

## CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

<b>Policy owner</b>	Executive Management Committee
<b>Policy category</b>	Governance
<b>Policy status</b>	Approved
<b>Approval body</b>	MIECAT Council
<b>Last amended</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2023

### PURPOSE

This Policy describes how MIECAT manages critical incidents which may have a major impact on the wellbeing and safety of staff and students and/or their ability to continue to teach and learn effectively.

The policy establishes recording and reporting systems to ensure preventative measures, immediate responses, and follow-up actions are taken to deal both with the immediate consequences and the longer-term implications of a critical incident.

The process is dynamic and designed to be updated regularly to incorporate ongoing feedback which is essential to the management of all critical incidents.

Critical incidents may include but are not limited to:

- Medical emergencies
- Student / staff injury resulting from an accident
- Critical student / staff illness
- Unexpected student / staff death
- Missing student(s)
- Wilful threats of physical harm against MIECAT staff, students, or visitors
- Natural disaster
- Bomb threats, fire, violent riot acts
- Major theft or vandalism
- Threat of serious infection

- Sexual assault or harassment
- Mental health crisis
- Drug and/or alcohol intoxication / overdose

Non-life-threatening events, for example, major reputational damage can be classed as critical incidents. Every critical incident is unique and will need to be dealt with on an individual case by case basis, according to the needs of the person(s) impacted. Critical incidents will be managed with the foremost goals of preserving life, the wellbeing of staff and students, protecting the organisation's property, and restoring normal operations as quickly as possible. MIECAT is committed to providing a safe learning and teaching environment and it is the right of all staff and students to feel safe and be safe while on campus.

## **SCOPE**

This Policy applies to all incidents affecting people and property at MIECAT.

It is applicable to all incidents that occur on MIECAT's premises; and/or that occur on MIECAT premises under the control of Institute staff, and/or involve MIECAT staff or students, while involved in work related to MIECAT business or programs.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### 1. Prevention and preparation

- 1.1 MIECAT will regularly identify and evaluate threats and potential crisis events to enhance preparedness for such events in accordance to MIECAT's Risk Management Policy.
- 1.2 MIECAT will develop appropriate plans, systems and processes to ensure it swiftly and effectively responds to and manages critical incidents.
- 1.3 The availability of appropriate resources and the development of safety measures are to be monitored on a regular basis through the Risk Management and Executive Management Committees and relevant senior MIECAT staff.
- 1.4 The following steps are to be taken to prepare in the event of a critical incident:
  - lock down procedures including safe and secure lockable rooms or escape paths in event of an intruder or armed person
  - emergency evacuation notices illustrating the location of assembly in the event of a fire or other similar situation prominently displayed
  - regular testing of building evacuation practice
  - new staff are made aware of the Critical Incident Management process as part of induction processes
  - emergency exits are clearly marked and kept clear of obstacles at all times

- emergency wardens are to be appointed and trained regularly in emergency procedures
- first aid officers are to be appointed and have current first aid certificates
- backups of computer records are stored off-site and are retrievable
- list of key MIECAT personnel that are responsible for critical incident responses

1.5 The Student Services Team will maintain a contact list of all relevant community resources including medical authorities, police, other emergency services, and counsellors.

1.6 Staff members will undergo periodic training to ensure they know how to respond to critical incidents, including:

- first aid training for Workplace Health and Safety Representative (WHSR)
- understanding staff roles and responsibilities
- undergoing periodic drills of responses to various situations

## 2. Managing a critical incident

### 2.1 Immediate response to an incident

- Appropriate first aid/medical treatment is rendered if required.
- Relevant authorities are contacted (e.g police, fire brigade, ambulance), including the Director (or appointed delegate).
- The Director (or appointed delegate) will inform members of the Executive Management Committee.
- Ensure immediate safety/wellbeing of affected people with emphasis on removing them from the immediate area/threat.
- A designated member of the Executive Management Committee ensures all steps required to protect the health and safety of all persons following the incident have been taken.
- The WHSR ensures Notifiable Incidents &/or Dangerous Occurrences are reported immediately to WorkSafe Victoria.
- In the case of a workplace death or notifiable incident, where practicable, the site of the incident must be preserved until directed by a WorkSafe Inspector.
- In the event that the WHSR is not available, the most senior MIECAT staff member present, should notify the WorkSafe Victoria
- A WorkSafe Victoria Incident Notification form must be completed and forwarded to WorkSafe within 48 hours of the incident.

### 2.2 Notifiable incidents

Notification is required to WorkSafe Victoria where an incident at a workplace results in:

- the death of any person
- a person requiring medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance
- a person requiring immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital
- a person requiring immediate medical treatment for:
  - amputation
  - serious head injury
  - serious eye injury
  - separation of skin from underlying tissue (for example degloving or scalping)
  - electric shock
  - spinal injury
  - loss of bodily function
  - serious lacerations

### 2.3 Notifiable dangerous occurrences

A dangerous occurrence is an incident at a workplace which may seriously endanger the health and safety of people in the immediate vicinity:

- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any item of plant listed in Schedule 2 of the OHS Regulations 2017;
- the collapse or failure of an excavation, or the shoring support of an excavation;
- the collapse or partial collapse of any part of a building or structure;
- an implosion, explosion or fire;
- the escape, spillage, or leakage of substances;
- the fall from a height of dangerous or heavy objects.

### 2.4 The Director (or appointed delegate) along with members of the Executive Management Committee will:

- make an assessment of any ongoing risk, which may require emergency action;
- contact next of kin/nominated emergency contact where necessary;
- detail arrangements for informing staff and students;
- devise guidelines for staff about what information to give students;

- delegate of a staff member to deal with telephone and other enquiries;
- ensure the site is secure for any potential police investigation;
- deal with external media;
- notify relevant Government agencies;
- mobilise resources and funds to support provision of immediate counselling and support for affected staff and students;
- make changes to ongoing operations if required

### 3. Incident investigation

3.1 The Executive Management Committee (or delegate thereof) will investigate the incident in consultation with the WHSR and the person/persons involved in the incident (where possible). The investigation should commence as soon as reasonably practicable after the incident occurs or at least within 24 hours of receiving notice of the incident. Depending on the complexity and nature of the incident, the investigation may involve other members of MIECAT or stakeholders and may require expertise from an external source.

3.2 The focus of the investigation is to obtain an accurate picture of what occurred by:

- Interviewing persons involved and witnesses
- Examining the scene of the incident and recording (as relevant) any physical evidence related to the event such as, but not limited to:
  - the location of the person at the time of the event
  - any problem associated with the use of any plant, equipment, or substances
  - workplace conditions such as lighting, floor surface, warning signs, weather conditions (if the event occurred outside)
- Reviewing background information including, but not limited to:
  - documented procedures for the work being carried out and if there were any deviations from such
  - maintenance and testing reports, if plant or equipment involved
  - training and competency
  - any similar events that have occurred previously.

3.3 The findings of the investigation must be recorded on the Incident Investigation form and this should be sent to Operations Manager within 3 days of Incident notification.

- 3.4 The immediate MIECAT supervisor, in consultation with the WHSR, the person who was involved in the incident (where possible) and, where relevant, other stakeholders, identify the corrective and/or preventative actions required to prevent a recurrence of the event. The findings must demonstrate that any risks to health and safety are eliminated, or where that is not reasonably practicable, minimised, and that priorities for actions are assigned. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, both short- and long-term control measures may be required.
- 3.5 The WHSR will be involved in further investigation or risk assessments if required, for example, for serious incidents or incidents involving manual handling, chemical substances, plant/machinery.

#### 4. Monitor and review

- 4.1 The WHSR will track and monitor the implementation of the agreed corrective and/or preventative actions as outlined in MIECAT Business Continuity Plan. The WHSR will report findings to the Executive Management Committee for evaluation.
- 4.2 The Executive Management Committee will review the Critical incident management procedures detailed in this policy every two years.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The Executive Management Committee is responsible for overseeing the overall implementation of MIECAT's health and safety provisions and issuing guidance in the management of health and safety to all staff.

### **KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

Executive Management Committee, MIECAT Director, Student Services Team, MIECAT Workplace Health and Safety Representative

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)

MIECAT OH&S Policy

MIECAT Risk Management Policy

MIECAT Privacy Policy

MIECAT Business Continuity Plan

MIECAT Critical Incident Register

Hazard Report Form

Incident Investigation Form

Incident Notification Form

'Controlling OHS hazards and risks - A handbook for workplaces' (Ed. 2, 2017)

#### **VERSION HISTORY**

<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Summary of changes</b>
16 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	0.1	J. Mitchell	Draft version for approval

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