Critical Incident Scenario Report

Report to the Trust (Based on real crisis scenario exercise names have been changed and comments added in the form of footnotes to indicate the response of the trust to the report)

The scenario was designed to test the systems of the Centre and to also provide training and confidence for those who would be directly involved in an actual event.

It involved 4 stages, first was to deal with the actual incident as it unfolded and then the next 3 stages dealt with the ongoing effect of this at intervals of 1 day, 1 week and 1 month later.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The actual incident dealt with a student falling a small distance whilst waiting for an activity. This started with injuries that then lead to a fatality. The day involved dealing with parents (Local Tramping Club), the media (Broadcasting School), school principal (Fred Dagg) [[2]](#footnote-2), counseling support (Jimmy Cricket) [[3]](#footnote-3) and the deceased students parents [[4]](#footnote-4)(another centre’s instructors). These people gave freely of their time to assist the Centre and much thanks needs to be given to them.

Overall, the day was of great benefit and showed that the people and systems would cope.

The Centre manager, Trust chair and Trust secretary showed themselves to be organized and competent in their roles. One major outcome highlighted the need for prompt and efficient support to the centre from the Trust Media/Trauma person. [[5]](#footnote-5)This was performed well by both the Trust chair and Trust secretary. The other major outcome was to be able to see and feel what reality would be like. The Centre manager appreciated being able to see the reality of dealing with an event like this and to gain confidence in this role. It is important that we do not lose this, so I would recommend we have scheduled practices. There are no major changes that need to be made to systems at the operational end but some minor adjustment and additions may make dealing with a real event easier.

There are some questions that need to be answered however.

1. What contingency fund and how much, is available to support extra costs of a real event?

Costs may include internal investigations, legal representation for both the Trust [[6]](#footnote-6) and the instructor involved, counseling support to staff, [[7]](#footnote-7) and payment of wages while the centre is shut down.[[8]](#footnote-8)

1. Does our business interruption insurance cover us if we voluntarily shut the centre down? Does it cover us for wages, operations costs? [[9]](#footnote-9)
2. If the Trust chair and/or Trust secretary are away, who steps in to the media role or the trauma role? This should be formalized that the Trust chair/Trust secretary alerts the next in line (deputy) when they are away and for how long. (the deputies should be formally appointed and undergo a training/familarisation at the Centre) [[10]](#footnote-10)
3. How often should this be practiced? Bi-annually, AGM, or it is practiced every time the media/ trauma role on the trust is changed or probably a combination of both. [[11]](#footnote-11)

I personally found the exercise valuable. It gave me confidence in those who would deal with this situation if it happened for real. It also proved to be thought provoking in what we actually do and the trust that we, whether a trust member or instructor, are given every time a student arrives.

James, the Safety Officer [[12]](#footnote-12)

Media Statement

(Based on a real crisis scenario exercise. Names have been changed)

1 November 2010

**Crisis Scenario exercise at Alpine View**

Over the weekend staff members from the Alpine Outdoor Education Centre together with members of the governing trust, and members of the Local Tramping Club, participated in an exercise to test the readiness to deal with an emergency.

“We are very aware of the need to make absolutely sure that our risk management policies and strategies are robust and capable of responding quickly should an emergency occur,” said the chairman of the Alpine Trust, Graham Sergio. “We know that schools and other groups using the centre for outdoor education and adventure activities expect us to keep students and members of the public from harm. While it is not possible to remove all risk from the kinds of activities we offer,” said Mr Sergio,” it is possible to ensure that those risks are kept to the minimum and that we have in place procedures to respond should an emergency occur.”

The scenario involved a high school student slipping on a rock face during an abseiling activity and falling. He is seriously injured and is airlifted from the Centre to hospital for further treatment but dies on arrival at hospital. The scenario initially involved simulating the accident site and actions to immediately attend to the injured student. The scenario then shifted to simulating the various actions that Centre staff and members of the Trust would need to take to manage the media and particularly the family of the injured student . The staff were required to simulate the management of the remaining students in the school party.

‘The exercise proved very useful in testing our ability to handle such an emergency,” Graham Sergio said. “Any organization providing for the kinds of programmes that we are providing needs to ensure that its programmes follow strict safety guidelines, its staff are well trained and that our policies and procedures for dealing with an emergency are robust. This exercise has been very useful in sharpening up our ability to respond quickly and effectively.”

Statement ends.

For further comment contact Graham Sergio, chairman, Alpine Trust. Phone number provided.

1. Fast forwarding technique used so that the range of events, actions and responses could be fitted into one day. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. He notified the parents, other members of the senior leadership team, his board chair, and the school counsellor. The latter joined the principal in providing support to the family. All parents of those on the camp were contacted by the contact person. All of this on a Saturday! [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Notified and on standby on day one [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Mum decided to visit the Centre to meet the Manager. This was a very emotional meeting with considerable pressure placed on the manager. Both parties were assisted with a ‘de-role’ activity [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Secretary informed two trustees who in turn used their ‘communication tree’ to inform the other trustees [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The trust has a legal adviser but needs to explore the matter of legal support for the instructor with Outdoors NZ and NZOIA [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. An agreement with a counsellor already existed however clarification re the cost and the terms required [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The trust annual budget includes ‘contingencies’ but this has subsequently been increased [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Trust to seek clarification with their insurance broker [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Procedures need to be created at this in-depth level [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Decision pending [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Special thanks communicated to the safety officer and those who gave of their time (Trust minutes) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)