

P.03.07 CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In line with Standard 6 of the ESOS National Code 2018, this policy and procedures has been designed to ensure that AVETA will activate the required procedures as soon it becomes aware of a critical incident affecting a staff member, a student or a group of students, contractors or members of the public on AVETA premises.

- The National Code defines a critical incident as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'. (This does not include serious academic misconduct)

AVETA will take immediate steps to manage the critical incident that could affect an overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm, the follow-up required after the incident, and record the details of the incident and action taken by AVETA during or following the incident.

AVETA will maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by AVETA for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student under the ESOS Act.

AVETA will ensure that all appropriate staff that may be involved in a critical incident or management of the incident post the actual incident will have contact information available to them for the police, the Department of Home Affairs and the parents of the student, if appropriate or any other organization that may be able to assist in such a situation for example Community/Multicultural organisations or phone – counselling services.

AVETA will maintain and publicise to students a list of designated members of AVETA's staff to be the official point of contact for students during normal office hours.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 Critical Incident

A traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. (This does not include serious academic misconduct). Non-life-threatening events could still qualify as critical incidents. Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- Missing students
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Death, serious injury or any threat of these
- Natural disaster
- Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse or
- Other Non-Life-threatening events

2.2 AVETA's Critical Incident Team

Immediately a critical incident has been brought to the notice of AVETA's CEO, it will be the responsibility of the CEO to establish an AVETA's Critical Incident Team. The composition of the team will be left to the discretion of the CEO.

Any action taken in regard to a critical incident will be recorded to include outcomes or evidence if the incident is referred to another person or agency but will take into account AVETA's Privacy policy. Whatever action is taken the major focus will be the care for both the physical and emotional wellbeing of staff, students and their families and if possible, to minimise any short and long term disruption to personal and professional functioning of AVETA as an educational provider.

- **Responsibilities of AVETA's Critical Incident Team:**

- a) To oversee the coordination of AVETA's response to the critical incident
- b) To liaise with the Department of Home Affairs, police, and their families or any other organisations as appropriate who and any other relevant organisations that may be able to assist in such a situation, for example community organisations or phone counselling services.
- c) To monitor staff, students, visitors or contractors throughout the critical incident response and afterwards
- d) To determine the level of counselling or other support required from external authorities
- e) To set up and staff a recovery room, where appropriate
- f) To liaise with relevant external support agencies
- g) To record the incident and actions taken including post incident actions.

3.0 EMERGENCY RESOURCES

The nature of critical incidents is such that resources cannot always be provided in anticipation of events. For this reason, AVETA's Critical Incident Team must use their discretion to provide adequate resources, for both physical situations as well as AVETA staff members, or to meet the needs of specific situations.

AVETA's Critical Incident Team will access any of the following emergency resources, as required:

- Police (Tel: 000)
- Fire Brigade (Tel: 000)
- Ambulance (Tel: 000)
- Phone-counselling services (Care Ring, 24 hours a day, ph: 136 169 OR Lifeline, ph: 131 114)
- Translating and Interpreting Service (ph: 131 450)

4.0 FOLLOW-UP AFTER A CRITICAL INCIDENT

- a) The outcomes of a critical incident response will be evaluated by the Critical Incident Team establish for a specific critical incident in the month following the critical incident (taking into account AVETA's Privacy Policy P.16.03).
- b) AVETA's Critical Incident Team will continue to monitor staff, student, visitor or contractor needs after the critical incident
- c) AVETA's Critical Incident Team will complete any reporting requirements as soon as practical.

5.0 DOCUMENTATION OF A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Any action taken in regard to a critical incident will be recorded to include outcomes or evidence if the critical incident is referred to another person or agency. When documenting the critical incident, it will be done taking into account AVETA's Privacy Policy P.16.03. A breach of an Australian Privacy Principle is an 'interference with the privacy of an individual' and can lead to regulatory action and penalties. This documentation will also assist with the evaluation phase of the critical incident. This should be completed on AVETA's Critical Incident Report Form F.03.10.