been negatively affected by the critical incident.

Yes ___ No ___ Span of control can be maintained while dealing with both primary & critical incident.

Yes ___ No ___ Management team is able to meet incident objectives.

Yes ___ No ___ Management team will meet work / rest ratio.

Yes ___ No ___ Communication capabilities are able to support both incidents.

Yes ___ No ___ Management team wants to stay in place.

Consider replacing or modifying existing management structure, if you answered NO to any of the above questions.

Follow-up Items:

- Assure completion of Workers Compensation First Report of Injury has been assigned.
- Assure completion of Vehicle Accident Report has been assigned, if appropriate.
- Initiate further assessment and/or investigation as necessary.
- If additional steps are necessary based on assessment/investigation; engage appropriate agency personnel to implement Critical Incident Management including the Division Administrator, HR Officer, Safety Officer, and etc.
- Contact FAMB to determine best approach for After Action Review.

Line Officer _____ Date _____

Appendix A
Reference Materials:
Critical Incident Pocket Card

**Draft Pocket
Card (Example)**
FRONT

Initial Response Protocol

- Incident Commander or Chief of Party must take control of the scene
- Withdraw and regroup if personnel are not able to safely continue with assignment
- The most qualified person available will initiate appropriate life saving measures; apply first aid and/or request emergency services
- Notify appropriate dispatch center of situation

Content of Notification

- **Do not release name(s) of injured over the radio**
- Is this a life-threatening emergency?
- Description of injuries
- What services are immediately needed? (Evacuation, EMS, Law Enforcement)
- Brief description of how incident occurred
- Incident location
- Name of person making notification
- Determine need for air space restriction over the incident and initiate if needed
- Establish check-in schedule with dispatch, and relay actions taken
- Assign someone to documentation, and document everything
- Order CISD team if necessary

BACK

Expectations for the IC/CP

- Identify need for operational control of the primary incident and the critical incident. Order or re-assign resources needed to accomplish operational control
- Record witness contact information
- Secure and preserve on a 24 hour basis the scene and all pertinent evidence
- Maintain communication with the proper dispatch center
- Brief your supervisor on the situation
- Identify a spokesperson until one is assigned by the line officer
- Isolate injured party from the Media
- Assess the need for a CISD team, order if needed

In Case of fatality

- Notify 911, Law Enforcement, and secure the scene
- If necessary, cover the deceased with blanket
- Isolate all personnel involved from the media

**Appendix A
Reference Materials:
Critical Incident Initial Assessment Report**

Incident Name:	Assessment Date:
Location:	
County:	

INCIDENT DESCRIPTION:

Check only those boxes that apply to this incident:

- No Safenet/SafeCom filed
- No possible employee negligence or violation of policy, rule, or law
- No work lost injury
- Personnel were within their scope of employment.
- No fatality
- No potential for the incident to get significantly worse.

Explain:

Check only A or B:

- A NOT A CRITICAL INCIDENT, no additional assessment or documentation necessary; OR
B IS (OR MAY BE) A CRITICAL INCIDENT, **FURTHER ASSESSMENT REQUIRED** (Request the DNRC Critical Incident Management Team or other assessment team option)

Check only C or D:

- C NO NEGLIGENCE OR VIOLATION OF POLICY, RULE OR LAW, investigation not necessary; OR
D **ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATION NECESSARY** (Request additional investigation by the appropriate law enforcement or investigation authority)

Conclusion/Recommendation:

LINE OFFICER: _____ DATE: _____

Copy to: DNRC Safety Committee

Appendix A
Reference Materials:
Critical Incident Initial Assessment Report

[Date]

To: Incident Commander **[Names]**, Critical Incident Management Team

From: Delegating Official(s) **[Name(s)]**

Subject: Delegation of Authority—Critical Incident **[Names]**

This memorandum formalizes your appointment as Incident Commander to provide support to **[DNRC Unit, Bureau, Land Office, Division]** and its impacts on the Agency as a result of the critical incident which occurred on the **[Incident Information]**.

Your duties Incident Commander (DNRC Critical Incident Team) may include, but are not limited to:

1. Following established guidelines and policies **[List Policies]**:

EXAMPLES:

- **PR-DNRC-OP-014 Critical Incident Management**

2. Providing support to the affected DNRC office and personnel.
3. Assist the affected DNRC office in stabilizing the incident or situation.
4. Ensuring that DNRC employees and their families have been cared for and are continually informed of the current situation.
5. Briefing affected agency officials as appropriate, including a closeout with affected agency personnel.
6. Coordinating information exchange between the team members and all pertinent involved agencies, including local law enforcement, OSHA, and the medical examiner/coroner's office.
7. Maintaining liaison with affected agency units.
8. Approving and allocating requests for funds related to the incident.
9. Securing technical, logistical or other support as necessary.
10. Coordinating the scheduling of interviews and other activities with other line-of-duty entities such as Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) teams, and funeral/memorial services.
11. Briefing Delegating Official(s) or delegates as appropriate within each affected agency.

You will be provided an agency-specific charge code for all travel and associated costs to conduct the investigation.

Delegating Official, **[Agency]**
[Name]
[Title]

Delegating Official, **[Agency]**
[Name]
[Title]

cc: **[Names]**