

**MANAGING REAL AND PERCEIVED EMERGENCIES ABROAD
INDIANA UNIVERSITY OVERSEAS STUDY**

April 2008

Keep in hard copy near main telephones:

This document outlines procedures for dealing with possible emergency scenarios that may arise in the course of study abroad programs. It also identifies the roles played by the Office of International Affairs as the first point of contact for IUPUI programs and that of IU-Bloomington as backup in its capacity as operative safety and risk managers for the IU system.

In an emergency, **any staff member taking the first notification phone call** will:

1. Write down:

- **Caller's name, and phone/e-mail contact info**
- **Title of the program involved**
- **Location of emergency**
- **A few key details**

2. Refer the caller immediately to Associate Dean (317-278-1265), Sara Allaei (317-274-3261) or Stephanie Leslie (317-278-0716) or the most senior person present for handling of further communication.

DO NOT HANG UP UNTIL YOU HAVE CONFIRMED THAT THE CALLER HAS CONNECTED WITH A LIVE PERSON.

3. Immediately take information collected in #1 to the person who is fielding the phone call.

4. *If no one is present in this capacity* – or immediately so – the staff member will:

- proceed to the relevant question lists outlined here,
- obtain information in detail,
- promise contact within 30 minutes,
- will then contact on an emergency basis one of the following as the first point of contact:

Sara Allaei

Stephanie Leslie

Susan Sutton

Office: (317) 274-3261

Office: (317) 278-0716

Office: (317) 278-1265

- subject to the directives received from either of these individuals: contact and dispatch information to:
 - a. Kathy Sideli – Bloomington, on behalf of the IU system (812) 855-1139
 - b. Joe Scodro, Chief Legal Counsel, IUPUI 317 274-7460
 - c. Any other person nominated by these people in the manner directed.
- If you are not able to reach the IUPUI emergency contacts listed above contact one of the following as the second point of contact:

Emergency Contacts: IU (Bloomington)

Overseas Study Emergency Cell Phone: (812) 327-9058

Overseas Study, Main Office: (812) 855-9304

Kathleen Sideli:

Susan Carty

(812) 855-9304 (office)

(812) 855-9305 (office)

Quick reference: Guide to Information Collection

Operating Principles

Safety #1 Priority
Think Minimize Liability

Caution/Restraint in Decision-Making & Language Chosen
Confidentiality

Checklists for guiding conversations:

1. Questions to be asked in all situations

- A. Related to the situation p. 3

- B. Important general contact numbers and information p. 4

2. Incident-specific questions

Death

- Participant p. 6
- Faculty leader: p. 7

Participant:

- **Ill/sick (serious):** p. 8
- **Injury (serious):** p. 9
- **assault or rape:** p. 10
- **missing:** p. 11
- **arrested:** p. 12
- **taken hostage:** p. 13

Political emergency p. 14

Natural or man-made disaster p. 14

***** Front Line Staff Do NOT Complete the Steps Outlined in pages 15-22 of this Document. It is for informational purposes only. *****

1. Questions to be asked in all situations

A. Related to Situation

- Is the Resident Director or other on-site staff member in close contact now with all affected participants?

- What are the current physical and psychological conditions of affected participant(s)?

- What is the proximity of the event(s) to all program participants?

- What is the imminent risk to participant(s) if they remain where they are?

- Are all program participants, whether directly involved or not, aware of the emergency? How are they responding to the emergency?

- Are adequate food, water and medical attention available?

- Is adequate and secure housing available? How long will this housing be available? What other appropriate housing options are available as a backup, if needed?

- Should students be evacuated?

B. Important general contact numbers and information:

Does the Resident Director and/or other on-site staff members have the telephone numbers of the participants involved?

Fax and/or e-mail numbers?

Is a telephone tree among program participants established?
(If not, it should be at this time, with instructions to students to call the Resident Director or the next level of students if their immediate contact cannot be reached)

For our records, record the information below for the attending physician(s), clinic(s) and/or other health professionals involved:

the names

Addresses

Telephone

Fax

E-mail

What are the name and contact numbers of the person, if any, who is providing translation services in this crisis?

Record the following for the appropriate officials at the U.S. Embassy

Names and titles

Addresses

Telephone

Fax

E-mail

Continued on Next Page

Record the following for the appropriate officials at the State Department in Washington, D.C

Names and titles

Addresses

Telephone

Fax

E-mail

Record the following for the local law enforcement or public security officials involved.

Names and titles

Addresses

Telephone

Fax

E-mail

Do these people speak English?

2. Incident-specific questions:

If there is a death of a program participant:

- What were the circumstances surrounding the death?

- Was there police involvement?
 - If yes, what is the case number?

- Has the US Embassy or Consulate in the country been notified?

- Are the next of kin aware of the death? **OIA will consult with the Dean of Students and IUB to inform the next of kin.**

- Have the other participants been informed of the death?

- Have arrangements been made for the repatriation of remains?

- Have arrangements been made for an on-site memorial service?

- Have arrangements been made for counseling for program participants and host families, if necessary?

If there is a death of a Faculty Leader:

- What were the circumstances surrounding the death?

- Was there police involvement?
 - If yes, what is the case number?

- Has the US Embassy or Consulate in the country been notified?

- Are the next of kin aware of the death? **OIA will consult with the IUB to inform the next of kin.**

- Have the program participants been informed of the death?

- Is there another faculty member that can take over leadership of the group?

- Do students need to return to the US?

- Have arrangements been made for the repatriation of remains?

- Have arrangements been made for an on-site memorial service?

- Have arrangements been made for counseling for program participants, if necessary?

If a participant(s) has fallen seriously ill:

- What medical treatment has the student received?

- What is the diagnosis, the prescribed treatment and the prognosis?

- Does the attending physician speak English?

- Are other participants at risk from this illness?

- Does the student have the necessary financial resources to pay for bills or will the program cover these expenses to be reimbursed by the student later?

- Is airlift a desirable and viable action?

- If so, has the insurance provider been contacted to determine coverage?

If a participant has been seriously injured:

- What are the details of the accident?

- What has the on-site response been?

- Does the attending physician speak English?

- Where has the participant been taken?

- What is the diagnosis, the prescribed treatment and the prognosis?

- Is airlift a desirable and viable action?

- If so, has the insurance provider been contacted to determine coverage?

If a participant has been assaulted or raped:

- What are the details of the incident?

- What has the on-site response been?

- Where has the participant been taken?

- If a rape or sexual assault, is counseling available and is it in English?

- Has appropriate local law enforcement been notified?

- What is the medical diagnosis, the prescribed treatment and the prognosis?

- Is the participant interested in returning to the U.S.? If so, inform the student what the likely academic and financial consequences will be.

If a participant is missing:

- When was he or she last seen?
- Does anyone have any idea about where they might have gone?
- If they had left and were expected to return at a specific time, when was the date and time of the expected return?
- Did the participant tell anyone of plans to be absent?
- Are search and rescue operations available on site and are these reliable?
- Have they already been initiated? If not, should they be?
- If other students are enlisted to search, have they been briefed adequately on what to do if they find the missing student or the various scenarios they may encounter?
- If you have determined that the student is truly likely to be missing, proceed with the following questions:
 - Has the US Embassy been contacted?
 - Have the local missing persons officials been notified?
 - What is the case number?

If a student has been arrested:

- Has he or she been detained?

- Has the U.S. Embassy been notified?

- What has their response been? What is their advice?

- What agency made the arrest and filed the charges?

- What are the names, addresses and phone numbers of arresting authorities?

- What is the case number?

- What rights have been granted?

- Is he/she entitled to place a phone call?

- Is appropriate legal counsel available?

If a student has been taken hostage:

- Has the U.S. Embassy been notified?

- What is the Embassy's advice?

- Have the kidnappers made contact?

- Is negotiation support available on site?

- Who are the contact people at the Embassy, and at the State Department in Washington, D.C and what are their titles and contact numbers?

If the emergency is political in nature or if a natural or man-made disaster has occurred:

- Has the U.S. Embassy advised participants to take appropriate action?
- Have all participants been made aware of these precautions, and in writing?
- Are all participants following these precautions?
- Have local authorities imposed a curfew?
- Is travel in or out of the country being restricted in any way?
- Is the group in danger?
- Who or what is the target of any unrest?
- Has any particular group or organization been threatened?
- What kind of military or other security or public safety personnel are present?
- Are they unusually visible?
- How are they behaving with respect to the civilian population?
- Is airlift a desirable and viable action?

Overview

The Office of Overseas Study at Indiana University (IU) is charged with the responsibility of coordinating the management of emergencies affecting participants in all IU-approved study abroad programs. In the case of campus- or school-specific IU programs, that responsibility is shared with other offices (e.g., Office of International Affairs at IUPUI, Office of International Programs at IUSB) and, for co-sponsored programs, this responsibility is delegated to other institutional providers (e.g., CIEE, IES, CIC), with Overseas Study in a consultative role.

Assuring the safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff who are participating in IU programs abroad is of the highest importance, and all reasonable actions will be taken to accomplish this.

While acknowledging that no single plan can address all contingencies, the Office of Overseas Study (OVST) recognizes the importance of establishing, in advance, policies and procedures that are designed to safeguard the safety and well-being of study abroad participants and to limit IU's legal liability. These policies and procedures, described in detail below, will serve to guide IU's response to crises affecting participants abroad.

We should draw a distinction between "real" and "perceived" emergencies. Real emergencies are those that pose a genuine and sometimes immediate risk to, or that have already disturbed, the safety and well-being of participants. These include such occurrences as coups and other civil disturbances; natural and man-made disasters; incarcerations; serious physical or emotional illness; accidents; physical assaults; disappearances or kidnappings; and terrorist threats and attacks.

Perceived emergencies are those which pose no significant risks to the safety and well-being of participants, but which are seen as threatening by family members in the U.S. or by others, including, at times, students and colleagues at the home university. Perceptions of threat can arise out of a number of situations, including the sensationalized reporting of an event abroad; the distortion of information provided by a participant in a telephone call, e-mail message, fax or letter home; or simply out of the nervousness of a family member or student with little or no international experience. Such perceptions will sometimes affect family members and others in the U.S. more strongly than will real emergencies, and need to be treated seriously.

By closely following the procedures outlined below, the staff of OVST will be able to gather information that will allow them to respond appropriately to real emergencies, or to place a perceived emergency in its proper context, and thereby reassure family members and others in the U.S. Other units at IU with responsibility for campus- or school-specific programs are expected to follow the same procedures and to consult with OVST as appropriate.

After working hours, on weekends and holidays, a call to the main office phone number or to the cell phone number of OVST will provide contact with the staff member who is on call for emergencies. To be prepared to answer calls in such cases, all staff who will handle emergency phone calls should have updated copies of the following at home : (1) university directories, (2) OVST domestic and international contact list, and (3) these procedures.

Operating Principles

In managing emergencies, real or perceived, OVST will be guided in its decision-making, before, during and after a crisis, by the following operating principles:

1. All responses to a crisis will be governed by the highest concern for the safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff participating in any IU-sponsored study abroad program as well as IU students participating in external programs.
2. OVST will exercise caution and restraint in deciding when, and with whom, information about an emergency should be shared, and will operate according to the procedures outlined below in deciding how information should be shared. We will, from the outset, however, contact IU's Assistant Vice-President for Public Affairs and Government Relations or his/her designate to coordinate responses and resources.
3. All reasonable and prudent measures will be taken to limit IU's legal liabilities.
4. OVST will respond to emergencies by closely following the procedures outlined below, except when otherwise directed by circumstances or agencies outside IU's control.

Procedures

When an emergency, real or perceived, is reported, OVST will follow specific, pre-determined procedures in managing the emergency, in the order that they appear in this text.

PHASE I: An emergency is reported to the Office of Overseas Study

A. Whoever learns of an emergency involving an IU student, faculty or staff member on an IU-sponsored study abroad program should immediately contact OVST. In the case of campus- or school-specific programs, the administrative representative in that unit may be the primary contact person, but s/he should, in turn, inform OVST.

Every effort should be made to reach OVST by telephone, rather than by e-mail or fax. OVST will coordinate IU's response to the crisis until it has passed.

Contact numbers:

Overseas Study Emergency Cell Phone: (812) 327-9058

Overseas Study, Main Office:	(812) 855-9304	Fax: (812) 855-6452
Kathleen Sideli, Director	(812) 855-9304 (office)	(812) 339-6169 (home)
Susan Carty, Associate Director	(812) 855-9305 (office)	(812) 336-7518 (home)

*****FRONT LINE STAFF DO NOT COMPLETE THE REST OF THE PHASES*****

PHASE II: OVST determines whether the emergency is real or perceived

A. OVST will gather as much information as is necessary to determine what risks, if any, study abroad participants are facing. In assessing these risks, appropriate people and organizations will be contacted, by telephone if at all possible.

B. In assessing whether the emergency is real or perceived, the appropriate staff member of OVST will contact a number of sources for detailed and accurate information.

The following people and organizations may be contacted (the OVST staff member determining the status of the crisis will check off these contacts if and as they are made):

- First and foremost, the IU Resident Director or local coordinator abroad, the co-sponsored program administrator or the individual in charge of a non-IU program.
- The U.S. State Department Desk Officer of the country affected (call 202-647-4000 for specific contact information or see the Department of State Web page: www.state.gov).

It may be useful to contact the following organizations as well:

- Study Abroad and International Program Offices of other universities and colleges with programs in the same city or country.
- The U.S. State Department's Citizens Emergency Center, which deals with serious illness, death, financial crisis due to theft, or arrest (call 202-647-5225).
- The U.S. Embassy in the appropriate country (see the Department of State web page for contact information).
- For civil disturbances, coups, natural disasters, etc., the U.S. State Department sometimes creates special Task Forces to monitor them; for background information on such crises, call the State Department's Operations Center at 202-647-0900.
- For information concerning a terrorist threat or action, call the State Department's Counterterrorist Office at 202-647-9892.
- For security information and assessments via the Office of Intelligence and Threat call the OSAC Electronic Bulletin Board: 202-663-0787 (8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. EST).
- Local safety/crime agencies in the host country (discuss with on-site contacts or the US Embassy in host country before proceeding).

- In a crisis that is more general than IU-specific, it will be useful to stay in touch with NAFSA's SECUSS-L network (care should be exercised in doing so, in order to avoid contributing to the propagation of a rumor). The Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility, in conjunction with SECUSSA, may organize an operations center for the dissemination of information.
- Large program providers may also have useful information, because of their extensive international networks: CIEE: (212) 822-2600; IES: (312) 944-1750 or (800) 995-2300.

C. Reporting and Recording Procedures: The OVST staff member will:

- ask for information about a number of issues, and
- will **take careful notes of sufficient detail** so as to be able to write a **chronological sequence of events** leading up to, during and after the emergency.
- The circumstances **may require a designated observer be appointed** charged with providing written details of the event as it unfolds.

PHASE III. OVST determines that the emergency is perceived rather than real and not widespread

It is important, at this stage, to control the dissemination of information, which must be shared responsibly, on a need-to-know basis. OVST will need to decide to respond at this point in one of two ways:

Response Scenario A: appropriate when the perceived emergency has not yet created widespread or persistent rumors

1. OVST will take appropriate steps to defuse the situation and reassure concerned parties.
2. In most cases, OVST will need to do no more at this point than reassure the concerned parent, student or other individual who has contacted OVST as the result of media coverage or rumor. The OVST staff member who calls back the party registering the concern in the first place should tell him or her that appropriate inquiries have been made, that we are confident program participants are secure, that the program is proceeding normally, and that the participants' welfare is being provided for, as before.
3. The Assistant VP for Public Affairs at IU and the Office staff of OVST will be informed of what has occurred, and what the concerned parties have been told; it is important that all members of the staff be able to provide the same information in case other inquiries are received.
4. Parents who request it can be given the telephone number of the appropriate Embassy abroad. However, embassies will not appreciate receiving calls from overwrought individuals, especially when there is no emergency.

5. The staff member handling the emergency should prepare a simple statement, check it with the OVST Director if possible, and provide it to all other OVST staff who might answer calls. All calls on the matter should be forwarded to the Director or other staff member who is handling the emergency if s/he is not available.

Response Scenario B: When a rumor is widespread and unusually persistent, and growing numbers of individuals, on or off campus, believe that an emergency really has occurred, or that participants are at risk

1. OVST will write a brief and accurate description of the perceived emergency, and will then deliver or fax it to, and speak individually with:

- a. the Assistant Vice President for Public Affairs at IU or his/her representative
- b. the Dean of International Programs or his/her representative
- c. the appropriate representative of the unit sponsoring the program
- d. all members of the OVST staff
- e. the Dean of Students or his/her representative

2. If OVST deems it appropriate, the person(s) listed as emergency contacts of program participants will receive accurate information about the perceived emergency, and about IU's response. The information will be substantively the same as that contained in the description distributed to the individuals in #1 above.

PHASE IV. OVST determines that the emergency is real

Response Scenario A: the emergency is real and could affect the entire program

1. OVST will consult with the Resident Director or other staff members on site and in the U.S., and with the Assistant VP for Public Affairs at IU, in order to decide what specific measures should be taken in responding to the crisis, and whether or not IU's crisis management team should be convened.

2. Once the appropriate response strategy has been determined, OVST will communicate directly, preferably by telephone, with the Resident Director or other staff members and the affected students; this communication will contain a detailed description of the course of action recommended in responding to the crisis.

Students will be provided with verbal or written instructions as appropriate to the situation. If the matter is sufficiently serious, the Resident Director or local coordinator will confirm that all program participants acknowledge receipt of this information in writing and fax this signed acknowledgement to the Director of OVST as soon as feasible.

3. OVST will take into account the following points in developing the written course of action:

- a. include a reasonable amount of detail in drafting the procedures;
- b. reassure participants that steps are being taken to ensure their security and well-being, and that their cooperation is important in responding to the crisis;

c. tell participants that while it is not possible to eliminate all risk, we have had experience dealing with emergencies in the past, and that we will work with them in order to respond effectively;

d. tell participants if we have communicated with their emergency contacts;

e. direct participants to stay in close touch with the Resident Director or local coordinator, to let him or her know of their precise whereabouts throughout the crisis, and to report any suspicious persons or packages or contacts;

f. if they haven't already done so, tell the participants to register with the U.S. Embassy or the nearest Consulate, and to maintain contact with them throughout the crisis;

g. tell participants to exercise common sense in responding to the crisis, and to avoid contact with or travel to the affected area (if they are not located at this area);

h. if appropriate, direct the Resident Director or local coordinator and participants to remove all signs or any other objects at the academic center or at their home stays, that would call attention to them or to the program;

i. tell participants to keep a low profile, to avoid dress and behavior which will attract attention, to avoid using luggage tags, and to avoid places where Americans are known to congregate.

4. If the situation is sufficiently serious to warrant it, the Director of OVST will write a brief and accurate description of the event, and will then distribute it, with a copy of the written response strategy, to the following people:

a. the Assistant Vice President for Public Affairs at IU or his/her representative

b. the Dean of International Programs or his/her representative

c. the appropriate representative of the unit sponsoring the program

d. all members of the OVST staff.

e. The Dean of Students or his/her representative

5. Once the description has been written and delivered or faxed to the above individuals, OVST staff will direct all media requests for information to the IU Assistant VP for Public Affairs or his/her representative in the Office of Communications and Marketing. In handling these requests, OVST staff will make every effort to appear cooperative, while at the same time letting the media know that OVST needs to avoid giving out information that might violate a student's right to confidentiality and that only the IU Office of Communications may respond to them directly.

6. The IU Office of Communications will provide no more information to the media than that contained in the Director's description; that Office should also coordinate and arrange with the Director all press requests for interviews.

7. The Director of OVST should handle all requests for information, including those from parents, students and other members of the IU community.

8. Depending on circumstances, the Director of OVST will communicate with the emergency contacts of program participants (as indicated on their application forms) in order to provide accurate information about the emergency, and about IU's response. The information communicated will be substantively the same as that contained in the description distributed to the individuals in #4 above.

Response Scenario B: the emergency is real, and particular to one or more individual students

1. OVST will contact the Resident Director or local coordinator, the IU Assistant VP for Public Relations, and other appropriate people abroad and in the U.S. in order to discuss with them the response to the crisis. OVST will be sure that all appropriate steps are being taken at this point to assure the immediate safety and welfare of participants, and will tell the student that their family/emergency contacts will be informed unless the student has already done so.

2. The Director will make these contacts, provide support to the family or other emergency contact persons, and work with them to determine a plan of action.

A special case: the death of a program participant

A. OVST will ask the Resident Director or local coordinator at the site to:

- fax complete details about the circumstances surrounding the death
- confirm that the US Embassy or nearest Consulate in the country has been informed
- arrange for repatriation of remains, following any police or immigration procedures that need to be observed. All students have repatriation as part of their insurance coverage with the program which should be explained to government officials who normally handle repatriation for American citizens abroad.
- inform all students in the program about the death. (OVST will inform students on its other programs since many of the students abroad concurrently know each other but not until the repatriation procedure is in place and the family has been notified)
- arrange a memorial service on site
- arrange counseling as necessary for program students and host families
- work with university officials to determine that if the cause of the death is infectious, how others students and their parents should be notified of any potential public health threat.

B. OVST will consult with the Dean of Students regarding notification of next of kin.

However, in most cases, if the police or embassy is called in, the next of kin are contacted by these professionals.

C. The Director will write a summary of the circumstances surrounding the death of the participant, which will be sent to the IU crisis management team, which is responsible for notifying all appropriate officials of the university.

D. OVST should:

- change status in all active databases to avoid sending any bills or mailings to the deceased or to the parents of the deceased

- send condolences (a card, flowers or make a donation, according to family wishes)

- attend the memorial or funeral service, with the family's permission

- check into fees and refund possibilities for unfinished academic term time/housing

**This document is adapted from similar guidelines developed by Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin, Madison and the Institute for Study Abroad at Butler University.*

***OVST in this document refers to the director of the Office of Overseas Study or one of the associate directors who is authorized to act in place of the director when he/she is not available*

U:/wpdocs/study abroad/safety seminar/managing real and perceived emergencies abroad