



Resilience Team

Responsibilities & Operating Procedures

A. Overview & Purpose

The SMR Resilience Team is an internal committee of peer support members who advocate for the wellbeing of SMR volunteers and who champion psychological first aid for subjects and rescuers throughout the mission life-cycle. The Resilience Team prepares members to cope with traumatic critical incident stress by proactively providing pre-incident training for members to be resilient and also reactively supports members after critical incidents in order to prevent stress injuries.

This Team operates in partnership with other county resources, including the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) SAR coordinator and King County Search & Rescue Association (KCSARA) Compassionate Assistance & Resilience Education (CARE) team.

The activities that the Resilience Team conducts are not mental health therapy, but are support, educational information, and occasional referral services which, when provided by trained peers, has been shown to assist first responders in their recovery from critical incidents. The SMR Resilience Team is not meant to take the place of trained professionals. However, by providing our unit members with tools, resources, and education, we can hopefully help prevent stress injuries from ever forming.

B. Commitment

The position of the Resilience Team Committee Chair is expected to require approximately 1-5 hours per month. Time commitments for other supporting Committee/Team members will vary, depending on training requirements and Committee commitments.

The Resilience Team Chair shall serve a term of two (2) consecutive years, is nominated by the unit Chairperson, and is confirmed by the Board of Trustees.

The Resilience Team is accountable to the Chairperson and Board of Trustees (Directors) for their performance.

C. Committee Structure & Requirements

From a strategic and administrative perspective, the Resilience Team is organized as follows:

- **Committee Chair:** Keeps track of the proactive and reactive sides of the Resilience Team and makes sure that the Team drives towards its mission and has the necessary resources to be successful.

- **Resiliency Advocates:** All members of the SMR Resilience Team will function as advocates of Psychological/Stress First Aid (PFA) for members of the unit primarily using the SAFER-R model of working with individuals. The SAFER-R model is merely one form of PFA that balances between granularity and mnemonic utility.
 - The SAFER-R Model Components
 - Stabilize (introduction; meet basic needs)
 - Acknowledge the event
 - Facilitate understanding (normalize)
 - Encourage effective coping mechanisms
 - Recovery or Referral (facilitate access to continued care)

Resiliency Advocate Team Members must:

- Have been in a SMR for at least three (3) years.
- Have been on at least twenty (20) missions and at least three (3) recoveries/critical missions.
- Attend an International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) accredited course on Group Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) (2 days), Individual CISM (2 days), and/or Group+Individual CISM (3 days).
- Commit to going to team-hosted twice-yearly refresher training.
- Commit to being available to provide support and assistance to unit members who are immediately affected by an incident.
- Have demonstrated:
 - the ability to maintain confidentiality,
 - the skill of acting as a good listener,
 - a commitment to assisting their fellow team members,
 - empathy and compassion without crossing the line into dysregulated empathy,
 - and earned the respect of their peers within the unit.
- Have been recommended by the SMR Chairperson and Resilience Team Committee Chair.
- Exemptions can be made if a potential member's skill set relates to critical stress or if they have taken specific and relevant training on stress injuries.

D. Proactive Support

One of the two primary goals of the Resilience Team is to prepare members to cope with traumatic stress even before rescuers ever go on a mission. Through proactive training, the Resilience Team will teach newer unit rescuers what to expect on critical incidents as well as educating all members on stress injury symptoms, sign and symptoms of stress

trauma, self-Resilience, best practice tools, as well as resiliency skills to help rescuers return to a mission ready state.

At a minimum, the Resilience Team strives to have two yearly trainings for unit members. Occasionally, these training events may bring in an outside professional resource.

In order to make the Resilience Team and resources accessible, the Team has created a public facing website (seattlemountainrescue.org/stress-first-aid) that showcases psychological first aid resources, podcasts, and articles. This website also contains a list of the Resilience Team members with an email address distribution group to message the Team for any information. SMR members also have access to the unit [Google Drive](#) where additional resiliency resources have been stored.

E. Reactive Support

The second goal of the Resilience Team is to support members after a critical incident, which is defined as a mission where:

- an SMR member had contact with a subject who was severely injured or deceased,
- an SMR member experiences a near miss for themselves or another rescuer,
- a situation had potential to impair a rescuer's capacity to integrate, or
- any situation that may divide or cause significant distress to unit membership.

If a mission has been deemed a critical incident, or if the SMR Base OL or SMR In-Town OL determines that the Resilience Team can be of support and benefit, the Resilience Team will be requested to provide reactive support for our unit members. After a mission has been determined to have had potential for rescuer stress injury, the Resilience Team's reactive response will include various elements of post-mission support for the unit members who were on the mission.

As part of a larger coordinated effort, the Team will also assist with coordinating a Rest, Information, and Transition RITS session (formally known as demobilization), following a critical incident. Having this right after the mission debrief helps to immediately acknowledge that the mission was stressful and hard. Mentioning this can be the first step in helping to reestablish safety and reinforce stress injury symptoms as well as resources to rescuers.

After the mission, the Resilience Team will also coordinate to check-in on members who were on the mission. Working with unit leaders, the Resilience Team will focus on initial and recurring check-ins with rescuers three (3) days after a mission and again after three (3) weeks.

F. Optional Mission Review and Debriefing Sessions

Depending on the mission, the Resilience Team might also choose to hold a peer-supported mission review. This would be an opportunity for those involved in the mission to chat about the mission. Attendance will never be mandated.

For those involved in the mission and who wish to attend, this would give them the opportunity to review what occurred on the mission, the actions that were taken, and the reasoning behind it, as well as giving members a chance to talk about what stood out to them on the mission or what they might be struggling with. This is not meant to dredge up the critical incident, but instead help members who are affected by the incident realize that the mission was stressful for others and that they aren't alone.

By giving rescuers a chance to talk about it, they can begin to integrate that experience; reminding the brain that this experience is in the past and they are safe.

If the critical mission requires a more formalized response, a cross unit Critical Incident Stress Debrief (CISD) for those involved in the mission may also be held by KCSO or the KCSARA CARE team.

For unit members who need additional resources beyond what the Resilience Team or what the County may be able to provide, the Resilience Team will also support members by providing external resources.

G. Referral Process

The Resilience Team is a group of non-professionals who will never take the place of professional help. Because of this, the Resilience Team partners with mental health providers who are also specially trained in crisis intervention, stress management, post-traumatic stress, and the critical incident stress debriefing process.

If any red flags are brought up during a peer discussion, the Resilience Team can work to establish an escalation to outside help. If the unit member has any difficulty in covering the costs for post incident related therapy, the Resilience Committee can also work to provide funds to support the member if three (3) members of the Resilience Committee provide authorization to the unit Treasurer. This will likely only be used in rare circumstances and will be kept as anonymous as possible.

On very unlikely occasions, the need for transfer to professional mental health care is urgent and immediate; for example, if one thinks a member might be in danger of committing suicide. In such a case, any member of Resilience Team may contact necessary resources to assist in obtaining an appropriate mental health provider who can respond immediately for a telephone consultation or even directly to a location, if necessary.

H. Budget Considerations

The Resilience Team has access to a separate Restricted account *Resiliency Reserve Fund* within the unit's finances that can be used for counseling expenditures and Resilience Team training costs. A minimum of \$2,000 should be maintained in this account for direct referrals of members to outside support.

In addition to this fund, each year during the unit budget development process the Resilience Team shall work with the Treasurer to include any budgetary asks in the draft budget for the Board to approve. This may be for any dedicated outside training events or to help replenish any used *Resiliency Reserve Funds*.

I. Legal Considerations

The Resilience Team provides tangible peer support to their teammates who have experienced duty-related critical incidents, either individually or to groups who have experienced the same critical incident together. Talking with a Resilience Team member, who is a peer that understands and can relate to the situation, can help one process the event and the response to it.

The Resilience Team member will keep the information shared confidential. (Exceptions to confidentiality include those mandated by law, e.g. immediate threat of harm to self or others.) Additionally, Washington State law (RCW. 05.60.060) grants privileged communication to Resilience Team members. As such, it is best that Resilience Team members advise anyone contacting them that they are "acting in the capacity as a peer support advocate", as this will help meet the requirements for privileged communication as defined in State statute RCW 5.60.060(6).

The Resilience Team members are not counselors or therapists, but they can make such referrals if it becomes apparent a higher level of support is needed and/or at the request of the team member.

J. Key Milestones & Timeline Dates

Each year in late November, or early December, the SMR unit Training Chair will coordinate and schedule the following year's training events under our Department of Emergency Management (DEM) training number application process. The Resilience Team should plan any unit training events and coordinate with the Training Chair to have those added to the unit training calendar. In general, the following are a sample list of dates, recommended trainings, and timelines for the Resilience Team:

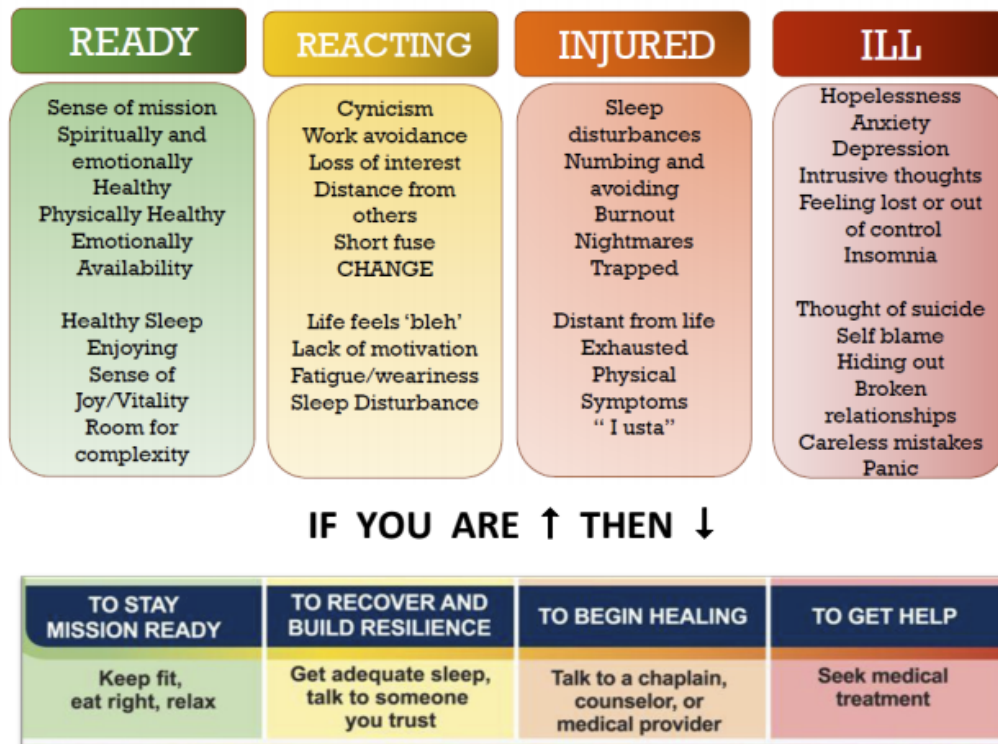
Date	Type	Title
January	Meeting	Committee Quarterly Meeting

March	Unit Training	Critical Crisis Care for Mountain Rescuers
April	Refresher	Resilience Team Support Refresher (Committee Quarterly Meeting)
July	Meeting	Committee Quarterly Meeting
August	Training	Psychological First Aid and proactive Stress Management training, or Working with Subjects and Family Members during Critical Incidents
September	Refresher	Resilience Team Support Refresher (Committee Quarterly Meeting)
September	Communication	Team Pulse Survey sent to membership

K. Reference Documents

Critical Resources

- [Stress First Aid](#) section on the SMR Website.
- [Resilience Team folder](#) on the SMR Google Drive.
- Responder Stress Continuum



L. Points of Contact

Important points of contact, within and outside of the unit, that the Resilience Team may work with.

- **Code4 NorthWest:**
 - Nick Bauer
 - Website - Code4NW.org
 - 24/7 Crisis Hotline - 425-243-5092

- **Wilderness Chaplains:**
 - Confidential Chaplain for King County Sheriff's Office who is also a administrative member of SMR's Resilience Team
 - Website - wildernesschaplains.org
 - Phone - 360-890-5536 (not a 24/7 hotline)

- **Soup Ladies:**
 - Confidential Chaplains who are well know to our Rescue team
 - Website - soupladies.org
 - Phone - 206-459-8477

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**
 - Confidential support & resources for people in distress.
 - Website - suicidepreventionlifeline.org
 - 24/7 Crisis Hotline - 1-800-273-8255

- **Crisis Text-line:**
 - Confidential real-time texting with a trained crisis counselor.
 - Website - CrisisTextLine.org
 - 24/7 crisis text-response - 741741

- **Climbing Grief Fund partnered Therapists:**
 - Danelle Cartun, LMHC
 - Licensed Mental Health Counselor
 - Website - anandayogatherapy.org
 - Email - danelle@anandayogatherapy.org
 - Phone - 206-485-0772
 - Office location - Kirkland
 - Additional relevant information - Developed the "Emotional First Responder" curriculum for the Washington Alpine Club. Facilitated the "Moving Forward with Grief and Trauma" workshops at the American Alpine Club Craggin' Classics.
 - Dr. Trevor Davis, PsyD

- Board Certified Rehabilitation Psychologist
 - Website - drtrevordavis.com
 - Email - info@drtrevordavis.com
 - Phone - 360-200-4341
 - Office location - Seattle (Ballard)
 - Additional relevant information - Instructor with Washington Alpine Club. Leads group sessions on navigating trauma, grief, and loss, as well as workshops for providers on compassion and preventing burnout.
- Eric Mann, MSW, LICSW
 - Licensed Social Worker
 - Website - ericjmann.com
 - Email - eric5mann@gmail.com
 - Phone - 206-659-9071
 - Office location - Seattle (Madison Valley) & Tacoma
 - Additional relevant information - Former mountain guide who has experience working in the therapy setting with guides, outdoor instructors, and first responders experiencing stress injuries as a result of their work.
- Chris Russo, LSWAIC
 - Licensed Social Worker
 - Website - seattleanxiety.com
 - Email - chris@seattleanxiety.com
 - Phone - 206-309-5990
 - Office location - downtown Seattle
 - Additional relevant information - Outdoor educator who specializes in wilderness therapy, member of the Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group. Taught a Mental Health Literacy workshop for the Mazamas.
- **Resilience Team Mentor:**
 - Laura McGladrey
 - Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
 - Website - responderalliance.com
 - Additional Relevant Information - An industry leading psychiatric nurse practitioner, specifically focusing on Psychological First Aid; member of Portland Mountain Rescue and Rocky Mountain Rescue; founder of the Responder Alliance non-profit agency.