

# MICROFILM DIVIDER

OMB/RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION

SFN 2053 (2/85) 5M



ROLL NUMBER

DESCRIPTION

2179

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Operator's Signature

Date

10/17/03

2003 SENATE INDUSTRY, BUSINESS AND LABOR

SB 2179

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Deanna Wallis  
Operator's Signature

10/17/03  
Date

2003 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2179

Senate Industry, Business and Labor Committee

☐ Conference Committee

Hearing Date 1-20-03

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1	xx		730
Committee Clerk Signature <i>Lisa Van Berkorn</i>			

Minutes:Chairman Mutch opened the hearing on SB 2179. Senator Krebsbach was absent.

SB relates to the provision of a written critical incident stress debriefing policy.

**Testimony in support of SB 2179**

Senator Cook introduced the bill. He expressed his support of the bill and asked that Mike Muscha further explain the bill.

Mike Muscha, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, gave written testimony. See attached.

(meter no. 970)

Senator Heitkamp asks him to compare and contrast the policies of other railroads.

Mike Muscha hands out sample policies. See attached.

Mike stressed the importance of the persons involved in a tragic accident on the railway should be removed from the train and brought directly to their home and counseling set up. The prolonging of this process, or the employee continuing on with work is proving to be detrimental

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*Deanne Hall*  
Operator's Signature

*10/17/03*  
Date

Page 2

Senate Industry, Business and Labor Committee

Bill/Resolution Number 2179

Hearing Date 1-20-03

of the moral of the workers. He is stating that the policy needs to be enforced by administration and the sunset clause removed from the current law.

Senator Klein asks if there is a requirement that all the employees read the material that is made available to them.

Mike answers that there is a yearly training and part of the requirement is to have the employee sign stating they have read the policy and are aware of the options available.

(meter no. 2580)

Senator Bercier of District 9 spoke in support of the bill. He gave examples of his experiences in many years of truck driving and wanted to go on record that he was in favor.

(meter 2932)

Ron Huff of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers spoke in support of the bill. See attached testimony.

Alexander Neigum spoke in support of the bill based on his experience working for the railroad.

He had experienced 3 fatalities in his career and didn't receive immediate counseling and was told to finish his route when he didn't feel he was able to do so. No questions were asked.

Tom Kelsch of Canadian Pacific proposed amendments. See attached. End tape side A.

(Continue side B).

**Hearing was closed. No Action Taken.**

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*Deanna Nellis*  
Operator's Signature

12/17/03  
Date

2003 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2179

Senate Industry, Business and Labor Committee

☐ Conference Committee

Hearing Date 1-21-03

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1		xxxxxx	165
Committee Clerk Signature <i>Lisa Van Berkern</i>			

Minutes: Chairman Mutch called the committee to order. All Senators present.

SB 2179 relates to the provision of a written critical incident stress debriefing policy.

The committee discusses the purpose of the bill.

Senator Mutch addresses a man by the last name of Daniel Kuntz of BNSF. He stated that BNSF already has a policy on stress debriefing. He said that removing the sunset clause would eliminate the process of providing proof that the employee was actually informed of the policy. They want to amend by saying a posting policy would be better. See attached.

Senator Mutch asks Mike Muscha of Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers if this amendment would be fine.

Mike states that he is satisfied with the amendment.

meter no. 1680.

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*10/17/03*  
Date

Page 2

Senate Industry, Business and Labor Committee

Bill/Resolution Number 2179

Hearing Date 1-21-03

**Senator Heitkamp moved the amendment. Senator Espegard seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote: 7 yes. 0 no. 0 absent.**

**Senator Heitkamp moved a DO PASS as amended on SB 2179. Senator Espegard seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote: 7 Yes. 0 No. 0 Absent.**

**Carrier: Senator Espegard.**

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Deanne Hall  
Operator's Signature

01/17/03  
Date

30378.0101  
Title.0200

Adopted by the Industry, Business and Labor  
Committee

January 21, 2003

*Jo*  
*1-21-03*

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2179

Page 1, line 8, overstrike "and shall provide a copy of the policy to each employee" and replace  
"Upon the complaint of an employee of" with "The railroad corporation shall keep a copy  
of the policy posted in a conspicuous place on an area of its premises commonly  
frequented by its employees. Penalties for a violation of this section are limited to those  
allowed in section 49-07-01.1."

Page 1, remove lines 9 through 12

Renumber accordingly

Page No. 1

30378.0101

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*Deanne Nellis KB*  
Operator's Signature

*01/17/03*  
Date

Date: 1-21-03  
Roll Call Vote #:

2003 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2179

Senate IBL Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number

Action Taken

Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By

Heitkamp

Seconded By

Espegard

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
7- Sen. Duane Mutch, Chairman	X		Sen. Michael Every <u>5</u>	X	
6- Sen. Jerry Klein, Vice Chairman	X		Sen. Joel Heitkamp <u>4</u>	X	
2- Sen. Duaine Espegard	X				
3- Sen. Karen Krebsbach	X				
Sen. Dave Nething	X				

Total (Yes) 7 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

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Deanne Hall  
Operator's Signature

10/17/03  
Date



Date:  
Roll Call Vote #:

2003 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2179

Senate IBL Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken

DO PASS AS AMENDED

Motion Made By

Heitkamp

Seconded By

Espgaard

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
7- Sen. Duane Mutch, Chairman	X		Sen. Michael Every <u>5</u>	X	
7- Sen. Jerry Klein, Vice Chairman	X		Sen. Joel Heitkamp <u>4</u>	X	
6- Sen. Duaine Espgaard	X				
2- Sen. Karen Krebsbach	X				
3- Sen. Dave Nething	X				

Total (Yes)

7

No

0

Absent

0

Floor Assignment

Espegard

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

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Operator's Signature

Deanne Hall

Date

10/17/03

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)  
January 22, 2003 8:15 a.m.

Module No: SR-12-0882  
Carrier: Espegard  
Insert LC: 30378.0101 Title: .0200

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2179: Industry, Business and Labor Committee (Sen. Mutch, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends DO PASS (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2179 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.**

Page 1, line 8, overstrike "and shall provide a copy of the policy to each employee" and replace "Upon the complaint of an employee of" with "The railroad corporation shall keep a copy of the policy posted in a conspicuous place on an area of its premises commonly frequented by its employees. Penalties for a violation of this section are limited to those allowed in section 49-07-01.1."

Page 1, remove lines 9 through 12

Renumber accordingly

2003 HOUSE INDUSTRY, BUSINESS AND LABOR

SB 2179

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Deanne Hall  
Operator's Signature

10/17/03  
Date

2003 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. SB 2179

House Industry, Business and Labor Committee

☐ Conference Committee

Hearing Date March 5, 2003

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1		x	0.0-19.5
Committee Clerk Signature <i>Judith Hammer</i>			

Minutes: **Chairman Keiser** opened the hearing on SB 2179.

**Senator Cook**, District 34, introduced the legislation regarding critical stress policy. He stated that this section of law that was first enacted at the last legislative session is working well. This bill will remove the sunset clause and the requirement for providing paper copies of the policy to all employees. Copies are to be posted in a conspicuous place at the site of employment.

**Rep. Kasper**: What are the penalties for violations?

**Senator Cook**: A civil penalty with a fine not to exceed \$5000.

**Rep. Nottestad**: Why not leave the language "shall provide the policy to each employee" in and say "and the railroad shall keep the policy posted"?

**Senator Cook**: There's concern how you verify that you left a copy of the policy with each employee.

**Rep. Ruby**: Is the reason for this wording because it is consistent with postings and notifications from Workers Comp, Job Service, etc.?

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Operator's Signature

10/17/03  
Date

Page 2  
House Industry, Business and Labor Committee  
Bill/Resolution Number SB 2179  
Hearing Date March 5, 2003

**Senator Cook:** That could very well be, I wasn't involved with drafting the amendments, I just introduced the legislation.

**Mike Muscha, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Burlington Northern Legislative Chairman,** testified in support of SB 2179. (See attached #1)

**Rep. Froseth:** Two years ago, the legislature left this to be compromised between the railroads and the employees union, has that worked, is there dissatisfaction?

**Muscha:** It's not perfect but it's getting closer. Getting a policy contractually is not the highest priority, wages and health and welfare take precedence.

**Rep. Severson:** Does this policy only apply to fatalities or does it encompass other traumas or near misses?

**Muscha:** It has to be a fatality at this time.

**Dave Kemnitz, President of the AFL-CIO,** offered oral testimony in support of SB 2179, stating that this works through enforcement and engagement.

**Dan Kuntz, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad,** testified that BNSF is not opposed to SB 2179 but took the podium to clarify information. Originally the railroads were required to provide proof that copies of the policy had been delivered to their personnel. This implies that you have to use affidavits. Every time a policy changes, you'd have to provide updated copies. That's why we proposed posting the current policy in a conspicuous place. Critical incidents are not limited to fatalities but include serious injuries and traumatic events.

**Rep. Severson:** Who determines when an incident is critical enough for an employee to get counseling and time away?

**Kuntz:** I can't say, it's up to the supervisor. The employee assistance program is available.

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10/17/03  
Date

Page 3  
House Industry, Business and Labor Committee  
Bill/Resolution Number SB 2179  
Hearing Date March 5, 2003

**Rep. Kapsner:** Does BNSF have a critical incident stress debriefing policy in effect now? How have you been working with the employees and the unions for the past two years since the original bill went into effect to update and modify it?

**Kuntz:** BNSF had policies in effect prior to two years ago. BN's was a template for other railroads.

**Tom Kelsch,** Legal Counsel for Canadian Pacific, took the podium to clarify issues and offer comments. Professional counseling is provided within 72 hours of the incident for their employees. He provided a copy of the CP Policy. (See attached #2)

As there was no one else present to testify either in support of or in opposition to SB 2179, the hearing was closed.

**Rep. Severson** moved a Do Pass.

**Rep. Nottestad** seconded the motion.

**Rep. Klein** commented that this will certainly assure paper reduction.

**Rep. Nottestad:** Shouldn't the railroads enclose a copy of their critical stress debriefing policy within their new employee packets as well as post it? I know that to prove it is impossible.

**Results of the roll call vote were: 12-0-2.**

**Rep. Thorpe** will carry this on the floor.

Date: 3/5/03  
Roll Call Vote #:

2003 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2179

House INDUSTRY BUSINESS & LABOR Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken DO Pass

Motion Made By Severson Seconded By Nottestad

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Kelser	✓		Boe	✓	
Vice-Chair Severson	✓		Ekstrom	✓	
Dosch	✓		Thorpe	✓	
Froseth			Zaiser	✓	
Johnson	✓				
Kasper	✓				
Klein	✓				
Nottestad	✓				
Ruby	✓				
Tieman	✓				

Total (Yes) 12 No 0

Absent 2

Floor Assignment Thorpe

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

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10/17/03  
Date

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)  
March 5, 2003 12:01 p.m.

Module No: HR-39-3944  
Carrier: Thorpe  
Insert LC: . Title: .

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2179, as engrossed: Industry, Business and Labor Committee (Rep. Kelser, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2179 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

(2) DESK, (3) COMM

Page No. 1

HR-39-3944

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10/17/03  
Date



2003 TESTIMONY

SB 2179

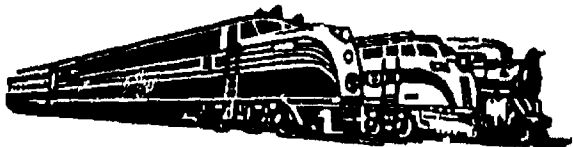
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10/17/03  
Date



# Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers



January 20, 2003

Division 671

Enderlin, North Dakota 58027

Re: Senate Bill 2179

*Same testimony  
to the  
House*

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Industry Business, and Labor Committee

My name is Mike Muscha. On behalf of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and my fellow workers in the cabs of the locomotives across North Dakota, I want to thank you for this opportunity to appear before this committee. I'm here in support of Senate Bill 2179.

I'm going to speak in favor of this bill and it will be from my heart. I have worked for CP Rail for 32 years and have been in the cab of a locomotive that has struck and killed a person stalled on the tracks, struck a pickup with a young father and 6 year old daughter returning from a day of fishing, and witnessed countless close calls. I believe this bill is necessary to ensure that each individual will be treated fairly at the time he or she experiences a tragedy such as the one I faced a number of years ago. In this profession it's sad to say, but such an experience will most likely happen at least once in each trainperson's career.

You may ask, why a law? I believe we need this law to ensure a check and balance system. Railroads change hands. Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Canadian Pacific, Soo Line, Red River Valley & Western, Dakota Missouri Valley & Western and Northern Plains Railroad, all these railroads have shed some tracks, gained more track, subleased track and secured trackage rights. My years of experience on the railroad have taught me that ownership changes, policy changes, and managers change. This law will make each railroad or new railroad have a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Policy and provide an employee a copy of the policy. Also, there will be a mechanism for enforcement of the policy on a railroad.

As I close I would like to tell the members of the committee that I have a few different policies with me and I can provide each member of the committee with copies. I also have a contractual agreement off the Delaware Hudson Railway. I like to use the expression, I have policies that vary from being like a Cadillac to a Volkswagen. The two most important issues I look for in a policy are 1) you need to educate all railroad employees affected by the policy, 2) adhere to the policy of removal of affected employees from a crash sight and be transported home as soon as possible so they can get help.

Thank you,

Mike Muscha, BLE Legislative Chairman

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10/17/03  
Date

## Guidelines

### Critical Incident Program Trauma Intervention with Authorized Paid Leave

Employees distressed following a critical incident may request relief from duty from their supervisor.

An employee requesting such relief will be returned to their home terminal and payment for the balance of trip miles not completed will be made in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements.

The Supervisor will send a letter of instructions (sample attached) to the employee. The supervisor will fax a copy of the letter to EAP.

The employee must contact their supervisor if they feel they are unable to report for the next tour of duty. All time off work will be paid at the basic daily rate of pay.

The supervisor will instruct the employee to contact the EAP Program Manager within the next 8 hours and comply with all EAP recommendations. The supervisor must ensure that there is a clear understanding regarding authorized time off and compensation days.

EAP will contact the supervisor, after assessing the employee, to recommend a work status. The supervisor will authorize compensated time off, if required. The EAP will confirm the time off by sending the supervisor a *Fitness for Duty* form.

When the EAP determines that the employee is medically fit to return to duty, the EAP will contact the supervisor and confirm the return to duty by sending the supervisor a *Fitness for Duty* form.

Since the majority of employee's return shortly after an incident, the front line supervisor must inform the Division Superintendent of all employee's utilizing these guidelines.

Employee's failure to follow this process will not be compensated for any time off as a result of a critical incident.

**Reportability Instructions:** If the employee cannot return to their next scheduled tour of duty, the supervisor must complete and send into the Accident and Injury Reporting Center the *Supervisor's Report of Injury and Occupational Illness*, (SAF 51658) clearly marked as "under medical review". The Safety/Medical departments depending upon analysis of incident, treatment, diagnosis and eventual outcomes will make reportability determination.

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10/17/03  
Date

**SENATE BILL: 2179**

**Testimony Submitted by Ron Huff**

**Representing BLE Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers**

Last session the legislator's passed a bill dealing with critical incident stress debriefing. This bill had a sunset clause with it. What we are attempting to do is (1) remove this clause, (2) give the Public Service Commission jurisdiction. The reason for the PSC to have this is while Sen. Cook and I were working on this bill we asked the Labor Commissioner if he could administer this law? His answer was no he thought the best ones for this would be the PSC. (3) complaint: an employee will be able to bring a complaint to the PSC, before we did not know where we could go with any complaints. (4) compliance: If the railroad is found to be out of compliance they have sixty (60) days to take care of the problem.

The two problems that I can see that would put them out of compliance would be (1) notification: Notifying the employee of the policy and where they can get a copy of it.

The railroads can accomplish this in several ways. A few of the ways would be, US Mail, bulletin boards at work. The perfect opportunity would be when the new hired employees go through their 4-month training program, the railroad could include the notification in their instruction.

(2) not offering the employee counseling after an incident: To stay in compliance with the law the railroads have to offer counseling to involved employees.

  
Ron Huff

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2179

Page 1, line 8, overstrike "and shall provide a copy of the policy to each employee"

Page 1, line 8, remove "Upon the complaint of an employee of"

Page 1, lines 9 through 12, remove "a railroad corporation, the commission shall request proof of compliance with this section by the railroad corporation. If the railroad corporation does not provide satisfactory proof within thirty days or does not remedy being noncompliant within sixty days, the railroad corporation is subject to the penalties in chapter 49-07."

Page 1, after line 12, insert "The railroad corporation shall keep a copy of the policy posted in a conspicuous place on an area of its premises commonly frequented by its employees."

Renumber accordingly

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Kuntz

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2179

Page 1, line 8, overstrike "and shall provide a copy of the policy to each employee"

Page 1, line 8, remove "Upon the complaint of an employee of"

Page 1, lines 9 through 12, remove "a railroad corporation, the commission shall request proof of compliance with this section by the railroad corporation. If the railroad corporation does not provide satisfactory proof within thirty days or does not remedy being noncompliant within sixty days, the railroad corporation is subject to the penalties in chapter 49-07."

Page 1, after line 12, insert "The railroad corporation shall keep a copy of the policy posted in a conspicuous place on an area of its premises commonly frequented by its employees. Penalties for a violation of this section are limited to those allowed in section 49-07-01.1."

Renumber accordingly

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01/17/03  
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The EAP will perform immediate outreach. The outreach will entail initiating direct contact with the employees involved, offering professional counseling assistance and explaining the short and long term potential effects of exposure to such incidents. An explanation of the Critical Incident Response Program will be provided and employees will be encouraged to participate immediately, and/or as needed in the future.

Debriefings will generally include only those employees who were directly involved in the critical incident. Although participation is strongly encouraged, it is voluntary and strictly confidential. Formal De-Briefings will be conducted in a private, secure environment which is free of interruptions. Usually this will be done at off-site locations such as motel/hotel conference or provider facilities or company facilities near but remote from the scene if practicable.

Arrangements will be made by the EAP to provide assistance for employees who request it even though they were not directly exposed, but had close relationships to those who were. Distribution of educational materials to any impacted non-employees will be at the discretion of the responding Company representative and the EAP.

Upon completion of the intervention(s), contact with the appropriate managers will be made by the EAP providing general updates and necessary information, while at the same time protecting the strictest confidentiality for individual employees.

Follow up with individuals either individually or in a group format will be provided as necessary.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information on the U.S. Critical Incident Response Program, contact the Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-777-0618.

#### POLICY ADMINISTRATION AND INTERPRETATION

The administration and interpretation of policy is the responsibility of the Director of Safety Management.



### U.S. CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE PROGRAM POLICY



May 1, 2002

#### INTRODUCTION

Canadian Pacific Railway regards employee safety as a priority and fully recognizes the individual needs of employees exposed to traumatic events that can lead to long-term difficulties. Consequently, Canadian Pacific Railway has developed this Critical Incident Response Program (CIRP) adapted for its U.S. operations, which is designed to offer timely assistance to individuals in these situations.

The Company's U.S. Employee Assistance Program will administer the Critical Incident Response Program.

For purposes of this document only, the terms "traumatic event" and "critical incident" will be used interchangeably.

Formal critical incident stress debriefing is a psychological and educational process that uses specially trained mental-health professionals in order to mitigate the impact of a critical incident and accelerate the return of personnel to routine functions after the incident.

This intervention is designed to accelerate normal recovery processes in normal people who are experiencing normal reactions to abnormal circumstances and to identify those individuals who may seem to be exhibiting more than the expected and normal responses to trauma.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the development of characteristic symptoms following a psychologically distressing and traumatic event in which the person has experienced, witnessed or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others, in which the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness or horror. The stressors producing this syndrome would be markedly distressing to almost anyone. PTSD is a clinical diagnosis characterized by:

- A. A Traumatic event
- B. Persistently Re-experienced
- C. Persistent Avoidance
- D. Symptoms of Arousal
- E. Duration of more than one Month
- F. Anxiety distress or impairment

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The symptoms of PTSD may be physical, cognitive, emotional or behavioral in nature; if no support or intervention is available following the

development of PTSD, from 25 - 30% of the persons involved may experience some long term difficulties. The diagnosis is not made if the disturbance lasts less than a month.

#### TRAUMATIC EVENT - DEFINITION AND HUMAN RESPONSE

A traumatic event is defined as one in which a person(s) has experienced, witnessed or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.

A traumatic event, many times called a critical incident, can induce sufficient emotional impact to cause a person to experience unusually strong reactions which have the potential to interfere with his/her ability to function either at the time of the incident or later. However, what is a traumatic event for one person may not be for another. It depends on one's perception of vulnerability and the amount of control the person has, or had, over the situation. Such incidents could include:

- A. serious accidents, fatalities or dramatic events in the workplace (e.g. explosion or suicide);
- B. catastrophes (e.g. plane or train crash);
- C. criminal acts (e.g. hold-up and hostage-taking);
- D. tragedies (e.g. massacre);
- E. natural disasters (e.g. earthquake);
- F. traumatic railway accidents, including level crossing accidents, derailments, etc.

This type of event is generally perceived by everyone as a high stress factor as a result of the threat it poses, the violence it involves, the emotional impact, as well as the psychological distress it generates.

There is a full range of human responses to traumatic events, especially those of a single, sudden, and short-lived event. While it is a basic human response to trauma to have a heightened arousal (increased pulse, hyperventilation), sleep disruption, and repetitive thoughts and imagery in mind for a few days following a traumatic event, such responses do not constitute a psychiatric disorder and are rarely disabling. A very small percentage of individuals involved in traumatic events develop ongoing symptomatic responses to such events.

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Operator's Signature

01/17/03  
Date

Although one might expect that the nature and severity of the traumatic event might predict the nature and severity of the post-traumatic responses, such is not usually the case. The symptomatic responses to traumatic situations are more dependent upon an individual's life history, vulnerability and overall health status.

#### USUAL REACTIONS FOLLOWING A TRAUMATIC EVENT

In the hours following the event, the employee may have various physical, cognitive (mental function), emotional and behavioral reactions. In general, the state gradually diminishes over the following days to possibly weeks, and in a small percentage of cases can take longer.

Every individual responds differently. In given incident, therefore, there are no "good" or "bad" reactions, even the absence of a reaction may indicate possible psychological distress.

#### POTENTIAL REACTIONS FOLLOWING A TRAUMATIC EVENT

**Physical/Behavioral Reactions:** Restlessness, nausea, tremors, shaking, fatigue, eating problems, tenseness, sleep disruption, dizziness, headaches, increased blood pressure, sexual problems, nightmares or flashbacks.

**Emotional/Social Reactions:** Anxiety, anger or feelings of rage, difficulty concentrating, reliving the incident, guilt, feeling lost or abandoned, memory problems, avoiding reminders of the situation, sadness, depression, feeling numb, moodiness or irritability, withdrawing from family or friends.

**Symptoms of Traumatic Stress:** The first symptoms may appear in the minutes following the event and may include emotional shock and feelings of helplessness and isolation combined with feelings of inadequacy and insecurity. Most people who are dealing with traumatic stress feel angry, frustrated, helpless, worried and anxious. They also may have negative, agitated and uncertain feelings about how to cope with the situation.

#### PURPOSE OF POST-TRAUMA INTERVENTION

It must be noted there are two types of post-trauma intervention: group intervention and individual intervention.

In both cases, the purpose is to help employees by allowing them to express their distress and by educating them on the possible impacts of traumatic events, thereby enabling them to master the situation.

#### TYPES OF POST-TRAUMA INTERVENTIONS

**Post-trauma Interventions** — may be utilized at the discretion of the EAP depending upon the severity of a critical incident. Interventions include defusing, formal debriefing, follow up services and individual consultations.

**Defusing** — is a mini debriefing for a small work group conducted away from the scene shortly after the incident which lasts no more than 30-40 minutes. During this time, information and advice on normal reactions and coping is provided by a mental health professional. It is also a time for personnel to begin processing the event and involved employees should be allowed to talk as much, or as little as needed. A defusing may eliminate the need for a formal debriefing.

**Formal debriefing** — is ideally conducted within 24-72 hours of the incident. It is a psychological and educational process to assist employees by allowing them to express their reactions in a safe environment and educating them on the impact of traumatic events, thereby enabling them to reduce symptoms and accelerate their process to return to normal functioning. It provides peer support and a place for reality orienting. It is not considered therapy and is strictly confidential and voluntary. A formal debriefing usually takes one to three hours to complete.

**Follow up services** — are conducted in the weeks or months following an incident, as a group or individually as necessary. It may include an informal debriefing session, phone or personal follow up, all to minimize delayed stress symptoms.

**Individual consultations** — include one to one counseling for concerns related to the incident conducted by a mental health professional. Individual sessions may take place after a formal debriefing, if necessary, or in lieu of a formal debriefing. Only one or two persons are involved in the intervention.

#### ADVANTAGES OF POST-TRAUMA INTERVENTION

There are several advantages to post-traumatic

intervention, both for the individual and the Company. For the individual, intervention allows them to gain peer support and begin the healing process effectively while minimizing the risks of long term physical and emotional effects which can interfere with one's home and work life.

Early intervention benefits the Company by preventing future accidents, reducing unnecessary absenteeism, decreasing the number of medical and mental health claims, reducing litigation, increasing employee loyalty and trust as well as increasing morale.

**Employees and/or their supervisors should be encouraged to contact the Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-777-0618 for questions or to schedule any post trauma intervention after critical incidents.**

#### CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE PROCEDURES (MANAGER'S ROLE)

When a traumatic incident occurs involving serious bodily injury, serious assault (or threats thereof), horrific events or fatalities, the Employee Assistance Program Administrator (EAP) is to be immediately contacted by either the responding manager, the dispatching office, or the involved employees.

The Employee Assistance Program can be contacted at 1-800-777-0613; if voice mail is activated, press "0" and stay on the line. EAP services are available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week for crisis situations.

Managers in charge at the scene of a traumatic event will ensure that an initial personal contact is made with involved employees to begin the debriefing process. As much as practicable, involved employees should be removed from immediate area of the event.

Managers at the scene will not try to be counselors, but will use simple good judgment to assess the obvious emotional responses of employees involved. They will have one-on-one discussions with each employee, and/or a general group discussion, depending on their assessment of the situation, to help and allow employees express their distress and to begin the process of educating them on the possible impact of such traumatic events. They will also explain the next steps of the Critical Incident Response Program and its benefits to involved employees.

On an individual basis the manager may make the decision to relieve the employees directly involved in a critical incident for the remainder of their tour of duty. Several rules of thumb are: to relieve the employee(s) if a co-worker fatality is involved; or, if the event is obviously horrific; or, if the obvious emotional condition of the employee so dictates; or if their continued service poses concern about continued safety of the operation.

Managers, in cooperation with the EAP, may allow employees to miss up to the next three consecutive days/shifts with pay, depending on individual employee assessments. Experts advise that while it might be helpful to some individuals in reducing post traumatic reactions to have a few days away from work, it can very well be the worst thing to do for many other individuals, for whom the best practice would be to immediately return to a regular work schedule and normal duties. Time away from work will not be mandatory, and will require EAP approval and medical substantiation when requested.

On a case-by-case basis, additional time off, compensation, and medical treatment will be determined by Health Services under the direction of the Chief Medical Officer and in conjunction with the EAP.

#### CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE PROCEDURE (EAP'S ROLE)

The EAP will collect information regarding the details of the event such as description of the incident, names of the employees involved, etc.

Based on the information collected and the situation, a plan will be established which may include scheduling a defusing and/or formal debriefing session or individual sessions depending on assessment of the need by the EAP.

The appropriate intervention will be facilitated or coordinated by the EAP within 24-72 hours of the event. The EAP will arrange for and begin the processes of intervention including Defusing, Formal De-Briefing, Individual Consultations, and Follow-up Services, as deemed necessary. Immediate intervention, Defusing, and Formal De-Briefing will be paid for by the company. Although referral will be provided by the EAP, individual counseling services and follow-up services will be the responsibility of the employee and/or as provided by their insurance.