

May 9, 2003

TO: Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices
Director, NASA Centers
Director, JPL Laboratory

FROM: AM/Chief Health and Medical Officer

SUBJECT: Critical Incident Stress Management

In recent years, but particularly in the last 18 months, NASA Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers have been called upon numerous times to lend support to our workforce affected by critical national events. These events have ranged from the destruction of the World Trade Center, to anthrax, to threat condition orange, the loss of Columbia, the war in Iraq, and most recently to the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). These critical incidents, outside the realm of normal every day problems and experiences are very distressing and have the potential to interfere with an employee's ability to function.

The Office of the Chief Health and Medical Officer (OCHMO) through its Occupational Health function sponsors training for all Center EAP providers in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD). Responding to a critical incident effectively requires a coordinated effort with emergency preparedness, medical first responders, and human resources personnel. Unfortunately, in some instances, even though CISM efforts were coordinated and initiated by Center EAP personnel in response to various critical incidents, local on-site authorities rejected the support as not being needed. Local authorities at a critical incident are often stressed themselves and may not fully appreciate the psychological impact to the on-site workforce. It is our responsibility to ensure that workers dealing with critical incidents have access to EAP support and CISM involvement.

The enclosed Guidelines for Implementing CISM Services will serve as a clarification and augmentation of the guidance in NPG 1800.1, Occupational Health Program Procedures, until those procedures are updated.

If you have any questions concerning CISM implementation please contact Mr. Alan Gettleman, Agency EAP Manager, at (321) 867-6003.

Richard S. Williams, MD, FACS

Enclosure

Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices:

AD/Mr. Gregory
AA/Mr. Stadd
ADI/Mr. Jennings
ADT/Dr. Greenfield
AE/Mr. Bradley
AF/Vacant
AG/Mr. Ciganer
AO/Ms. Dunnington
AS/Dr. Lucid
B/Vacant
C/Mr. Frelk
E/Dr. Hayden-Watkins
F/Ms. Novak
G/Mr. Pastorek
H/Mr. Luedtke
I/Mr. Schumacher
J/Mr. Sutton
K/Mr. Thomas
L/Mr. Horner
M/Mr. Readdy
N/Dr. Loston
P/Mr. Mahone
Q/Mr. O'Connor
R/Dr. Creedon
S/Dr. Weiler
U/Ms. Kicza
W/Mr. Cobb
X/Mr. Saleeba
Y/Dr. Asrar

Directors, NASA Centers:

ARC/Mr. Hubbard
DFRC/Mr. Petersen
GRC/Mr. Campbell
GSFC/Mr. Diaz
JSC/Gen. Howell
KSC/Gen. Bridges
LaRC/Mr. Freeman (Acting)
MSFC/Mr. Stephenson
SSC/Mr. Parsons

Director, Jet Propulsion Laboratory:
Dr. Elachi

cc:

A/Ms. Whewell

AM/Ms. Angotti

CIC/Ms. Grimes

KSC/AM/Mr. Gettleman