



Chairperson Address AGM CISM Network Ireland 3 November, 2011

Good Afternoon and welcome to the AGM of CISM Network Ireland.

I hope you have all found today's presentations and workshop interesting and that you have learnt something that will be of benefit to you in your daily work. I know we have all had a long day and I do not intend to delay you too long more but I want to give an overview of the Work of the Network and in particular the Steering Committee over the last two years.

The Network has produced a number of key deliverables over the last two years including today's conference. I will go into these at more length shortly. But probably most importantly CISM Network Ireland has brought us, the various statutory, voluntary and commercial organisations who practice CISM together to share our insights, practices and pitfalls. It is leading us to the creation of a shared database of resources which may be drawn from in times of emergencies.

Of critical importance to the Network is our link with NUI Maynooth who has given the Network a home and a location from which to conduct our activities. It is also hoped that in the near future NUI Maynooth will be in a position to provide CISM training. In this regard I want to acknowledge the work of Dr Sinead McGilloway and her team in the Mental Health and Social Research Unit. In particular I want to publically acknowledge the support and guidance provided by Sharon Gallagher, Principal Researcher in that unit, who acts as the Research/Education Officer and Co-ordinator of the group and in so many ways has been proven to be the backbone of the Network. I also want to acknowledge the work of Mairead Bracken who acts as Secretary/Administrator of the Group and who pretty singlehandedly created and established our website www.cismnetworkireland.ie.

The National Steering Committee has met on a very regular basis over the last two years. In 2010, there were 9 full meetings of the Steering Committee with 10 meetings of various sub committees and so far in 2011 there have been 7 meetings of the National Steering Committee along with 5 sub committee meetings. On average we are meeting every six weeks which shows considerable dedication on behalf of the members.

Representatives of the following organisations have made up the National Steering Committee over the last two years and I would like to acknowledge the hard work and effort put into the

development of the Network by these individuals. The organisations involved are as follows: Air Accident Investigation Unit, Ambulance CISM Committee, Civil Defence, Defence Forces, Dublin Fire Brigade, HSE including the Mental Health and Emergency Planning Office, Irish Coast Guard, Irish Aviation Authority, National Ambulance Service, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Services, NUI Maynooth, Order of Malta, Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council, PSNI, Red Cross, Search and Rescue Dogs.

The Steering Committee is very proud of the achievements of the Network to date. At last year's conference we launched the Network's website www.cismnetworkireland.ie which is a very important resource and source of information for our members countrywide. We also launched the CISM Stress booklet entitled "Critical Incident Stress Management for Emergency Personnel" which encompasses topics such as nature of stress, sources of stress, signs of stress, stress survival skills and stress control. It provides useful tips on relaxation, deep breathing and positive mental attitude and has been produced in a format that will fit into a pocket. It is proven very popular with and beneficial to members of the various organisations represented here today.

Through the CISM Network Ireland Strategic Plan 2011-2013 we have outlined our key aims and objectives and so have a clear and defined path to follow in our activities.

We have also broadened our knowledge base on CISM and developments on the international stage through our links with our international colleagues in the field of CISM. This has been enhanced with the involvement of people of the calibre and standing as Jeffery Mitchell and Amy Adler at conferences and seminars we have hosted over the last two years.

We are also working with our colleagues on a national level to ensure the key aim of interagency collaboration in the Delivery of Critical Incident Stress Management on this island. To this end there has been a recent meeting between members of the Steering Committee with the Minister of State at the Department of Health and Department of Justice, Equality & Defence with responsibility for Disability, Older People, Equality & Mental Health, Minister Kathleen Lynch, T.D. The Minister was very interested in the work of the network and undertook as a result of that meeting to write to her colleague the Minister for Defence, Minister Alan Shatter, T.D., to bring the matter of CISM and the work of the Network to the attention of the Office of Emergency Planning. And thence to the attention of the Minister for Environment, Minister Phil Hogan, T.D. who has responsibility for the Framework on Emergency Management. It is hoped that this will help ensure that CISM is included in emergency planning guidance and procedures and that the responsible bodies know that the Network is available for consultation in this regard.

These are all the visible outputs from the Network but another critical task which has been carried out by the Steering Committee over the last two years is that of Corporate Governance. As I set out at last year's conference one of the main goals of the Steering Committee is to be put the Network on a sustainable footing into the future. In this regard I am now pleased to bring to

the Network, on behalf of the Steering Committee, a revised Constitution document and Standing Orders. This work has taken up a huge amount of committee and subcommittee time over the last two years but we hope that this work will be of lasting benefit to the Network in the future.

Both documents have been circulated to members and will shortly be put to a Vote. You will have had an opportunity in advance of the meeting to examine these documents but I will give a short summary of both at this point.

The Constitution document has been revised and updated to include our key objectives which are in line with those included in our Strategic Plan 2011-2013 which I mentioned earlier. It clearly sets out in Para 5&6 the composition of the membership of the National Steering Committee. This is as follows:

“5. National Steering Committee

A National Steering Committee (NSC) will be established and will meet at least twice per year. The method of appointment will be, in the case of organisations listed at 6.2 below shall be nomination of the parent organisation, and in the case of individual members shall be election at AGM.

6. Membership of National Steering Committee

6.1 The membership of the NSC shall comprise a minimum of 12 members, with power to co-opt additional members where appropriate, to a maximum of 30 members.

6.2 Membership of the NSC should reflect the inter-agency nature of the Network, both voluntary and statutory. Members should also be from a range of backgrounds/ professions. The following organisations will be represented on the NSC (subject to annual membership payment):

- *Civil Defence*
- *Defence Forces*
- *Dublin Fire Brigade*
- *Garda Síochána*
- *Health Service Executive (NAS CISM Committee)*
- *Irish Aviation Authority*
- *Irish Coast Guard*
- *Irish Prison Service*
- *Irish Red Cross*
- *National University of Ireland Maynooth (Department of Psychology)*
- *Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service*
- *Order of Malta*
- *Police Service of Northern Ireland*
- *Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council*

Representatives of other statutory and voluntary bodies may be co-opted where it is deemed appropriate by the NSC.

There will be a minimum of one representative seat on the NSC for each of the following groups: voluntary organisations (including charities); associate corporate members; and individual members.⁴

The NSC shall have a minimum of six officers, comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations Officer, and Research and Education Officer. Other necessary officer positions may be created as and when required. The following four officers will be elected at the AGM, following nomination, for a period of two years: Chair; Vice-Chair; Treasurer; and Public Relations Officer. The other two officer positions, Secretary and Research and Education Officer, are to be appointed by the NSC.”

The Standing Orders Document sets out the roles of the officers, Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, the Research/Education Officer and Network Coordinator, Public Relations Officer and Secretary/Administrator. It also outlines the types of membership available organisational membership, voluntary organisation, associate corporate membership, individual membership and student membership and associated membership fees per membership type. The document also deals with various administrative matters and the voting system to be used for AGMs and EGMs.

Unless there are any questions arising, I will now move along to the Voting.