

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE - 3.4.1

TOPIC - POST INCIDENT DEBRIEFING

PURPOSE:

To identify methods that will create an environment leading toward learning from our experiences.

GENERAL:

Every emergency incident that we respond to brings with it an opportunity to learn. It is vital that we encourage open discourse that will promote a productive perspective regarding the circumstances of an incident and the actions we took to reduce the problem. This post incident discussion may take one or more of the following forms: Informal Debriefing, Formal Debriefing. Post incident debriefing needs to occur as early as possible after the event.

GUIDELINE:

Informal Post Incident Debriefing:

1. After each incident the officer in charge or crew leader should informally check in with the crew to determine their perspective of the incident. Some suggested areas for discussion:
 - What went well?
 - What were the significant aspects of the call?
 - What are our opportunities for growth?
 - How is each person doing?
2. Based upon the nature of the call and/or the significance of any responses during the informal discussion the officer may elect to schedule a more formal debriefing.
3. Be sensitive to needs of all personnel regarding their emotional health and the potential need for a traumatic stress debriefing session.

Formal Post Incident Debriefing:

1. A formal debriefing may be scheduled immediately after an incident or at some date soon after the incident based upon the availability of personnel and resources.
2. It is extremely important that the formal debriefing is organized in such a manner to promote a good outcome leading toward better understanding.
 - Write down topics for discussion.
 - Gain appropriate resources.
 - Assure security.
3. Make an attempt to have all people who were on scene at the session.

4. Provide opportunities for people to express their perspective.
5. Keep the opportunity for dialogue open, invite further discussion as necessary.
6. Maintain awareness to the need for traumatic stress debriefing.