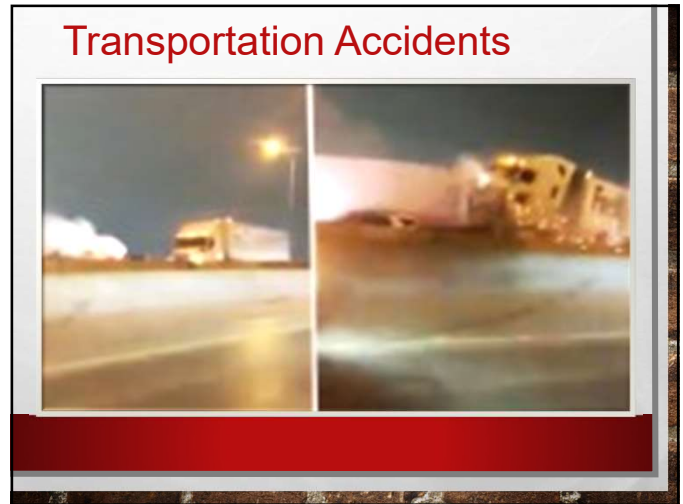




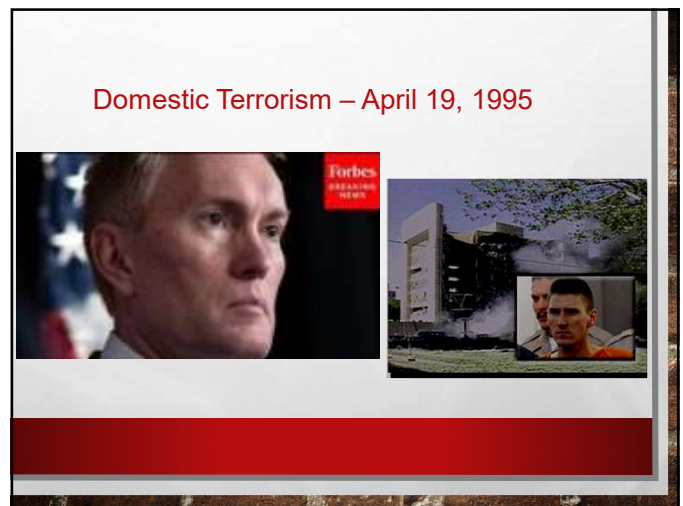
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4

Mass Shooting – March 27, 2023



Mass Shooting – October 1, 2017



NIGHTLY NEWS

The image is a still from a news broadcast, showing an aerial view of a large, modern building complex, likely a government or institutional facility, with a prominent tower. The image is overlaid with the 'NIGHTLY NEWS' logo and the NBC peacock logo. The text 'Mass Shooting – October 1, 2017' is displayed at the top of the frame.

2

Mass Fatalities Incident

A mass fatalities incident is any situation where there are more deceased people than can be handled using local resources.

The medical examiner mass fatality response plan should be activated when there are at least 10 confirmed or anticipated fatalities related to the event.

9

Ethical Treatment of the Dead

Reverence for the dead is derived from many factors:

- Our culture
- Our feelings
- Literature
- Religious guide lines

10

Critical Operational Objectives

- Notification
- Staging
- Search and recovery
- Morgue operations
- Media relations
- Political relations
- Family assistance center
- Critical incident stress management

11

- Mass fatalities incident is a multi-discipline response involving many stakeholders.
- Mass fatalities scene recovery and operations will be managed under the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

12

Components of NIMS

- Command and Management
- Multiagency coordination systems
- Public information system
- Incident command system



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Incident Command System (ICS)

- Organized way to look at task or management
- Defines roles
- Defines lines of communication
- Limits the number of people under one manager – Span of Control

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Unified Command

- One person is in charge
- Establish goals
- Plan tactical objectives
- All agencies contribute to the command process
- Maximize resources and personnel

15

FEMA Pre-training

- IS-100 (INTRODUCTION TO ICS)
- IS-700 (INTRODUCTION TO NIMS)



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Law Enforcement response to a Mass Shooting

- TACTICAL PHASE –
Removal of the hostile threat
- OPERATIONAL PHASE –
Safety, rescue, perimeter control and security
- CRIME SCENE PHASE –
Evidence collection



17

Evaluation Team

- Chief Medical Examiner
- Chief Investigator
- Police Agency – Crime Scene Supervisor
- ❖ Confirmation of the number of fatalities
- ❖ Coordinate with law enforcement the crime scene evidentiary concerns with body recovery

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Incident Operations

- On-scene operations:
 - Staging
 - Search and recovery
 - Notification of response personnel
- Morgue Operations
- Family Assistance Center Operations



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Staging Area

- Law Enforcement
- Fire Department
- Emergency Medical Services
- Medical Examiner



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Notifying response personnel

- Where to report
- Who to report to
- What equipment to bring
- The route to take to get to the staging area
- What time to report
- How many personnel needed on-scene
- How many personnel needed in morgue operations
- Accountability of personnel
- Daily operations "DO NOT STOP"

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Recovery Team

- Medical Examiner – Team
- State Emergency Management - Team
(Governor's declaration of a disaster)
- Federal Team - D-MORT Team #7
(Presidential declaration of a disaster)



22

Recovery Team

- Team Leader – Forensic Death Investigator
- Scribe
- Photographer
- Recovery officer
(control and custody of decedent and personal effects)

23

Protocols for on-scene operations

- Preserve evidence and personal effects and protect the scene.
- Establish methods for documenting what is recovered, and where.
- Manage expectations about how quickly operations can be completed.



24

Documentation

- The incident scene
- Decedent position
- Shell casings
- Cellular telephone
- Personal effects

Preserve Evidence
Don't Rush!



25

Shooting – Forensic Evidence



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27

Supplies needed for documentation

- Stakes, flags, and spray paint
- Identification tags
- Office supplies
- Cameras and video recorders



28

Personal Effects Management



In transportation incidents, the Family Assistance Act recommends how Personal Effects are managed.

Aside from monetary value families gain greatly from return of Personal Effects.

It should be the call of the family

29

Documenting the scene



30

Document the scene



- Both still photographs and video
- Aerial - Drone photographs
- Ground-level photographs with proper orientation or location noted in the photo
- Photograph body in relationship to fatal scene and personal effects

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Search Methods

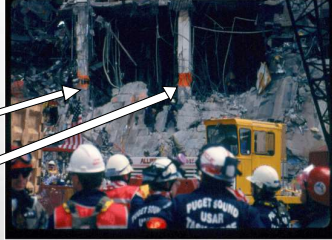


- GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS)
- TOTAL STATION TECHNOLOGY
- GRID SEARCHING

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Using the structure as a Grid

Grid Points



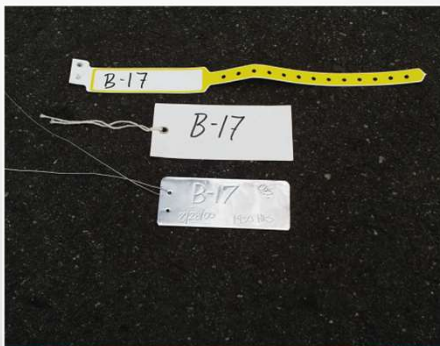
33

Numbering System Considerations

- The system should be simple and use whole numbers.
- Use the same number on the toe tag and the tag on the outside of the remains pouch.
- Assign a range of nonduplicative, consecutive numbers to each search and recovery team.
- After morgue triage the remains should be assigned a sequential morgue reference number.
- Do not use leading zeros.

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Numbering System Considerations



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Incident site collection/storage

- An area may be set to collect remains prior to transport to morgue.
- Refrigerated trucks may be necessary at this site.
- Remains may be transported by refrigerated truck or individually.
- This is simply an on-site storage facility

36

Removing remains from the scene

Log sheet should include the:

- Field recovery number
- Number of remains being transported
- Date and time of departure from site

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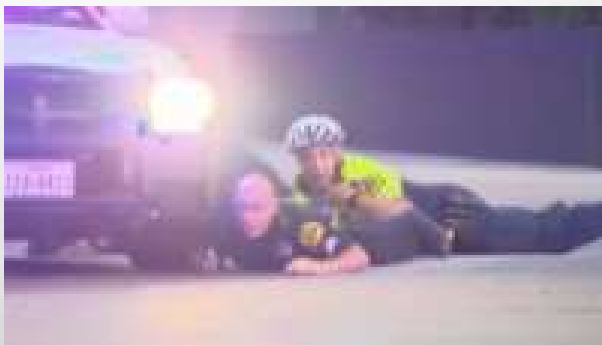
Removing remains from scene

- Store body bags in refrigerated/cooler truck until transported at 38 to 42 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Use trucks with metal construction.
- No company names should be visible.
- Pre-arrange with vendor
- Figure 20-25 bodies per truck
- No wooden floors
- Be prepared for mechanical problems
- Sanitize thoroughly after the mission



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Public Information Officer – Media Relations



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Public Information Officer

- Must be assigned as early as possible. The Public Information Officer must also be familiar with:
 - The overall incident.
 - Procedures for recovering and identifying remains.
 - Procedures for release of remains.
 - Family notification procedures.

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Public Information Officer - PIO

DO'S

- Designate a PIO prior to event
- Establish working relationship with media
- Establish specific timeline and location where release of information will take place
- Schedule special media release to clarify misinformation or misrepresentation of ME operational response
- Answer "Truthfully"
- Consider the use of Social Media

DON'TS

- Wait until event occurs to designate a PIO
- Work from outdated media points of contact
- Allow wrong, false details to cause confusion or concerns. Get ahead of the narrative
- In response to questions do not guess or speculate. Use technical experts to address specific details.
- Media is not to have access to the recovery site, morgue operations, or the Family Assistance Center.

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Political Influence

DO'S

- Know who your politicians are
- Informally make them aware of MEO daily operations and mass fatality operations
- Invite politicians to shadow forensic investigators. Follow a case from beginning to conclusion to include the forensic examination
- Know which politician is supportive of the MEO and our needs

DON'TS

- Show any partisanship
- Become involved in political turf wars

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Incident Morgue Requirements

- Convenient to the scene, but in a secure location
- Adequate size to comfortably accommodate morgue personnel, supplies, and equipment
- Infrastructure for communications, lighting, HVAC, restrooms, water, drainage, and other support for morgue personnel
- Easily accessible



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Additional Morgue Requirements

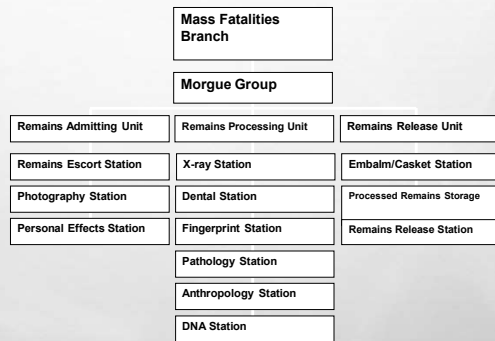
- Security and storage for personal effects
- Removed from public view
- Nonporous or disposable flooring
- Office space
- Tractor trailer/forklift accessible
- Rest and debriefing areas
- Refreshment/lunch area



Typical size is 8,000-10,000 square feet.

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Morgue Organization



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Morgue Stations

- Triage of remains
- Admitting of remains
- Photography
- Personal effects
- Postmortem examination
- Radiography
- Forensic examination/Autopsy
- DNA collection
- Forensic anthropology examination
- Fingerprinting for scientific identification



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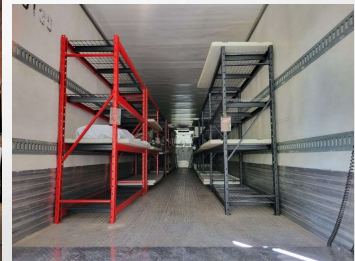
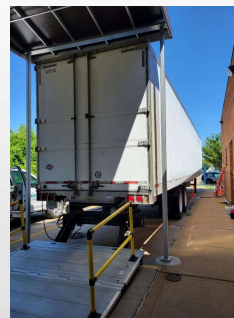
Refrigerated Truck Requirements

- 1 refrigerated truck for 20-25 sets of remains
- “Rule of thumb:”



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Refrigerated Truck



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Sandy Hook School – December 14, 2012



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Purpose of the Family Assistance Center (FAC)

- To provide family members with information about the event.
- To provide family members access to services.
- To provide a controlled facility where family members can receive and provide information while their privacy is protected.
- To allow investigators and the ME/coroner access to family members to collect antemortem information.

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Family Assistance Center - Considerations

- Proximity to the incident
- Privacy, comfort, and security
- Functional areas and equipment
- Access



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Family Assistance Center Site Selection

- Close enough to the incident site to allow the medical examiner or coroner and others to travel easily among the site, morgue, and center.
- Far enough from the site that families are not continually exposed to the scene.

Plan for an average of 10 family members visiting the FAC for each victim.

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Family Access Procedures

- Designate specific secured entrances for families.
- Use check-in and checkout procedures.
- Assign each family a personal representative.
- Ensure that families are badged in an unobtrusive way so that they do not stand out.



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Family Assistance Center staff access procedures

- Designate specific entrances for FAC staff.
- Use check-in and checkout procedures.
- Require identification.
- Verify the credentials of volunteers.



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Family Assistance Center Functional Areas

- Family briefing area regarding operations and recovery
- Interview area for medical examiner/coroner
- Areas for local casework services, including housing, funds, etc.
- Individual rooms for next-of-kin notification



55

Conducting family briefings

- Brief families before the media.
- Choose terms carefully.
- Be sensitive to ethnic diversity.



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Family briefing substance



- Scene operations and recovery
- Identification process
- Return of personal effects
- Explanation for why it takes so long

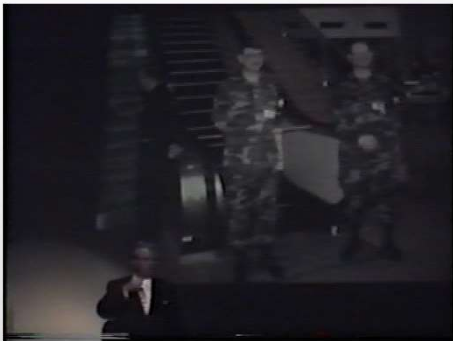
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Site visits and memorial services



- Should be a coordinated event
- May not always be possible

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CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT - CISM

Iowa CISM Network

Provides statewide response to any event requiring CISM debriefing and defusing

Statewide response is "Regional" by County

Point of Contact: Len Murray, Coordinator
(515) 249-9030 MurrayL150@hotmail.com

<https://www.211iowa.org>

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Traumatic Stressors in Mass Fatalities

- Emotional involvement—that which reminds us that the remains were people
- Personal effects—makes a life real
- Bodies of children—affect everyone emotionally

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Critical Incident Stress Management

- Defusing is an informal process beginning at the break area
- Debriefing is a formal process

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Defusing Session

- A defusing session is a informal, brief, confidential, non-judgmental group meeting of workers affected by the incident
- Voluntary
- Defusing begins immediately upon completion of an assigned task
- Trained “peer” counselor
- Trained mental health professional - Defusing vs. Intervention

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Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

- **Critical incident stress debriefing (CISD)** is a formal process that aims to help individuals work through their response to a highly stressful or traumatic event. It is a form of crisis intervention that is designed to reduce the traumatic impact of an event by fostering a connection between people who went through the same experience, increasing effective coping, and trauma education after the stressful event¹. The process involves a facilitator who helps a group of people work through their response to the event.

Definition: CISD by Dr. Amy Marshall

64

Debriefing Session

- A debriefing session is a formal process
- Psychological debrief “NOT” Operational debrief
- Must be conducted within 72 hours of conclusion of operations
- Mandatory to all personnel
- Task related or job specific
- Facilitated by trained mental health professional
- Assisted by “Peer” counselor

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Leadership actions to diminish incident stress

- Lead by example
- Maximize worker safety
- Communicate regularly
- Limit traumatic exposure
- Visit work areas and talk with workers
- Praise and reward people’s work
- Ensure adherence to work/rest cycles

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Lessons Learned

1. Planning - include stakeholders and multi-disciplines
2. Media relations – “get them informed and on-board at the “on-set” ME response
3. Ensure “positive” identifications of decedent in a timely manner
4. Death notifications to families made in a timely manner
5. Return of decedent’s personal effects to family
6. Mass fatalities incident response training

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Plan

Prepare

Practice

Without Practice We Will Fail

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