

Cochise County's Multi-Agency Critical Investigation Response Team Protocol

It is the consensus of the CEOs of the law enforcement agencies in Cochise County that a team of highly trained and skilled investigators, comprised of personnel from participating law enforcement agencies, and the County Attorney's Office, be formed to investigate critical incidents, to include officer involved shootings, mass casualty events, conflict matters, and other incidents deemed appropriate. This team shall be designated as the Critical Investigation Response Team (CIRT).

CIRT MISSION:

To conduct a complete and thorough high quality and unbiased investigation to be presented to the Cochise County Attorney's Office to determine if any person committed a crime during the course of events which led up to and included the critical incident and to best serve the citizens and victims in Cochise County.

DEFINITIONS:

Employer Agency: The agency that employs the person(s) that is the subject of investigation regarding the critical incident.

Venue Agency: The agency of the Team Commander that is assigned primary responsibility for the investigation.

To maintain transparency and to reduce conflict of interest, Critical Investigation Response Team members from the employer or conflict agency shall not be used for critical duties (Team Commander, Team Leaders, etc.) related to the CIRT investigation.

INVESTIGATION COSTS/EQUIPMENT:

All normal personnel costs related to the investigation shall be the responsibility of the agencies providing members to the team. Critical Investigation Response Team members, while responding to a "call-out", will be deemed to be on duty. The employer and venue agencies will cooperate to provide all reasonable and necessary equipment and supplies required by the Critical Investigation Response Team to conduct an investigation. Any routine costs for equipment and testing will be the responsibility of the employer

agency. Prior to incurring extraordinary costs, the Team Commander will consult with the CEOs of the Employer agency.

DEPARTMENT'S INTERNAL/ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION:

The employer agency's administrative "internal" investigation will be conducted as independently as practicable of the Critical Investigation Response Team investigation. The administrative "internal" investigation may run concurrently and in conjunction with the Critical Investigation Response Team investigation; however, the Critical Investigation Response Team's purpose is investigating criminal offenses not administrative.

ASSIGNED PERSONNEL:

All local law enforcement agencies are welcome to join CIRT. Agency members assigned to CIRT should be based on the individual's desire, aptitude, and their ability to demonstrate the necessary skill set to perform effectively with this team.

- Team Commanders:

Officers of supervisory rank with superior training, experience, and skill, should be appointed to serve as Team Commanders. A minimum of two agencies will assign a Team Commander to the CIRT. Each of these agencies shall designate a minimum of one supervisory ranked individual who will serve as a back-up if needed. It is incumbent for the group of Team Commanders to work together and communicate with each other for the betterment of the team.

Normal Responsibilities: Each Team Commander is responsible for ensuring their CIRT investigators are skilled, experienced and capable of conducting critical incident investigations. The Team Commanders will be responsible for developing less experienced investigators assigned to the team. There must always be a conscious effort to plan for succession and develop other investigators. Team Commanders are responsible for ensuring that the team members from their respective agencies attend as many trainings as possible.

Team Commanders will be responsible for identifying members of their agency to act as Team Leaders and investigators with agency CEO approval.

Critical Incident Responsibilities: During an incident call-out, a Team Commander not from the employer agency will be designated as CIRT Commander. This decision will be made between the employer agency CEO and the potential venue Agency CEO. If the Team Commander is unavailable, their back-up shall act in their stead.

The Team Commander, or their designee, is responsible for directing the investigation of the critical incident. The County Attorney may be asked to advise the Team Commander to resolve any conflicts that might arise with regard to how the investigation should proceed.

The team should be assembled as soon as possible at a location or locations as determined by the Team Commander. After the assembly of the team, a briefing will be conducted concerning the incident.

At the conclusion of a CIRT call out, the Team Commander should organize a team debriefing to identify any training issues and acknowledge team successes.

- Team Leaders:

Team Leaders will possess the necessary skills, training and experience to handle a critical incident. The Team Commander will identify one Team Leader who will have primary oversight for the investigation.

- Team Members:

All law enforcement agencies in Cochise County are eligible to assign personnel to the CIRT. The Team Commanders will determine the size of the CIRT team for a particular critical incident.

- Involved Agency Liaison:

Agencies within the county may wish to assign members as liaisons to the team. The liaisons will typically be utilized when their respective agency employee is the subject of the investigation in which the team is deployed, and the agency is not represented by a Team Commander.

When the CIRT team is activated and the employer agency does not have a Team Commander available, they will provide a command

officer to act as a liaison to venue agency Team Commander. The Team Commander and employer agency liaison will be clearly identified to all team members at the initiation of the investigation or as soon as possible thereafter.

ACTIVATION PROCEDURES:

The CIRT may be activated upon the occurrence of a critical incident or upon request of the CEO of the employer agency or their designee. Upon the occurrence of an officer-involved incident, the employer agency may initiate the call out of the CIRT and notify the County Attorney's Office and the appropriate venue agency. All law enforcement CEO's, retain the discretion to request activation of the CIRT for non-officer involved incidents in which their personnel were involved or other critical events in which a multi-agency or conflict investigation may be appropriate.

CIRT activation is usually done when someone from the employee's command staff calls a command staff officer of another agency participating in the CIRT. Once the venue agency agrees to the activation, they (Team Commander) call out their investigation team and/or calls other members of CIRT to request help with investigators or other resources, as needed.

VENUE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY:

The scene of an officer involved shooting (or other CIRT incident) will be secured and preserved by the venue agency. Care should be taken to make sure the scene is undisturbed. The venue agency may utilize employer agency personnel to help secure the scene. Other than essential law enforcement information needed to preserve public safety, no information regarding this incident will be discussed until contact is made with and the arrival of a Critical Investigation Response Team Commander.

EVIDENCE COLLECTION:

CIRT member(s) assigned to evidence collection will oversee and coordinate the evidence collection and packaging. All evidence collected will be logged into the Team Commander's agency's evidence system pursuant to the agency's procedures. Each CIRT member will prepare a report detailing their independent role in this process and their observations.

OFFICER PROCESSING:

Whenever possible, the involved officer should be taken to their employer agency for processing. The employer agency will follow its Officer-Incident Protocol for detailed information regarding officer processing, gatekeeper responsibilities and peer support procedures.

ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATIVE ASSISTANCE:

The CIRT may utilize personnel from the employer agency as needed. However, employer agency personnel shall only act under the supervision of a CIRT member.

CRITICAL INVESTIGATION RESPONSE TEAM MEMBER REPORTS:

Reports completed by team members will be handled by the team member's agency. This is to relieve the venue agency of the burden and allow for the transcription of interview tapes, so that the information may be gathered and presented for review as expeditiously as possible. In some cases, alternative arrangements may be made with the approval of the Team Commander. Critical Investigative Response Team members are responsible for delivering all reports to the Team Commander at a time or date specified by the designated Team Commander.

MEDIA/RELATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION:

The CEO of the employer agency or their designee will be responsible for media relations/public information requests.

ROLE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY:

The County Attorney shall be included in the CIRT team call out. The County Attorney, Chief Criminal Deputy or their appropriate designee may respond. The County Attorney's Office shall serve as the legal advisor to the CIRT Team.

CIRT TEAM REPORT:

When the investigation is completed, it will be presented by the CIRT members designated by the Team Commander to the County Attorney. The Team Commander is responsible for notifying and scheduling the presentation with the County Attorney and CEO of the employer/venue agency(s). The CEO of the employer agency may request that the Team Commander make a separate presentation to the employer agency and/or any other review board. No officers directly involved in the critical incident may attend the presentation.

Critical Investigation Response Team

Signatory Agencies

BENSON POLICE DEPARTMENT		BISBEE POLICE DEPARTMENT
Chief Greg Volker		Chief Timothy Cox
COCHISE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT		COCHISE COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
Sheriff Mark Dannels		County Attorney Brian McIntyre
DOUGLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT		HUACHUCA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
Chief Kraig Fullen		Chief James Thies
SIERRA VISTA POLICE DEPARTMENT		TOMBSTONE MARSHALL'S OFFICE
Chief Chris Hiser		Marshall Jim Adams
WILLCOX POLICE DEPARTMENT		
Chief Dale Hadfield		