

The Mountaineers Critical Incident Response Plan

Last Reviewed & Approved – January 2019 by the Risk Management Committee

Critical Incident Action Plan (CIAP)

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Purpose	2
Definitions	2
Mountaineers Critical Incident Communication Chart.....	3
Implementing the Critical Incident Action Plan (CIAP).....	5
Critical Incident Review Process.....	11
Appendix	Error! Bookmark not defined.

(Note: Page #'s revised once this revision is final)

Purpose

The purpose of The Mountaineers Critical Incident Response Plan (CIRP) is to outline the actions to be taken if an incident occurs:

- a. That involves a major behavioral episode or injury that would typically be recommended by a medically or first aid trained person for evaluation or treatment in a professional medical facility (clinic, hospital, etc.).
- b. During a Mountaineers' approved activity and/or at a Mountaineers property.

The CEO and Board President may direct the organization to use specific portions (or all) of the CIRP in support of incidents other than those specified above, for example, during an activity involving Mountaineers members but not officially listed as a Mountaineers activity.

Groups, Mountaineers' departments, and volunteers are expected to supplement this CIRP with additional emergency procedures for their trips and educational activities. Information such as evacuation plans, nearest medical assistance, and other specific emergency details may be needed for effective emergency response.

The CIRP facilitates The Mountaineers' response so that the problem is addressed in an efficient, compassionate, and professional manner. The following procedures are in place as a guide, and are to remain flexible. Note that The Mountaineers does not provide rescue services, individuals must contact others, such as the 911 system or the National Park Service, for these services. The Mountaineers provides only support around and during the time of the emergency.

A Critical Incident Response Plan is not to be a substitute for the common sense, judgment, training and knowledge of The Mountaineers leadership or those responsible for its implementation.

Definitions

Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT): The purpose of the critical incident response team is to effectively manage information gathering and communications through a formal, clearly defined channel to mitigate crisis, or serious negative repercussions for The Mountaineers, and maintain a reputation of leadership and transparency on vital issues and breaking news. The team of people, compiled by the CEO (or his/her designate), has the skills needed to respond to a critical incident. These people are listed on The Mountaineers' Emergency Call Service roster to receive emergency calls and help manage responses. The team may consist of staff, individuals from the Board of Directors, or other key leaders in The Mountaineers. Periodic critical incident response training will be offered to potential CIRT members.

Emergency Coordinator and Incident Leader: One to two of the CIRT members take on the roles of the Emergency Coordinator and Incident Leader, and in most cases the Incident Leader will be the CEO unless he/she is unavailable:

- **Emergency Coordinator (EC):** Person on the CIRT who is contacted through The Mountaineers' Emergency Call System. This person triages the situation and collects relevant information. (Page xx.)
- **Incident Leader:** Person who takes the lead coordination position after the initial information is gathered to maintain consistent contact and communications with stakeholders. This may be the same as the Emergency Coordinator.

Incident Review Team: The Mountaineers team assembled by the Incident Leader to review the incident. They are chosen for the specific incident because of their expertise in the activity and/or experience in incident investigation. The Mountaineers' Safety Chair, relevant branch chair(s) and safety representative are typically involved. The Committee chair, a member of the board and a staff member may also be involved.

Support Team: Individuals identified to support the participants involved in the incident

Communication Liaison : Individual responsible for communication. This may be the incident leader or someone assisting the incident leader.

CEO: CEO of The Mountaineers

BOD: Board of Directors

Critical Incident: an incident---during a Mountaineer's approved activity and/or at a Mountaineers property---that involves a major behavioral episode or injury or that would typically be recommended by a medically or first aid trained person for evaluation or treatment in a professional medical facility (clinic, hospital, etc.)

EMS: Emergency Medical System.

Field Staff: The trip leader(s) or instructor(s) of a Mountaineers trip, class, or activity. This includes a group trip leader, a YEP instructor or volunteer, or an Adventure Travel trip leader.

SAR: Search and Rescue. County Sheriff departments or other entity such as the National Park Service authorize search and rescue operations.

The Mountaineers Critical Incident Communication Chart



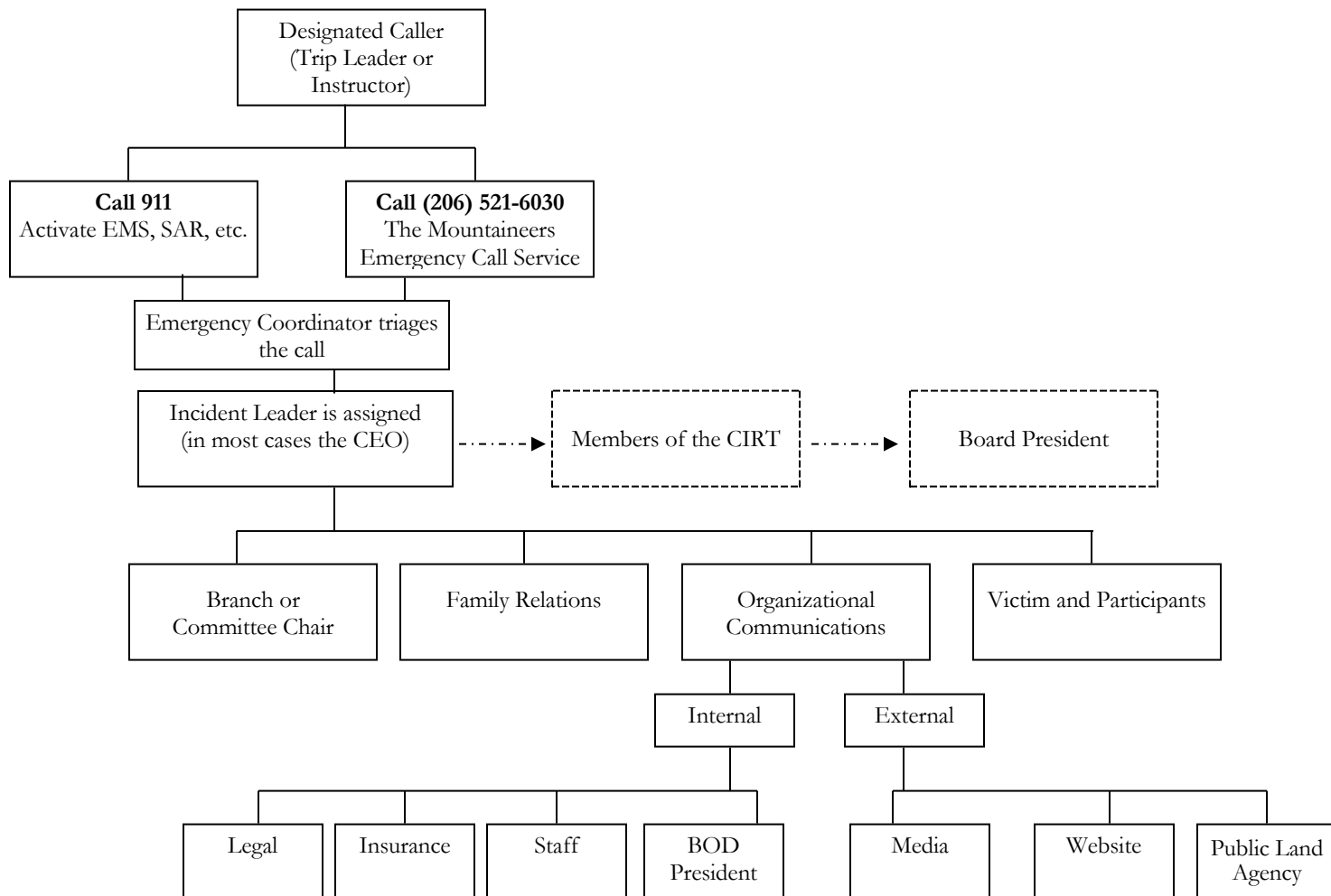
KEY
Communication flow

Communication as needed between CEO and EMS/SAR

Back-up if CEO is not available

SAR -Search and Rescue
 EMS-Emergency Medical Service

BOD-Board of Directors



Implementing the Critical Response Action Plan (CIRP)

The following section of the CIRP outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers:

Duties of Critical Incident Response Team:

1. **Team members:** Serve on The Mountaineers Emergency Call Service roster and respond to emergency calls. (In emergencies, callers are patched through a series of numbers until a live person is reached.) Notify other call service members if planning to be unavailable to take a call for an extended time on a weekend.
2. **Emergency coordinator** receives and triages the call and, if necessary, assigns an Incident Leader.
3. **Incident Leader** manages the incident through the entire process and coordinates with involved parties.
 - a) Assembles review team.
 - b) Assigns internal tasks to staff [PROVIDE EXAMPLE HERE?] as well as external tasks [PROVIDE EXAMPLE HERE?] to review team.
 - c) Reviews and reflects on the incident response for lessons learned.
 - d) Makes adjustments as needed in the Critical Incident Action Plan and supporting documents.

Process Guideline:

1. Emergency occurs and The Mountaineers Emergency Call system is called and a member of the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) is notified.
2. The team member who receives the initial call (Emergency Coordinator/EC) takes down vital information about the incident and triages the call (page 4).
3. If the incident is determined to be a critical incident that occurred during a Mountaineers activity or on Mountaineers property (page 1), then ASAP the Emergency Coordinator contacts the other members of the CIRT. They designate an Incident Leader. In most cases the Incident Leader will be the CEO. However if the CEO is unavailable responsibilities migrate down the previously agreed chain. The Emergency Coordinator may be the Incident Leader.
4. Restrict external (The Mountaineers) communication about the emergency only to those parties vital to the emergency response, and refer any outside inquiries (e.g. media) to the CEO (or alternate assigned by the Incident Leader).
5. Emergency Coordinator transitions accountability for communication and events log to Incident Leader who maintains log during the event and gathers relevant facts.
6. Incident Leader may assemble an Incident Review team. The team will be notified soon after the incident but will be sensitive to any family and friends and wait an appropriate amount of time to begin review.

Emergency Coordinator's (EC) Tasks:

Be sure and state only the facts in the communication log; avoid speculation or opinion. (See Appendix I.)

- 1) Takes the initial call and relays communications.
- 2) Initiates a communication log describing the:
 - a) Date
 - b) Time

- c) Contact person
 - d) Subject/type of the emergency
 - e) Actions recommended and taken
 - f) Responsible person(s); contact information for Trip and MOFA leads and others as appropriate.
- 3) Reviews "CIRP Purpose" and makes an initial decision on whether the nature of the incident falls within the need to engage the CIRP (page 2, "Purpose").
 - 4) Follows the Crisis Communications Chart (page 4). The individuals involved in a serious injury incident should have already contacted the National Park Service or 911. If not advise them to do so and assist if needed.
 - 5) Contacts CEO and confirms decision to engage CIRP.
 - 6) Contacts other members of the CIRT.
 - 7) Logs onto the website to gather information on type of activity and participants, including number of people in attendance, goal(s) of the activity, original plans, field staff names and qualifications, outfitter contacts, roster, emergency contact or other pertinent information.
 - a) Note: Group and Committee Chairs and Directors are responsible for providing the current trip information and contact phone numbers in The Mountaineers database before the start of every activity.
 - b) Handles appropriate communications within the Group/Staff. Notifies the Safety and Leadership Committee. See sample scripts as communication examples.
 - 8) Maintains contact with SAR, and refers media calls to the CEO (or appointed spokesperson).
 - 9) Gathers information and forms.
 - 10) Monitors telephone and maintains a log of communications and events.
 - 11) Continues communication with and gives direction to the field staff.
 - 12) Assesses needs of staff and participants for physical and emotional support.
 - 13) Transitions logs, forms, information to the incident leader and assists incident leader as needed (in some cases the Emergency Coordinator may also be the incident leader).

Incident Leader Tasks:

A. Immediate Response:

1. Serves as point person for communication with the various stakeholders.
2. Helps to keep current a human resources list of people that can help in emergencies. (Note: Mountaineers should create a resource list of people, their expertise, and phone numbers. Included is insurance, legal, and other advisors with expertise in emergency response.)
3. Coordinates with the Emergency Coordinator and CIRT to gather the following information:
 - a. Assesses the incident and gets facts:
 - i. Uses the Mountaineers website to identify who was registered for the trip
 - ii. Identifies the location of the incident and any resources
 - iii. Monitors any related social media such as blogs and websites
 - b. Confirms whether incident falls within the need to engage the CIRP (page 2, "Purpose").
 - c. Uses Emergency Coordinator Worksheet and Incident Leader Worksheet to determine needed additional information and who should obtain it.
 - d. Continues documentation process.
 - e. Determines if a CIRT representative needs to go to the scene and what will be communicated to people at the scene.
 - f. Determines areas of concern about what can and can't be said to the media.
 - g. Determines when legal and insurance representatives should be notified.
 - h. Determines whether professional 3rd party public relations assistance is needed.
 - i. Develops written response guidelines and statement(s) for employees, board members, and membership services.

- j. Assigns Member Communications representative to closely monitor and report to the CEO on blogs and press.
- k. Determines and provides the responses (press, web, statements, CEO comments)
- l. Notifies board and staff
- m. Takes the lead in forming a support team for participants. See end of document for possible support team participants.

B. Follow-on Response:

- n.
- o. Assembles review team (internal and/or external.). If it is a large incident or an international incident, a larger team may be needed.
- p. Assigns internal tasks to staff as well as external tasks to review team.
- p. Encourages Critical Incident Response Team members to reflect on CIRP implementation for lessons learned and opportunities for improvement, and accumulates / synthesizes input. Prepares summary recommendations for CIRP improvements and reviews with team and CEO.
- q. Makes adjustments, as needed in the CIRP and supporting documents.

C. Family / Emergency Point of Contact Interaction:

1. In the event of a fatality or critical injury, the family or next of kin should be notified by civil authorities. Assesses need for critical incident debriefing or professional therapeutic intervention. This intervention is highly recommended in cases of fatalities or serious injuries.
2. Considers follow-up with the patient's family in event of an extreme incident. Without admitting any fault, extends possible means of support, such as lodging, meals, transportation, or counseling.
3. Approves expenditures that exceed program budget such as airfare.
4. Determines appropriate follow-up with participant's family or next of kin.

D. Other Communications:

External Communications

1. Supervises public relations.
2. Obtains accurate information about the emergency from the emergency coordinator and other applicable staff.
3. Appoints an appropriate spokesperson to communicate with the media and ensures the spokesperson has current and accurate information about the emergency.
4. Writes press release and media response.
5. May decide to post press release on The Mountaineers web site.
6. Maintains communications with the appropriate Public Land Agency representative, as needed.

Internal Communications

1. Keeps the Board President and CEO informed of the situation.
2. Notifies relevant staff via e-mail with brief description of incident and directions to refer press inquiries to CEO or designated CRT member.
3. Determines when and how to notify The Mountaineers staff, board, outside groups and other stakeholders.
4. Contacts insurance agency and provides requested information as directed by CEO.
 - a. If staff is injured, follows up with the appropriate worker's compensation procedures.
5. Contacts The Mountaineers' legal counsel as directed by CEO.
6. Initiates formal review process for serious incidents, critical or disabling injuries, and fatalities.

7. Keeps a current log of all relevant internal communications.

THE MOUNTAINEERS Emergency Coordinator Worksheet

1. Are you the designated Emergency Coordinator at this time? If yes, carefully start down this worksheet. If not, is that person readily available to take this call? If yes, go get them.
2. Emergency Coordinator's name: _____
3. Date of call: _____ Date of incident: _____
4. Time of call: _____ Time of incident: _____
5. Who is calling (name, title, organization/company)? _____
6. Location they are calling from: _____ Phone Number(s): _____
7. What is the situation (collect info on SOAP NOTE): _____
8. Location of the incident? _____
9. Weather and terrain on the scene? _____
10. Is the scene now safe? _____
11. What specific assistance is needed? _____
12. Names and roles of those involved in the incident _____

13. Further Information: Do they have a plan? Record details: _____

14. When speaking with someone outside The Mountaineers, find out who they are and how we can help:

_____ MAKE A PLAN:
15. What kind of trip is it (Committee activity, Group, school, etc.?) _____
 (a) Who is the Trip Leader? _____
 (b) List patients and the nature of their injury (get medical forms).

Name	Nature of injury (record info in SOAP note)

- (c) List the status of other trip participants. Location, injuries, needs, feelings, need to contact emergency contact info about late return?

<u>Name</u>	<u>Status information</u>

- (d) How many total people on the trip? This number should agree with above listing. _____

- (e) Which day is it in the group's itinerary? _____

- (f) What is their current location? _____

- (g) What is their current elevation? _____ Feet Exactly (or) Approximate (circle one)

- (h) Do they have an intended alternate gathering location planned, and where is that?

- (i) Can they self evacuate, or can field staff readily evacuate them, or is SAR assistance required (for SAR support call 911) _____

- (j) If partnering with an external SAR team, arrange for a Mountaineers representative to locate at their communications base.

- (k) When will you communicate with this person again _____ (E.G. ask that leader contact again in 2-3 hours after s/he knows more info and is in cell phone communication (returning to trail head/meet with rangers, etc.) It's good to talk about their expectations, so the ball is not dropped.

16. Clear The Mountaineers phone lines to keep the lines open and clear for incoming calls. Record notes on any related communications, calls, faxes, etc...

17. Contact all of the following individuals in this order and inform them of the situation and ask for help as appropriate:

	Cell	Home	Office
CEO			
Operations Director			
Board President or designee			
Member Services & Communications Director			

18. Record notes, log calls, document facts as appropriate!
- ~~19.~~ Is there potential public interest? What are people feeling?

THE MOUNTAINEERS' INCIDENT LEADER WORKSHEET

1. Review the checklist below extensively.

Notifications	Who makes contact? (suggested)
External Communications:	
Family relations of person injured	For fatalities and critical injuries, civil authorities should notify emergency contact, with follow-up / on-going support offered by Incident Lead; otherwise Incident Lead
Emergency contact of others on trip Get list of participants and emergency contact info	Incident Lead
Media Law enforcement and coroner: Request coroner's report	CEO (or designated Media contact) Incident Lead
SAR (give them press release)	Review Team
Land Manager: Request SAR or NPS report	Incident Lead and/or Review Team
Monitor social media, press and electronic media to keep core response team updated	Membership & Communications staff
Counseling resources relevant to the type of trip. Gather info to make list that will be available for trip leader and others on trip	CEO or Incident Lead
Internal Communications	
CEO to write summary of situation to communicate with key parties- <i>Based on known facts at time of writing and updated as information is gathered</i>	CEO or Incident Lead
Group Chair, Adventure Travel, Committee Chair, or Department Director, depending on the type of incident	CEO
Monitor phones, general email, faxes	Membership Services Staff
Groups, committees, etc. – internal communications within the Group	Group chair, committee chair, etc.
Other Groups, committees, as relevant	CEO
Other participants on trip	Incident Lead?
Board president, Donors/Foundation, Partners, Schools, Insurance, Legal Committee	CEO
Inform board	President
Update web site, social media	CEO /staff
Keep paper / electronic file with all relevant documentation	Operations Director
Follow up:	
Send cards to all participants involved in incident	CEO
Ensure lessons learned from the accident are used as educational tools for leaders	Board President, Safety Chair and CEO
Ensure those who desire or need counseling have been offered	CEO, Safety Chair, Committee Chair
Check-in and follow-up with all who have been contacted	Incident Lead

Turn over documentation to The Mountaineers' central files	All. Maintained by Finance Dept. Director of Finance and Operations
Review of incident, response team process, review team process, communication process, and this document, with an intent to identify opportunities for improvement.	Critical Incident Response Team; Review Team; CEO; Risk Management Committee. At conclusion of incident.
Other actions as needed	At discretion of CEO
Article, as appropriate Media rights.	The Mountaineer Editor

Critical Incident Review Process

When to Consider an Internal or External Review of an Incident

1. When a fatality occurs to a participant of a Mountaineers activity
2. When a fatality occurs to a staff member while on duty
3. When a permanently disabling injury occurs to a participant or staff member while on a Mountaineers activity
4. When a life threatening injury occurs to a participant or on duty staff member on a Mountaineers activity

Determination of the Need for a Review Team

1. The CEO will determine the necessity of a review and initiate such a review. This should occur as soon as possible after an incident.
2. The CEO will consult with the president of The Mountaineers board, chair of the Safety Committee, and the management of the program in which the incident occurred in making a decision regarding conducting a review.
3. The Mountaineers will look to accepted industry standards in determining whether an internal or external review is appropriate.
4. The CEO must approve external reviews.
5. Appropriate funds will be set aside if an external review is found to be appropriate.

Role of the Review Team

1. . The overall mission of the Review Team is to help The Mountaineers as well as outdoor education/recreation industry prevent fatalities and permanently disabling injuries.
2. The Review Team will provide recommendations and suggestions on prevention of further incidents and related improvements in quality.
3. The Review team will also provide recommendations and suggestions on improvements in emergency response as well as highlight areas of effective procedure for continuation in the future.

Composition of the Review Team

1. To be determined by the CEO.
2. Review team members should have expertise or have access to expertise relevant to the type of incident.

Ground Rules

1. The Review Team will work with the CIRT and keep the CIRT updated of all processes.
2. All findings, discussions, and written materials of the review team will be confidential.
3. The scope of distribution of the findings within The Mountaineers will be determined in advance of the preparation of the review team's report. CEO will make this determination.
4. The Review Team will operate independently and its findings will be based on the facts discovered.
5. The program will follow all recommendations of the Review Team.
6. No review team member will speak with the media. All media inquiries will be handled by the CEO or her/his designee

Guidelines for Conducting the Review

1. The CEO should begin appointing the review team immediately following the incident. There should be a Team Leader and one to five other members depending on the magnitude and kind of incident. *Team may include Branch Chair, Branch Safety Chair, Committee Chair and a board member at discretion of CEO.*

2. Kickoff the team via telecom or face-to-face. Determine tasks to do.
3. For an external review team, a written agreement as to the scope of work, process, costs, and distribution of the Final Report will be drawn up.
4. Review Team steps:
 - a. Team leader communicates with other members as to timing, process, and task assignments.
 - b. Visit the site of the incident when environmental factors are part of the cause, deploy at least one review team member to the site as soon as possible (before conditions change). Photographs, and perhaps video, of the scene should be part of this process. Consider visiting other relevant locations as appropriate.
 - c. Review all pertinent written materials.
 - d. Gather all reports from external sources (park service, coroner, SAR)
 - e. Assign the following tasks:
 - Chair – determines the timeline for activities, manages all actions of committee, ensures a final report is completed and submitted to State Safety & Leadership Committee, CEO, Board, and legal committee.
 - Interviewees – a minimum of two people must conduct all interviews. Personal phone calls to set up interview.
 - Communication manager – notifies trip leader of temporary suspension (personal phone call.) Notifies all interested parties in the process and timeline of the review. Group Chair, Board, Parties involved in incident.
 - Report writer – writes the final report.
 - Note organizer – manages all notes, documents, and communications.
 - CIRP updater – makes note of any CIRP changes that need to be made.
 - f. Interviews with appropriate administration, staff, and external individuals and agencies involved. All interviews must be conducted by a minimum of two people and set up by a personal phone call.
5. The Review Team will write a final report (within a reasonable scheduled time) that should include the primary and secondary causes of the incident, recommendations and suggestions on prevention of further incidents and related improvements of quality, and recommendations and suggestions on improvements in emergency response

Development and Delivery of a Final Report

1. The report writer will write a DRAFT report for the Executive Committee, based on a discussion with all members of the review team.
2. The Team Leader meets with the Executive Committee to discuss the draft report and possible revisions.
3. The Team Leader submits the Final Report to the CEO, President of the Board of Directors, Group or Committee Chair, or Department Director of the program involved in the incident, and others as identified prior to the writing of the report.
4. The report is reviewed by legal counsel before being made public

Document Revision Tracking:

Date	Name	Title	Revision Description
May 2013	Brenda Porter		Document Creation
Nov 2018	Bill Ashby	Operations Director	Revisions subsequent to CIRP activations in 2017 & 2018; minor language revisions including title changes; more clarity around when to engage the CIRP