

Health and Safety in the Department of National Defence

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This presentation will provide an overview of the General Safety (occupational health and safety) Program in the Department of National Defence. It will include statistical information on the number of injuries sustained by DND employees and by Canadian Forces members, and will discuss the programmatic elements that are designed to reduce these numbers.

The presentation will describe the scope of the General Safety Program and its relationship to other safety programs in the Department. It will address the organisational structure of the program and associated responsibilities. In addition, it briefly will address the legislative and regulatory basis for the program and will conclude with a brief discussion of a number of ongoing issues within the program.

Keywords: Canada; injuries; legislation; program; safety; structure

Lessons Learned of International Importance from Recent Disasters

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Disaster Medicine is defined as the delivery of care to victims of catastrophic events. Planning for medical response to disasters involves identification of plausible scenarios, response team training, and review of lessons learned from prior disaster responses. Certain lessons learned are relevant regardless of where in the world a similar disaster occurs. Other lessons learned are important to study for medical responders who travel from one country to another to assist with disaster medical care.

Examples of lessons learned that fall into one of these categories include:

- 1) Team leaders must be concerned with team composition, transportation, communication, and re-supply as well as the safety of team members;
- 2) Team members must be prepared to be self-sufficient and to respect the cultural sensitivities and ethnic convictions of the disaster victims;
- 3) The extent of victim field stabilization and available triage options should be constantly re-evaluated by team leaders and communicated to field personnel;
- 4) Disasters such as earthquakes, severe hurricanes, trans-border conflicts, and certain acts of terrorism are likely to result in requests for international medical assistance;
- 5) Delayed complications of disasters, such as epidemics of communicable diseases, substance abuse, and psychiatric illness may affect the victims and rescues alike; and
- 6) Those who are responsible for public policy relating to disasters should remember:
 - a) How well a society survives a disaster is directly related to the skills possessed by its leaders and the advanced preparations they have made; and
 - b) International disaster assistance reflects a sophisticated level of human compassion and intra-cultural respect.

Keywords: complications; culture; disaster medicine; disasters; lessons; public policy; preparedness; responses; stabilization; triage