

15 April 2021

Dear Client,

CREW WELFARE AND EVIDENCE PRESERVATION IN THE AFTERMATH OF A MARINE CASUALTY

Background

When a marine casualty occurs, much of the damage – the loss of life, personal injury, property damage and operational disruption – is apparent in tangible form. Other less tangible forms of damage, such as crew stress and trauma and the effects they can have on a return to normal operations, are less visible.

As a normal human response to threat, a seafarer who has recently been involved in a frightening, shocking, unexpected negative incident can reasonably expect some fluctuations in their concentration, thinking ability, emotions and behaviour. Feeling anxious, panicky, overwhelmed, sadness, or any of a range of other emotions can be seen as part of an ordinary human reaction to an extraordinary event or change of circumstances.

The priority of marine casualty investigations is to learn as much as possible about the nature and probable causes of the incident. This usually involves interviewing crew members in the immediate aftermath of the event to obtain vital information and evidence. However, those witnesses are, by definition, people who have recently had direct or indirect involvement in a potentially shocking and frightening incident, with a significant likelihood of there being some impact on their emotional wellbeing and cognitive availability.

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Conventional interview processes are insufficiently cognizant of the adverse effects that stress and trauma have on witnesses. They can be very stressful for the seafarer, which may add to any post-incident stress, worry about blame, responsibilities and outcomes, and any pre-existing everyday tensions. The immense difficulties for ships' crews arising from the current pandemic are a glaring illustration of how underlying stress can reach intolerable levels, even before a critical incident occurs. As a consequence, there may be significant variations in their ability as a witness to recall clearly, chronologically and completely the information sought as part of casualty investigation interviews. Furthermore, when unrecognised and unsupported, such emotional difficulties may continue and even at a low level can impact crew member's individual functioning, with consequent effects on crew-wide safety and efficiency and wellbeing on board.

TIMS™ - a new approach

C Solutions group together with colleagues at Qwest Maritime are pleased to support a new approach to investigative interviewing and the surrounding crew wellbeing issues that has been developed by Captain Terry Ogg and Dr Rachel Glynn-Williams, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, called *Trauma-Informed Interviewing in a Marine Setting*, or TIMS for short. The approach combines enhanced investigative interviewing techniques for marine casualties with expertise in ordinary human psychological responses in post-critical incident situations. The aims of the TIMS approach are:-

- To obtain more complete and better quality information and evidence from crew interviewees.
- To actively support their wellbeing as part of the interviewing process.
- To use the involvement of a TIMS investigator, backed up by a clinical psychologist, to provide support and guidance for all crew and a pathway for on-going, more structured, psychological support where required and authorised.

TIMS Features

TIMS is the central element of a continuum of wellbeing support.

The process starts with crew-wide guidance and self-support literature on mental wellbeing post-incident on the casualty vessel. As an option, an award-winning, digital app-based solution can be made available to companies, which provides immediate psychological support to those affected by trauma, as well as guidance on do's and don'ts for those leaders and managers supporting them. Early, yet low level, interventions post-incident have been shown to limit the possibility of post-traumatic stress and other psychological difficulties developing over time.

The TIMS interview model itself is structured and delivered in ways that acknowledge and address the ordinary emotional and cognitive impacts of critical incidents, with the effect of supporting the wellbeing of the interviewee during the process, de-escalating their on-going stress levels, and maximising their chances of contributing a complete, accurate and reliable account of events. TIMS investigators are trained in awareness of human trauma responses, and how to take these into account and offer first line basic stress management strategies during the interview with witnesses, should this be required. The TIMS interview model has been developed with both in-person and remote interviewing in mind and can be delivered in either setting.

Finally, where required and authorised, those crew who are more distressed by events and in need of greater support, can be sign-posted seamlessly towards more structured clinical assessment and psychologically-based interventions, in as short a time-frame as possible. Assessment can be carried out on-line in a very short time frame, and in-person, where possible and appropriate. Psychological therapy is available as a digital app-based platform or one-to-one on-line psychological therapy, provided by fully-qualified accredited psychological practitioners.

TIMS Benefits

1. Low level crew-wide education and guidance regarding ordinary psychological impacts of untoward incidents offers support to those who may not come forward for support, but whose well-being or otherwise impacts the operational safety of the ship.
2. The need for psychological assessment and possible intervention can be more quickly identified and acted upon in those crew most impacted by a casualty or major marine incident.
3. Prevention and early intervention of psychological difficulties, including post-traumatic stress reactions, in crew affected directly and indirectly by a casualty incident can prevent costly repatriation, limit operational disruption and foster positive relationship between company and crew.
4. Recommendations and advice where needed by qualified clinical psychologists for future crew care and treatment, allowing crew to learn from such events.
5. Protection or mitigation from adverse issues under employment contracts.
6. No increase in costs of the interview process. Psychological assessment and interventions charged for based on usage at investigation rates when necessary and authorised.
7. Better crew retention, loyalty and employer reputation in seafarers' networks through enhanced welfare packages.

8. Post investigation ongoing monitoring and therapy from experts involved in crew care from the outset. Timely return to work.
9. Close collaboration with crew managers and insurer's claims handlers through bespoke interaction.
10. Using the TIMS approach can form part of a company's plan for responding well to untoward events, consistent with best practice set out in ISO 22330:2018 for People Aspects of Business Continuity.

TIMS and the associated wellbeing support services will be offered by Recall Recover Limited (www.recallrecover.com), a Liverpool-based company with representatives in London, Singapore and Hong Kong. C Solutions is a founding supporter of Recall Recover and invite your kind attention to further detail of Recall Recover's services via their website. Alternatively, use the contact details below:

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