

## Does Your Business Have a Trauma Plan?

All businesses, whether small or large, are susceptible to critical incidents occurring. Whether it be an accident, injury, threat, death, robbery, assault, or natural disaster, most people involved will have their thoughts consumed with the incident, therefore making concentrating on their work and home lives near impossible.

Many businesses now have emergency procedures in place. However, often the psychological element is ignored. The Trauma Centre of Australia is a provider of trauma & critical incident response services by highly experienced and trained trauma psychologists. They understand that traumatic incidents can occur at any time and therefore provide a 24 hour trauma hotline for their customers.

### This Could Happen to Your Team

Tina\* is a 32 year old female employed as a retail manager. She was working as usual on a Saturday morning when one of her staff members ran up to her and stated that an elderly customer was suffering some kind of heart attack or stroke in the store.

Tina instructed her staff member to contact an ambulance while she commenced C.P.R. on the customer. Approximately ten minutes later the ambulance arrived and pronounced the customer dead. The paramedics thanked Tina for her efforts and stated that nothing could have been done.

However, Tina was in shock and couldn't stop seeing pictures of the elderly woman dying. Tina spoke to the owner of the store on the telephone who was rightly concerned for her and the other staff who witnessed the incident. The owner contacted the Trauma Centre of Australia using its 24 hour emergency hotline number.

The Trauma Centre of Australia responded immediately to the manager's/owner's request for assistance. They sent a fully qualified, specialised trauma psychologist out to the work-site and conducted a critical incident de-briefing with management and affected staff within 2 hours of being contacted.

Trauma counselling was provided to Tina and the other staff who witnessed the incident, and the Trauma Centre of Australia kept in regular contact with management as to Tina's mental condition and how best to help their return to work.

If immediate on-site assistance hadn't been provided in this case Tina could have suffered from severe post-traumatic stress syndrome and may have never been able to return to work and normal mental functioning. With proper psychological treatment Tina returned to work in just two days.

Tina's manager had the foresight to engage the Trauma Centre of Australia as their Trauma and Critical Incident provider prior to an incident occurring and therefore had access to the 24 hour contact number and knew exactly what to do upon hearing about the critical incident. As the manager/owner had these systems in place, minimal damage was done to employee morale, productivity (through employee down-time) and the business's bottom-line (through insurance premiums and legal costs etc.) and the business can still boast happy, healthy and productive staff. \* Name changed to protect identity

### Join the MGA's 'Trauma & Critical Incident Response' Program!

In the event of a traumatic event in your store you will be armed with a quick response mechanism that will no doubt save your business much more than the small annual membership fee of \$159

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*The MGA are often called in response to such traumatic occurrences in stores across Australia and are pleased to be able to recommend to members the The Trauma Centre of Australia's 24/7 support package.*

*In the event of such a traumatic event in your store you will be armed with a quick response mechanism that will no doubt save your business much more than their small annual membership fee of \$159.*