



United Nations

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR
STAFF EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS AND
RESPONSE**

14 August 2013



Security preparedness and response

1. Security, safety and well-being of staff remain a high priority. An **enhanced safety and security management system** has been implemented across the United Nations supported by continuous review of policies, increasing threat analysis capabilities, upgrading security standards for all staff and UN assets, and security training to match threat environments in which the UN operates.
Visit: <https://trip.dss.un.org/dssweb>
2. Increased **training at all Secretariat and field locations to address security, preparedness and crisis response** for managers, first responders and staff, delivered through crisis simulation, table top exercises and online programmes. For example, mandatory Basic and Advanced Security training modules are available online for all staff.
Visit: <https://training.dss.un.org>
3. Implementation of **TRIP (Travel Request Information Processing) system**, a mandatory online tool for use by all UN personnel embarking on official travel, also recommended for personal travel. The system provides security and travel advisories and required online security clearance for travel destinations. Staff are required to record travel itineraries and emergency contact details which would enable UN Security to provide appropriate security support to all personnel eligible under UN security arrangements while they are travelling. Visit: <https://trip.dss.un.org>



Advocacy and Outreach to Staff

4. Increased advocacy, awareness-raising and outreach to staff on preparedness, security and safety, access to information and various resources, using a combination of online messaging tools, social messaging campaigns, and institutionalized emergency/crisis communication protocols. For example, over the last three years, approximately 20 articles have been published on iSeek on various initiatives, events relating to crisis preparedness measures, training events, etc. Visit: <https://trip.dss.un.org>; <https://un-epst.org>; www.un.org/depts/OHRM/stress



Mechanisms and Partnerships

5. The **Emergency Preparedness and Support Team (EPST)**, established in 2010, is a dedicated resource which coordinates essential support to staff, survivors and families in during all phases of incidents related to malicious acts, natural disasters and other emergency incidents. EPST offers emergency preparedness training to build UN personnel capacity at their duty stations, serves as a dedicated HR focal point during an incident providing referrals and support to UN personnel and their families, and provides continuous post-incident support to survivors and families in navigating and following up issues related to claims/compensations, as well as working with the relevant service providers within the UN. Visit: <http://un-epst.org>
6. Robust counselling facilities, with dedicated counsellors in the field and at HQ to coordinate and provide stress management training, deliver counselling services and

provide psychosocial support to staff, survivors and families:

(i) **Critical Incident Stress management Unit (CISMU)** located in the Department for Security and Safety, provides counselling services in all field missions and coordinates the UN response to critical incident stress in emergencies system wide (except at UN Headquarters and Offices Away from Headquarters (OAHs) where services are provided through the Staff Counsellor's Office). CISMU has a dedicated team of mental health professionals located at Headquarters and in field operations, and collaborates with professional counsellors across the UN system. CISMU also maintains a worldwide referral network of trained and certified mental health professionals who are licensed in their respective countries covering 90 duty stations. Contact: Mr. Moussa Ba, Chief of CISMU, email: ba2@un.org

(ii) **Staff Counsellor's Office (SCO)**, hosted in the Medical Services Division, Department for Management, is the primary source for providing mental health and psycho-social support to personnel at UN Headquarters locations for a variety of conditions such as, stress, anxiety, depression, grief, burnout, substance abuse, relationship issues, and reaction to highly stressful events. The SCO offers short-term individual consultations that are confidential and free of charge to staff and surviving family members, and will provide referrals for longer term support. Visit: <https://www.un.org/staffdevelopment>

7. The **UN Medical Emergency Response Team (UNMERT)**, established in 2009, is a dedicated medical emergency facility comprising of over 30 volunteering emergency trained medical professionals in the UN, who are ready to deploy globally at short notice to support mass casualty incidents affecting UN personnel. The UNMERT is managed by a Coordinator attached to the MSD at UN Headquarters. It is deployed within the first 24-48 hours of an incident and works closely with UN medical staff and DSS personnel on the ground to identify, triage and provide emergency medical treatment for staff and their families immediately following a mass casualty incident, and to facilitate medical evacuation.
8. **Networks of trained emergency Family Focal Points, Call Centre Volunteers** and Peer Support Volunteers at Headquarters locations (Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Vienna as well as Addis Ababa, Beirut and Santiago) and in field operations have been integrated into the crisis management response structure to ensure managerial preparedness and enhance human resources crisis response during the after-math of a mass casualty incident by providing comprehensive and compassionate support to survivors and surviving families of staff.
9. The **Memorial and Recognition Fund** has been established to create a living memorial to UN civilian personnel who have lost their lives in the line of duty and to provide a practical way of supporting their families by assisting financially in the education of surviving children. EPST serves as the Secretariat for the Fund, ensuring effective coordination with offices and survivors to file claims and expedite settlement. Email epst@un.org or visit <http://un-epst.org>
10. Establishment of **partnerships with emergency preparedness and response national/international institutions** to establish joint training, and access to selected resources and best practices, e.g. Red Cross, U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Institute for Disaster Mental Health/State University of New York

(IDMH), and Jet Blue Airlines. These formal partnerships provide the opportunity to augment the Organization's response capacity during periods of surge, when required.

11. Standby arrangements have been established with **air ambulance and medical care/service providers** globally.
12. An **annual memorial service** at UN Headquarters has been institutionalized to honour UN personnel across the Secretariat and Agencies, Funds and Programmes who have lost their lives in service to the Organization as a result of natural disasters, malicious acts and work-related events.
13. **Assistance to staff on estate planning and preparing wills.** In partnership with the United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU) and OHRM, a joint campaign has been implemented to raise awareness among staff to engage in effective estate planning, such as drawing up wills to articulate their wishes in case of death, and also "Living Wills". Information packages and briefings to staff on estate planning and preparation of wills will be available to staff in New York during the fourth quarter of 2013. For staff at OAHs and field locations similar information and briefings are also planned. Email epst@un.org or visit <http://un-epst.org>
14. Consultations with UNFCU to arrange **standardized financial products and services for staff affected by emergencies** are also underway.



Capacity building and Training

15. Capacity building and training are ongoing priorities. MSD, in partnership with CISMU, is preparing a programme for delivery of a mandatory training programme on **Psychological First Aid for administrators, HR practitioners and security officers.**
 - Dedicated **mass casualty incident training** for UN country teams, senior officials, administrators and essential staff in all locations is being conducted by UNMERT in collaboration with OAHs and peacekeeping missions.
 - EPST has successfully delivered **training for staff volunteering for emergency support roles of family focal points (FFP) and call centre volunteers (CCV)** at seven UN Secretariat locations, with ESCAP, Bangkok, scheduled for the last quarter in 2013. In collaboration with Field Personnel Division/Department for Field Support, EPST will conduct a Training of Trainers programme for developing a cadre of trained emergency support volunteers in field locations.
 - **Manager's self-learning e-module** promoting a culture of understanding, care, and compassion to staff affected by critical incidents will be released during the fourth quarter of 2013.
 - Capacity building and **training of HR and first responders on the Advisory Board on Compensation Claims (ABCC) claims process** is taking place through presentations and briefing sessions. These sessions, delivered by the ABCC and Insurance Units, specifically target human resources and medical services staff and are being offered to these offices.

16. Standard operating procedures have been developed for critical incidents requiring a **'single operational response'** to better support survivors and affected families, enhance effectiveness and efficiency, and ensure that gaps and redundancies in crisis management and policies are addressed.
Visit: http://iseek.un.org/webpgdept2186_38.asp
17. Self-management online tool for staff to update their **emergency contact information** has been made available on the 'inspira' platform. The system serves as a repository for updated emergency contact information that will enable the Organization to notify staff member's emergency contact(s) in event of accident or critical incident.
Visit: <https://inspira.un.org>
18. **'Handbook for action in cases of death in service'** has been updated and made available as an [online tool](#) for information to all staff and action by HR practitioners.
19. Introduction of **mandatory leave as Special leave with Full Pay** for up to two weeks for staff affected by critical incidents is being reviewed for implementation within the existing policy frameworks.
20. Streamlined mechanisms for introducing **special measures** in response to critical incident HR requirements and specific HR policies to facilitate expeditious settlement of benefits and compensation review for affected survivors and families. The evaluation of special conditions to enable more efficient response to survivors and families of victims are streamlined as agreed upon by affected Departments, Agencies, Funds and Programmes and internal partnering offices (for example: HR Policy Unit, Staff Services offices, Compensation Board, Insurance Unit, Payments and Payroll Units).
21. **Ongoing work to enhance support to staff and survivors through an Inter-departmental Working Group** established in 2012 to review and address issues such as:
 - expanded care proposals for survivors
 - mandatory medical insurance coverage for all staff (both national and international) and their dependants
 - development of a unified system-wide policy for medical emergency evacuation
 - comprehensive review of insurance and workers compensation schemes
 - extending coverage under the United Nations Claims Board for personal effects lost or damaged for locally-recruited staff
 - extending salary advance repayment cycles of up to 24-36 months for staff in case of significant residential property damage/loss as a result of critical incident
 - placement authority for reassignment of internationally-recruited staff members affected by critical incidents
 - design and development of a case management database that will enable tracking of cases resulting from critical incidents for global deployment.