

## POST-INCIDENT

Debriefing a critical incident is just as important as training for one. A critical incident is not immediately over after the initial response ends. Assessing how the response went is essential for improving both individual and agency performance. There are three key aspects to a post-incident response:

### 1. Debriefs

- First, the facilitator, usually the FLS or highest ranking officer on scene, should provide an overview of the incident and its objective, starting with the initial call for service and progressing through the response to the resolution. Do not analyze the event, simply present a list of facts about the response.
- Each participant should then share how they responded to the incident and what specific actions they took throughout the event.
- Next, the group should discuss what they thought went well in the response and what could be improved as an agency. The group will identify key takeaways from the incident and establish future.

### 2. After-Action Reports

- Following a debrief, it is beneficial to produce an after-action report to share with the entire agency. An after-action report should discuss:
  - What happened in the incident
  - The agency's response
  - What went well
  - What needs to be improved

### 3. Officer Wellness Programs

- Critical incidents can be traumatic events for responding personnel. Law enforcement agencies need to evaluate their officer wellness programs and ensure that they are providing their personnel with a range of resources after a critical incident.
- For more information, see the COPS Office "Officer Safety and Wellness" site at [www.cops.usdoj.gov/officersafetyandwellness](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/officersafetyandwellness)

## ABOUT THE CRT

**The Critical Response Toolkit for First-Line Supervisors (FLSs) is designed to help sergeants responding to critical incidents they will experience in the field. The full toolkit provides pre- and post-critical incident recommendations and resources for sergeants and their agencies.**

**This Quick-Reference Guide provides key highlights FLSs can consult as they prepare for, respond to, and debrief critical incidents they help manage. The full toolkit can be accessed at [www.policeforum.org/critical-response-toolkit-for-first-line-supervisors](http://www.policeforum.org/critical-response-toolkit-for-first-line-supervisors).**

### POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM

1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW • Suite 930  
Washington, DC 20036

Phone (202) 466-7820 [info@policeforum.org](mailto:info@policeforum.org)

[WWW.POLICEFORUM.ORG](http://WWW.POLICEFORUM.ORG)



## Critical Response

**TOOLKIT**

*for First-Line Supervisors*

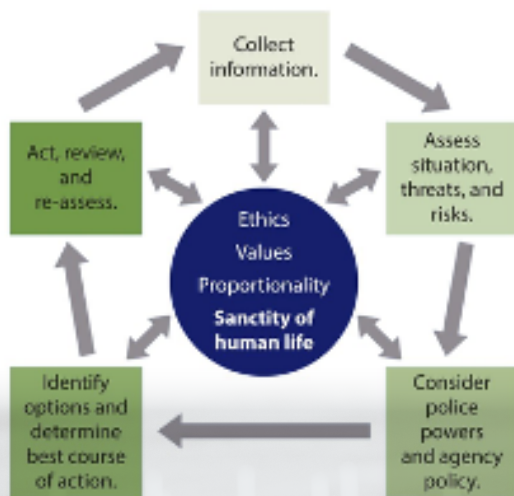
## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE



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## THE CRITICAL DECISION-MAKING MODEL (CDM)

PERF's CDM can help first-line supervisors (FLSs) make crucial and time-sensitive decisions during critical incidents. When supervisors work their way through the CDM, or "spin the model," they will go through a structured set of directions that will help them manage dynamic situations and help ensure a safe outcome.



1. **Collect** as much information as possible. This includes listening to the police radio and pulling information from your mobile data terminal, etc.
2. **Assess** the situation, threats, and risks. FLSs must gauge the severity of the incident and assess whether there are enough personnel, immediate police action needs to be taken, and if there are any risks present to officers or bystanders.
3. **Consider** police powers and agency policy. While it may be a given on critical incident scenes, supervisors should always determine whether their officers have the legal right to be on scene and if there are cross-jurisdictional issues.

4. **Identify options and determine the best course of action.** This includes:
  - Considering what you are trying to achieve.
  - Communicating with your officers.
  - Determining the most appropriate tactics to safely and effectively respond to the critical incident.

### 5. Act, review, and reassess

- FLSs must act and give orders to your officers. Once completed, FLSs must assess whether the actions had the intended effect.

If the issue is not resolved, FLSs must go back to Step 1 and continue the process by beginning to collect more information.

Even in fast-moving critical incidents, the CDM is a valuable tool. With experience, the model will become second-nature to FLSs.

## THE 7 C'S OF A CRITICAL INCIDENT:

1. **Take Command** of the scene.
2. Be in **Control** — being calm during a critical incident helps instill confidence in responding officers.
3. **Communicate** — clear communication facilitates efficiency and teamwork.
4. **Containment** — make sure the scene is safe.
5. **Coordinate** the resources that are available to you.
6. **Complacency** — these incidents are dynamic; do not become complacent.
7. **Critique** — Conduct debrief sessions to discuss both positive and negative actions during the incident.

\*The 7 C's were developed by Deputy Inspector Matt Galvin of the New York City Police Department (NYPD)

## CRITICAL INCIDENT CHECKLIST

- Establish a perimeter and isolate the subject or the focus of the incident.
- Secure the scene and evacuate civilians (if necessary).
- Establish a command post and staging areas a safe distance away from the scene.
- Manage and assign personnel responding to the scene. Assignments can include:
  - » Managing traffic
  - » Maintaining a perimeter
  - » Responsibility for making notifications
  - » Hospital or prisoner transport
  - » Information control or scene scribe
  - » Evidence/weapons control
  - » Canvass the area for suspects, victims, and/or witnesses
- Manage self-deployments
  - » Ensure that officers do not overwhelm a scene and keep enough units in-service to handle normal calls-for-service.
- Manage traffic
  - » Ensure there are clear access and exit points along the perimeter as well as a clear route within the perimeter.
- Internal communications
  - » Keep senior officials, dispatch center, and officers informed of major developments.
- External communications
  - » Ensure that witnesses are interviewed.
  - » Solicit information from people who work or reside in the building (if applicable).
  - » Inform civilians directly impacted by the critical incident.
- Warm handoff
  - » Ensure all relevant information is shared with personnel relieving the outgoing shift, especially other supervisors.
- Documentation
  - » Assign a scribe to record personnel arriving and leaving the scene, document all resources that arrive, and major actions taken, and record the times for all major actions.