



SINGAPORE KARATE-DO FEDERATION

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs)

On

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

By Order of the Management Committee

31 OCTOBER 2011

SINGAPORE KARATE-DO FEDERATION

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES ON CONVENING A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY FOR MAJOR INCIDENTS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This SOP details the follow-up on convening a Committee of Inquiry (COI) on all major incidents. It applies to all affiliates covering all sporting events.
- 1.2 A **major incident** is defined as a significant event that caused serious injuries, life threatening or loss of life, disruption or extensive damage to the organization's property. This is a result from uncontrolled developments in the course of its operation or work activity and demands a response beyond the routine.
- 1.3 The major incidents may include (but not confined to) the following:
- Serious injury, deep cuts with continuous bleeding, fractures and suspected spinal injury, total permanent disability and person in an unconscious state or coma
 - Near-drowning resulting in the person in a vegetative state
 - Death or life-threatening injury by accident or use of force
 - Unnatural or sudden death of person visiting the organization's premises or training/competition grounds
 - Unnatural or sudden death of an employee, coaches and/or volunteers
 - Serious crimes committed in the premises (e.g. suspected murder or suicide)
 - Mass outbreak of contagious or infectious diseases and mass food poisoning (involving 3 or more persons)

- Major natural or man-made civil emergencies which cause significant injuries or property damage
- Major structural damage or collapse (e.g. temporary canopy)
- Terrorist activity: actual, attempted or planned terrorist activity, sabotage or other hostile acts against persons or property
- Rioting involving 5 or more persons
- Any fire of deliberate or suspicious origin
- Serious damage to property including malicious destruction
- Bomb threat, anthrax scare or other potential life-threatening related incident

2. Committee of Inquiry (COI)

- 2.1 For all major incidents, a Committee of Inquiry (COI) shall be convened in consultation with the Key Appointment Holders like the President and/or General Manager.
- 2.2 The COI shall comprise of a minimal of 3 members, of which, one shall be from another organization. Members can also be subject matter experts from other organizations. The members should not be from the same group as the person(s) involved in the incident.
- 2.3 Appointment letters for approval by Key Appointment Holders like the President and/or Honorary Secretary shall be prepared, together with the terms of reference, for issue to the panel members prior to convening the COI.
- 2.4 The COI will be supported a by Secretariat and a Resource Team, if necessary.
- 2.5 The date, time and place for the inquiry session shall be arranged 4 weeks within occurrence of the incident.
- 2.6 Staff, coaches, officials, volunteers, participants and/or witnesses who are required to attend the inquiry session shall be given a minimum 3 days' advance notice of the inquiry session.

3. Terms of Reference for COI

3.1 The terms of reference for the COI are as follow:

- a. To ascertain facts and sequence of events leading up to the major incident(s)**
- b. To review and establish any lapses in the operations, incident management and emergency response protocol(s)**

This will include the following:

- i. Current Procedures – Understanding and application of the ground; reasons for deviation (if any) from standard procedure;
- ii. Identify any shortcomings in the areas of:
 - Coordination
 - Communication
 - Response
 - Skills;
 - Incident Management; and
 - Training / Knowledge
- iii. Highlight any areas where greater focus needs to be given to systems and implementation

c. To recommend measures to prevent occurrence of similar incidents.

- i. To identify the specific concern and recommend the specific / follow up action required, by whom and in what time-frame;
- ii. To identify areas of legal implications where follow up with legal counsel may be necessary;
- iii. To recommend follow-up by further inquiry or disciplinary proceedings.

d. To validate implementation of recommendations and update Management Committee

- i. To ensure that recommendations are adopted and implemented
- ii. To understand why certain recommendations are not implemented
- iii. To update Management Committee on the final implementation plan

4. Representation at the inquiry

4.1 Staff / Coaches / Officials / Volunteers / Participants / Witnesses

- a. All staff / coaches / officials / volunteers / participants / witnesses involved in the incident will be interviewed to gather as much information on the incident. It is further recommended to interview any other parties such as bystanders and/or patrons who are able to provide information, depending on their availability.

- b. In the event if staff and/or coaches are unable to appear before the COI, the person will be requested to submit a written reasonable explanation for his / her absence.
- c. The COI may also decide, if necessary, to request for another interview session with the staff / coaches / officials / volunteers / participants / witnesses who are absent.
- d. Alternatively, the COI may decide to propose a set of questionnaire (refer to Annex A – Guiding Questions) to be forwarded to the staff / coaches / officials / volunteers / participants / witnesses to gather information relating to the incident.

4.2 COI Chairperson

- a. In the event if the COI Chairperson is unable to convene the interview session, the Chairperson may recommend another representative (refer to Point 2.2 for appointment criteria) to replace as the new Chairperson.
- b. The Chairperson shall seek approval from Key Appointment Holders like President and/or Honorary Secretary on the replacement.

4.3 COI Member

- a. In the event if any of the COI member is unable to partake in the COI, the Member may recommend another representative.
- b. The member shall seek approval from the COI Chairperson on the replacement.

5. **Inquiry process**

5.1 Before the commencement of the inquiry, the following (but not limiting to) documents shall be prepared for the panel members:

a. Brief outline of incident

b. Facility/event layout plan

c. Emergency response plan

d. Training records (if applicable)

e. Work schedules (if applicable)

f. Investigation report by the Officer In-Charge of facility / event

g. Any other document(s) the COI / Secretariat / Resource Team deemed necessary

5.2 The COI shall ask probing questions during the inquiry but also to take care not to victimize or traumatize the interviewee(s). The tone of the interview shall be conversational and not confrontational.

5.3 All interviews shall be recorded and all documents shall be classified confidential. A set of interview questions (**Annex A**) shall be used as a guide throughout the interview.

5.4 At the start of the interview, the COI Chairperson shall assure all interviewee(s) that the COI is not to find fault and assign blame. The purpose of the COI must be explained clearly to all interviewee(s); that is, to ascertain facts and make recommendations.

6. Report submission by COI

6.1 Upon completion of the inquiry session, the Secretariat shall submit the draft report to the COI for approval within 4 weeks of the inquiry. Upon approval, it shall be submitted to the Management Committee within 3 weeks from completion of the inquiry session.

6.2 The format for the report (but not limiting to) shall be as follows:

- a. Background and summary of the incident;
- b. Findings ascertained by the COI;
- c. Areas of concern (raised by the COI); and
- d. Recommendations by the COI (if any).

6.3 Upon approval by the Management Committee, the COI report shall be extended to the relevant personnel and/or department to implement improvement and preventive measures recommended in COI report.

7. Follow-up actions

7.1 Following the submission of the COI report, the relevant personnel and/or department shall review and work on the implementation of the recommendations.

7.2 Responsible parties shall then update the COI panel and Management Committee on its implementation plans within 4 months time. The COI shall validate the implementation plans for update/closure of the case.

- 7.3 Secretariat shall issue letters of appreciation to bystanders, patrons or external agencies/parties (if any) who may have assisted in the inquiry.
- 7.4 The incident shall be shared for learning amongst team members of responsible parties.
- 7.5 Salient points of the incident can be posted on the web portal for case studies/learning. No names or photographs of persons involved in the incident shall be featured during the sharing.

8. Implementation

- 8.1 Organization are to disseminate this instruction to their respective staff / coaches / officials/volunteers for compliance with immediate effect. Please see flowchart at **Annex B**.

ANNEX A

A) GUIDELINES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY SESSION

Prior to every interview, the Chairperson should assure the interviewee(s) that the COI is not a session to find fault and assign blame. The Chairperson should also inform the interviewee(s) of the following:

(1) Purpose of the COI

- To ascertain facts
- To make recommendations

(2) Recording during interviews

- That all interviews will be recorded for note taking purposes
- Besides the recording by the Secretariat, no other recording is allowed
- All information shared will be kept strictly confidential

(3) Assurance to interviewees

- All correspondences and information provided will be kept confidential
- The report will be submitted to Senior Management
- COI is not a disciplinary panel
- Recording is only to facilitate report writing

B) GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR COI MEMBERS

(1) Can you relate the incident to the panel?

To establish the sequence of events

(2) Based on their statement, asked how it happen?; when it happen?; where it happen? Who was there? etc. This can lead to other questions like who informed you/or you informed who? At what time? etc.

To probe on details of the incident/event/timing/personnel that maybe missed out in their report

(3) Are you AED/CPR certified? When was the last time you had your training? What was trained? Who trained you?

(4) What is the equipment available and what does it do? Procedures?

To look at staff's competency, training given and knowledge of the life saving equipment available.

(5) What did you do when you know that an incident had happened? What is the emergency procedure?

To evaluate staff's knowledge on emergency procedures and reporting protocol

(6) What would you have done if similar incident happen in the future?

To gather staff's feedback and comments on any improvement using this case as a reference.

Annex B

