

# NATIONALLY AGREED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (NASOP)

**Title:** Conducting debriefings in a biosecurity response

**Version:** 1.0

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**Approved by:** Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness Working Group

Revision history:	Version	Date of approval	Comments
	1.0	21/09/11	Approved by BEPWG

NASOPs support national consistency and provide guidance to response personnel undertaking operational tasks.

## 1. Purpose

- To outline the procedure to be followed when conducting debriefings of groups during the response to or subsequent to a biosecurity incident.

## 2. Application/scope

- This procedure can be applied to staff working in an operations centre and/or in the field.
- This procedure applies to operational debriefings (i.e. the debriefing of operational activities and issues). It is not applicable to critical incident stress debriefings and/or defusing sessions, which are more focused on the individual.
- Debriefings are conducted to critically analyse the activities that have occurred in the past operational period or during the entire response operation. Operational debriefings can be informal or formal. In either case, written records should be made of the discussions and outcomes of any debriefing activity.
- Debriefings may be ad-hoc or occur at intervals during an incident (sometimes referred to as 'hot' debriefings). They may also occur as formal and structured activities, at prescribed intervals during, or at the conclusion of, an incident.
- Debriefings can be provided to any person or groups of people involved in the response to an incident. In the case of a small scale incident it may be possible to debrief all involved at once, however where there are many people and/or organisations involved it may be necessary to conduct a series or program of debriefings.
- For efficiency it may be best to conduct a number of issue/task specific debriefings for identified groups, rather than one debriefing that includes all staff involved.

### **3. Resources/equipment**

- Adequate space to accommodate the personnel attending the debriefing.
  - for short debriefings they may be able to stand (not preferred)
  - for long debriefings chairs and tables may be required
  - debriefing space should (where possible) be separate from the operational space. If this is not practical, normal work may need to stop, while the debriefing is being conducted.
- Facilities to display relevant maps (electronic/hard copy) and other relevant information, such as. photographs, diagrams and other data required to facilitate the debriefing
- Chronology of significant activities or incidents (see template at Appendix 1).

### **4. Warnings**

- Normal OH&S requirements should be adhered to in respect of the debriefing environment
- A debriefing should be conducted in an environment which is comfortable, free of distractions and if necessary, secure
- Debriefings should be kept as short as possible, without leaving anything out.

## 5. Description of activities

- NOTE: debriefings should be held:
  - periodically during the response to an incident
  - at the conclusion of a major task or phase of an incident
  - daily – where practicable
  - at the conclusion of the response to an incident.
- In preparing for the debriefing:
  - develop a list of participants
  - identify date, time and venue for the debriefing
  - identify and appoint a facilitator and minute secretary
  - identify issues or topics that are relevant to the participating group. A list of topics that could be addressed are included in Appendix 2.
  - develop and distribute an agenda for the debrief (see template at Appendix 3)
  - request participants to provide written report/s (where practicable)
  - prepare venue, seating, refreshments (if appropriate).
- During the debriefing the facilitator should follow the debriefing agenda, which should include:
  - welcome participants and conduct introductions
  - explain the purpose of the debriefing
  - provide a summary or chronology of the incident
  - reports from participants (as individuals or representatives of their function, agency, organisation etc.)
  - opportunities for discussion on relevant items
  - advise methodology for analysis and appropriate implementation of lessons identified.
- During the debriefing the minute secretary should:
  - take notes/minutes (see template at Appendix 4) noting action items and recommendations
  - record key recommendations and be prepared to summarise these at the conclusion of the debriefing.
- During the debriefing participants should:
  - follow the direction of the facilitator
  - represent their agency/organisation, as required by the debriefing
  - contribute towards discussion as required.
- Following the debriefing:
  - prepare minutes and any reports prescribed during the debriefing
  - distribute draft notes/minutes to participants for acceptance
  - following acceptance, distribute approved minutes to appropriate parties
  - ensure that action items and/or recommendations are referred to the appropriate parties for further analysis and appropriate implementation.

## 6. References

- NSW SOP – Briefing/debriefing - EOC sections, field personnel

## 7. Appendices

- Appendix 1: Chronology – template
- Appendix 2: List of debrief topics
- Appendix 3: Debriefing Agenda – template
- Appendix 4: BIMS231 – Meeting Summary – template



## List of debrief topics

The following is a list of topics that could be considered when conducting a debriefing.

It is not intended that all these topics would be covered and others may need to be included to suit the particular debriefing and issues that arise during the response.

### Overall management

- Response activation, set up and stand down
- Operational coordination of issues
- Operations including security, briefings etc
- Manuals, procedures and plans

### Public relations and community engagement

- Community Liaison
- Public information and media relations

### Planning

- Planning, strategy and policy development

### Operations

- Field operations

### Logistics

- Personnel induction
- Personnel management, including rostering and rotation
- Welfare including OH&S, accommodation, catering etc
- Information and communication technology (ICT)
- Resources, including financial, human, equipment and stores
- Transport and travel

### Administration and finance

- Information management including records and electronic system (e.g. BioSIRT)

### Liaison

- Laboratory liaison and support
- Industry relations, including relations with owners/managers of affected premises

## Debriefing Agenda – template

This template represents a sample agenda for debriefings. It may be amended as required to suit the needs of the particular activity.

### Debriefing Agenda

<<Insert type or name of incident/activity>>

Location: <<Insert meeting location>>  
 Date: <<Insert date to be conducted>>  
 Time: <<Insert start and finish time (if known)>>

#### Welcome

#### Present/Apologies:

#### Agenda items

##### 1. Aim of the debriefing

##### 2. Chronology of events

##### 3. Participants' reports

- <<List the organisation, agency, group or functions that are expected to provide a report at the debriefing>>
- ...
- ...

##### 4. Additional items (General discussion)

- <<list issues or items that have been specifically identified for discussion>>
- ...
- ...

##### 5. Summary of recommendations and actions

##### 6. Next steps

# BIMS 231 – Meeting Summary – template

<b>MEETING SUMMARY</b>	1. INCIDENT NAME	2. MEETING DATE	3. MEETING TIME
4. MEETING NAME:			
5. MEETING LOCATION:			
6. CHAIR / FACILITATOR:			
1.0 ATTENDEES:			
2.0 NOTES (with summary of decisions and action items)			
<b>BIMS 231 20100302</b>	9. PREPARED BY:		10. APPROVED BY: