

ASSESSMENT OF CRISIS  
PREVENTION AND RESPONSE  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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(with grammatical edits January 2009)

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## Executive Summary

The Assessment of Crisis Prevention and Response at the University of Saskatchewan was conducted between June 2007 – when the terms of reference were developed – and April 2008. The Assessment Team was co-led by Barb Daigle, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources and David Hannah, Associate Vice-President, Student and Enrolment Services. In addition, they drew upon the resources of team members Jamie Houdek, Martin Gonzalez De Souza, and Lori Auchstaetter, with special assistance from Nowell Seaman, to assist with interviews, research of best practices, and analysis of policies, etc. The executive sponsor was Richard Florizone, Vice-President (Finance and Resources).

Overall, the University has a good record of responding to safety and security crises. For example, during the blizzard of January 2007 services were provided to feed and house stranded students and staff. Similarly, the sighting in April 2007 of a suspected gunman on campus demonstrated our strong working relationship with Saskatoon Police Services. However, both of these incidents also highlighted some areas where we could be stronger, including coordination among different University units in crisis situations, and communication with the broader campus in emergency situations. We have many talented and capable individuals and units managing our safety and security environment. Their professionalism and commitment to the University are clear.

This assessment focused on taking a continuous improvement approach. Over 40 interviews of staff/faculty and 10 external interviews were conducted. Additional participation of interested stakeholders took place at two presentations, one on the initial findings and one on the recommendations. These, combined with a thorough review of debriefing incidents of several critical incidents that recently occurred on campus, provided data for the creation of a Conceptual Framework that distinguishes the types of incidents, crises, emergencies and disasters that are anticipated at an institution like the University of Saskatchewan.

Current governance, structures and processes of the University of Saskatchewan were reviewed, as well as documents and best practices from other institutions, allowing the current model of crisis management at the University of Saskatchewan to be assessed. While it was found that most campuses have comprehensive emergency measures plans in place, it was also determined that serious obstacles exist. The University of Saskatchewan is no exception, having attempted to make improvements and/or changes in response to issues through the development of new policies, protocols or committees. Responsibilities have been added to departments and individuals without increasing or focusing resources, integrating approaches or considering structure.

A short-list of best practices for both response and prevention was collected and served as the basis for identifying key strengths and weaknesses of the crisis management model at the University of Saskatchewan. Through this exercise, we learned we are better prepared for large-than small-scale incidents. We also learned that we must work toward achieving a better balance between our efforts in prevention and our response practices. A similar type of balance will be

beneficial when managing mental health issues as they grow in frequency and complexity.

Organizational and human challenges require the most emphasis, as we are technically relatively well equipped. Continued role clarification, resource identification and restructuring will be essential. We need to share information and concerns, and coordinate responses.

The result of the Assessment is that we have an improved understanding of the issues facing us (gained by developing the Conceptual Framework). With that as a framework, our review of the current governance and crisis management model at the U of S, and an identification of best practices, has enabled us to develop and prioritize the following list of recommendations, some of which can be acted on concurrently.

These priorities are expanded on in the recommendations section of the report:

**Priority #1**

Create an Operational Risk Management Committee

**Priority #2**

Implement the new Conceptual Framework  
Review and execute the new governance/authority structure  
Renew centralized, institution-wide decision-making for crisis response  
Revise approach to policy development  
Continue, stop, start or integrate relevant committees

**Priority #3**

Redefine structure and roles/responsibilities

**Priority #4**

Propose resources in key areas

**Priority #5**

Develop an ongoing communications strategy  
Develop communications messages with clear content and purpose  
Efficiently utilize existing communications operations and technology

**Priority #6**

Implement appropriate training in crisis prevention and response

# Terms of Reference: (developed June 2007)

## 1. Background and Rationale

The safety and security of students and staff are of primary concern to the University of Saskatchewan. We have policies, procedures and staff in place to manage a wide array of threats ranging from speeding and theft, to harassment and assault, to chemical, fire and radiation safety, to blizzards and pandemic.

While no institution can guarantee the safety and security of a single individual, the University of Saskatchewan is committed to doing the best we can – delivering a safety and security system that is consistent with best practices at other institutions with similar resources and contexts. We are also committed to continuously improving our safety and security practices.

Overall, the University has a good record of responding to safety and security crises. For example, during the blizzard of January 2007 services were provided to feed and house stranded students and staff. Similarly, the sighting in April 2007 of a suspected gunman on campus demonstrated our strong working relationship with Saskatoon Police Services. However, both of these incidents also highlighted some areas where we could be stronger, including coordination among different University units a crisis situations, and communication with the broader campus in emergency situations. We have many talented and capable individuals and units managing our safety and security environment, but we could do a better job of coordinating and communicating.

To learn from these recent events and to enact our commitment to continuous improvement, we launched an Assessment of Crisis Prevention and Response at the University of Saskatchewan. The objective of this assessment is to recommend improvements to the overall coordinated response to crisis/emergency situations to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness, while minimizing the University's risk. Recommendations will also focus on encouraging appropriately inclusive assessment and response teams and clarifying governance processes (committees, policies and roles) to ensure all aspects of personal and workplace safety of our campus community are addressed.

The remainder of this document outlines the proposed deliverables, team structure, and process for the assessment.

## 2. Deliverables Expected from the Assessment

The overall deliverable of this assessment will be a written report with the following key elements:

- A **Conceptual Framework** to distinguish the types of incidents, crises, emergencies and disasters that are anticipated at an institution like the University of Saskatchewan. Incidents may range from individuals who potentially threaten the health and safety of the environment, to disruptions of normal operations as a result of weather, illness, or other circumstances, to full-blown disasters. Development of the framework should build on initial work and literature searches completed in this area by Corporate Administration (Judy Yungwirth and Nowell Seaman).
- A **summary of our current governance (policies, processes, committees, roles and responsibilities) of crises**. A number of policies and committees exist to address issues around safety and security; however, the linkages and authority need to be made clear to all involved. The summary should be made against the framework so that governance for each type of incident is distinguished.

- A **review of best practices** to incorporate the lessons learned at other universities and organizations. These “lessons learned” should pertain to safety and security in general, and to specific lessons now being identified in the wake of the Virginia tragedy.
- An **assessment of the key strengths** (what is working) and **weaknesses** (what is not working) in our overall governance of crises, with specific examples.
- **Recommendations** to build on strengths and to shore-up weaknesses, including policies, committees, roles and communications.

### 3. Structure of the Assessment Team

The assessment will be co-led by Barb Daigle, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources and David Hannah, Associate Vice-President, Student and Enrolment Services, with resources as needed to assist with interviews, research of best practices, and analysis of policies, etc. Outside resources will be brought in at the discretion of the co-leaders.

The executive sponsor, who will receive the final report and acts as “client” for the assessment, is Richard Florizone, Vice-President (Finance and Resources).

### 4. Assessment Process

The detailed process for the assessment will be determined by the co-leaders. However, several general principles on consultation and timeline will apply as outlined below.

The overall assessment will be highly consultative. The assessment team will conduct a series of interviews both externally and internally with staff and students. A critical group to consult is staff in those administrative units generally involved in crises response. These include, but are not limited to:

- Campus Safety (Bob Ferguson, Robin Hazelwanter)
- Health, Safety and Environment (Sunil Choubal, Janice Lavoie)
- Communications (Ghislaine McLeod, Patty Martin)
- Student and Enrolment Services (Dave Hannah, Laurie Pushor)
- Corporate Administration (Judy Yungwirth, Nowell Seaman, Don Litz)
- Discrimination and Harassment Prevention (Carole Pond)
- Facilities Management (Colin Tennent, Howie Wall)
- Information Technology (Rick Bunt, Ed Pokraka)
- University Secretary’s Office (Lea Pennock)
- Consumer Services (Greg Fowler)

The assessment team should collect and review feedback already received from the campus community on this topic in the past year. Examples include: e-mails from staff and students sent to the Vice-President (Finance and Resources) following the rifle sighting incident; the blizzard debriefing report prepared by Nowell Seaman; and the recent unit debriefings conducted and documented by Campus Safety and others after the Virginia incident.

Recognizing that our institutional record on safety and security is strong, the assessment is expected to be smaller and faster than a typical university review. We expect to receive preliminary recommendations for improvement by September 2007.

# Methodology

## 1. Building an Assessment Team

As stated in the terms of reference, the Assessment Team was co-led by Barb Daigle, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources and David Hannah, Associate Vice-President, Student and Enrolment Services. In addition, they drew upon the resources of team members Jamie Houdek, Martin Gonzalez De Souza, and Lori Auchstaetter, with special assistance from Nowell Seaman, to assist with interviews, research of best practices, and analysis of policies, etc. The final report will be delivered to the executive sponsor, Richard Florizone, Vice-President (Finance and Resources).

## 2. Conducting Interviews

The consultative interview process included over 40 interviews of staff/faculty and 10 external interviews, and was combined with a thorough review of debriefing incidents of several critical incidents that recently occurred on campus. The interviews brought to light several aspects of critical incidents or crisis-type situations that our employees and students face on a regular basis; these are situations beyond the large, institution-wide, disaster-type scenarios for which we typically have prepared response measures. This has meant a growing list of interviewees and an expanded consideration, perhaps, of the definition of crisis on our campus.

## 3. Creating a Conceptual Framework

Through discussions with participants in the review process, a Conceptual Framework was developed and expanded with each series of interviews. It distinguishes the types of incidents, crises, emergencies and disasters that are anticipated at an institution like the University of Saskatchewan.

## 4. Reviewing Current Governance and Best Practices

Current governance was reviewed to identify the number and types of policies, plans and procedures in place to respond to various aspects of specific crises. Also reviewed were documents and best practices from other institutions that have made crisis management a priority. A study of best practices in crisis prevention and response included the review of reference material, articles, publications and debriefings of high-profile cases. In addition to conducting an inventory of best practices of Canadian Universities, experts were consulted in the areas of law enforcement, legal responsibilities, medicine and communications.

## 5. Formulating Recommendations

The current model of crisis management at the University of Saskatchewan was assessed based on best practices to determine our key strengths and weaknesses and identify policies, programs and procedures that would be appropriate for our campus. Recommendations were then drafted to create a crisis management model for our University that takes into account both universal crisis situations that may occur at any institution, and also those crises that are specific to the University of Saskatchewan on the basis of such factors as climate and geography. The findings and the recommendations were presented to a variety of stakeholders, including many of those interviewed. The feedback received during and after the presentations was included in the report as appropriate. As discussions and reactions to the assessment reached final stages and the report was being prepared, the link between crises prevention and response, operational risk management and the University's Enterprise Risk Management Strategy became more clear. This link is outlined further in the following report.

## 6. Preparing the Final Report

As requested in the terms of reference, a written report has been prepared.

### Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual Framework on the following page is a graphical representation which provides a contextual understanding of the different types of critical incident/crises situations that may occur. Potential incidents and/or crises were evaluated against two dimensions: severity (level of risk and/or need for escalation through levels of authority and increased resources) and scope or magnitude (the potential to grow to an institutional-wide level).

Crises prevention and response can be viewed as a continuum: from prevention, to some sort of crises intervention or response, to a full scale emergency. Each stage on the continuum may require a different type of action and/or decision to be made.

The Framework was developed through discussions with participants in the review process and added to and/or expanded with each series of interviews. The Framework will assist responders in having a better understanding of the best response to an incident and/or when the University should escalate an incident to a crisis. The Framework also highlights the need for increased attention to prevention.

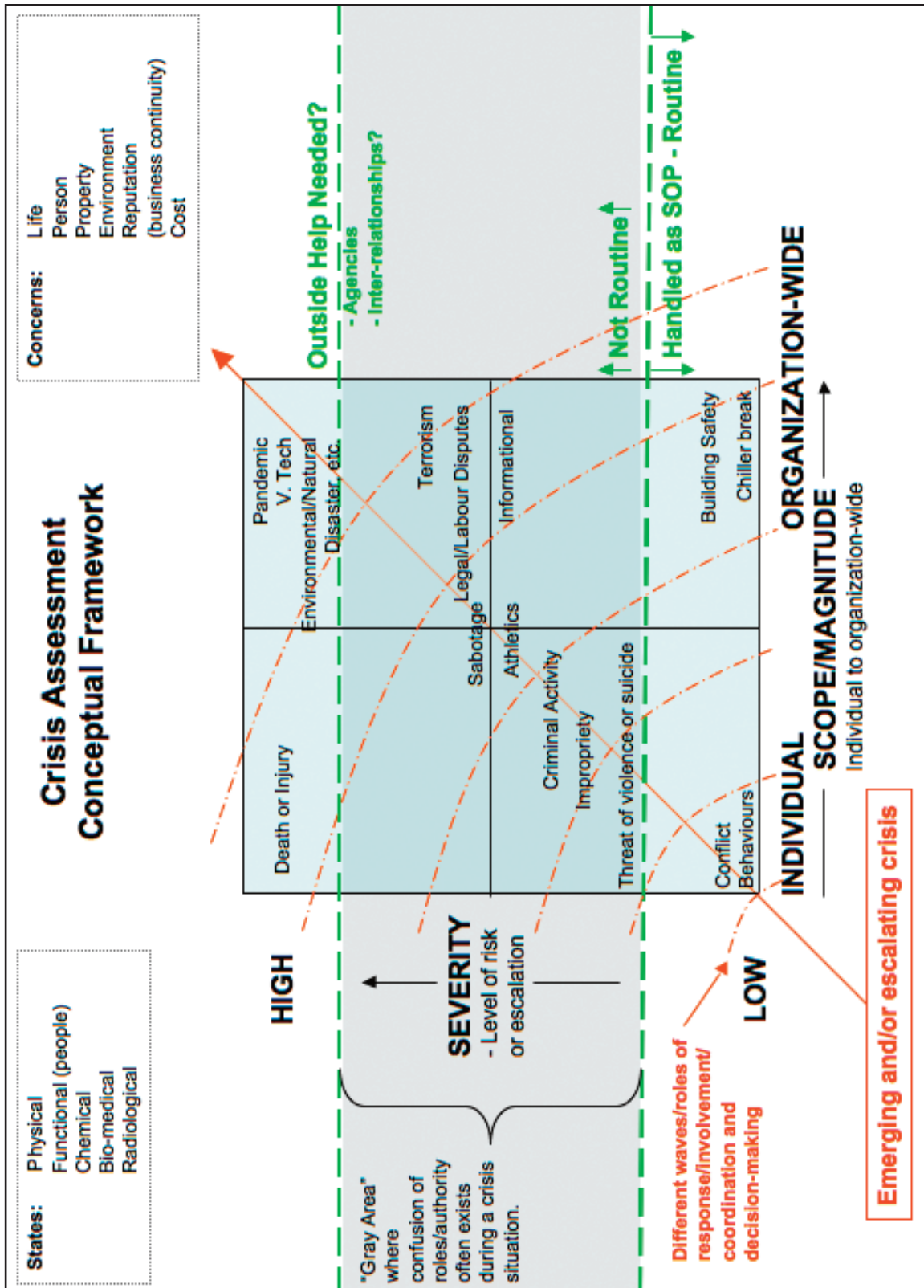
The Conceptual Framework leads to the awareness of the need to improve governance and authority structures, which must be capable of changing according to the needs of the University campus and community. The Framework also provides guidance for the improvement of policies, communications strategy and technology, structure, role clarity, committees, resources and training.

The purpose of the Framework is to simplify the many approaches to planning, prevention and response so that a myriad of policies, processes and protocols is not necessary. The Framework will assist in:

- Providing contextual understanding.
- Emphasizing the importance of prevention – there are usually early warning signals.
- Improving clarity of how crises are identified, assessed and/or escalated.
- Identifying when increased integration becomes important.
- Determining the appropriate organizational response.

#### Types of Situations Potentially Leading to Escalating Situations:

- Criminal – shooter, rape, murder, robberies, guns, gangs, terrorism.
- Informational – identity theft, violations of confidentiality, fraud, attacks on IT systems, viruses, malware, systems, etc.
- Building Safety – substandard housing (on or off campus), structural integrity, environmental safety (e.g. mould, asbestos, chemical spill, etc.), generators.
- Athletics – recruiting practices, academic or sex scandals, hazing, etc.
- Health – disease outbreaks, food safety and tampering.
- Unethical behaviour/misconduct – fraud, plagiarism, record tampering, conflicts of interest
- Financial – failure of major unit or school, fraud, mismanagement.
- Environmental/Weather/Natural Disasters – fires, floods, blizzards, tornados.
- Legal/labour disputes.
- Perceptual/Reputational – false rumors, stories.



## Summary of Current Governance

### University of Saskatchewan Emergency Measures Policy 4.25 and UEM Plan

The University of Saskatchewan Emergency Measures Policy 4.25 was approved by the Board of Governors in June 1999. It sets out the mandate of the University Emergency Measures Planning Committee (UEMPC), activation of a University Emergency Situation and University's Emergency Operations Centre, and recognizes the University Emergency Measures Plan.

The UEM Plan is based on the Incident Command System (ICS), which is recognized worldwide and used by the City of Saskatoon, Saskatoon Health Region and other universities. When first created in 1996, it was designed to address the most common potential disasters facing the University at the time, such as tornadoes, dangerous goods incidents (on rail or highway passing through University lands), blizzards, plane crashes, etc. The plan is due to be updated.

### Institutional Crisis Response Plan

The Institutional Crisis Response Plan is a document, in draft phase, developed as an interim measure to address crises that do not fall within the parameters of the UEM Plan and require coordination at the institutional level, but do not require activation of the University Emergency Operations Centre or a declaration of a University Emergency Situation by the President. Examples of such crises include the Norwalk virus outbreak, alleged sexual assaults, suicide, winter storms, chemistry lab explosion and concern about shooting incidents such as the ones at Dawson College and Virginia Tech. The University of Saskatchewan has experienced an increase in the frequency of critical incidents.

### University Policies and Procedures

The University of Saskatchewan has a number of policies, procedures, plans, protocols and guidelines in place to respond to various aspects of specific crises, including:

- University Policy 2.05 Discrimination and Harassment Prevention
- University Policy 3.01 Health, Safety and Environment Protection
- University Policy 3.02 BioSafety
- University Policy 3.03 Long Term Storage of Nuclear Substances
- University Policy 3.04 Radiation Safety
- University Policy 3.07 Employee Assistance Program
- University Policy 3.09 Violence
- University Policy 3.12 Working Alone
- University Policy 4.25 Emergency Measures
- University Policy 4.43 Network Security
- University Policy 6.05 Death of a Student
- University Policy 8.25 Misconduct in Scholarly Work
- Protocol for Non-Academic Discipline Appeals
- Responding to Sensitive Issues – Resource Guide
- Critical Incident Response Protocol
- Threat Assessment Team – Action Plan Summary
- Emergency Public Information Plan
- Communications Protocol for Incidents of Violence on Campus

- Interim Procedure for Receiving an International Emergency Call
- Department of Campus Safety (DCS) – Incident Response Procedure
- Residence Suicide/Emergency Response Protocol

While most of these plans outline procedures for immediate responses to events, they should be viewed as part of a larger, coordinated University response to a crisis. Currently, there is little coordination and oversight at senior levels.

## Safety Committees

- Threat Assessment Team (TAT) – As per the Violence Policy, an ad hoc committee that assesses the risk or threat to the University and campus community in a situation, pulled together under the direction and discretion of the Community Safety Manager in DHSE.
- President’s Advisory Committee on Personal Safety – Standing Committee formed to complete a “personal” safety audit and make and implement recommendations. Group has not met since May 2006. Overlaps with Occupational Health and Safety and Joint Consultation Committees.
- Sexual Assault Awareness Committee (SAAC) – Standing Committee established to promote awareness of sexual assault (date rape). Group has not met since May 2006.
- Student Advocacy Network – Standing Committee to support students, staff and advocates from across campus which provides an opportunity for information exchange and is seen as a highly valuable network. Good resource for future training initiatives.
- Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Committee 1998 – Standing Committee developed to support policy, although is no longer necessary.
- Statutory Occupational Health and Safety Committee (with local unit committees) – provide a forum for consultation between the University of Saskatchewan and representatives of its employees concerning health, safety and environmental issues in the University workplace. The obligation to maintain a safe workplace rests on the University as employer under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, S.S. 1993, c. O-11, and it is the purpose of the Occupational Health Committee to assist the University of Saskatchewan in meeting this obligation.
- President’s Advisory Committees for Research (President’s Radiation Safety Advisory Committee and President’s Biosafety Advisory Committee) – Advise the applicable safety manager on research that is unusual or on new hazardous substances. They also provide information on policies and procedures written by DHSE and a sub-committee for each approves amendments or new permits to use these hazardous substances. Dr. Basinger is currently completing a review of the terms of reference and membership for these committees this summer. The Radiation Safety Advisory Committee is a requirement of the federal regulations. With the coming of Bill C-54 it is likely the Biosafety Committee will also become a regulatory requirement.

Crisis prevention and response at the U of S is centralized through risk management and emergency measures planning in Corporate Administration, and in Board-approved policies. Decentralization has occurred through protocols, formal and ad-hoc committees, departments and individual roles. In most cases, assignment of accountability is fragmented, as shown later in this document.

## Summary

To date, improvements and/or changes in response to issues have been attempted through the development of new policies, protocols or committees. Responsibilities have been added to departments and individuals without integrating, increasing or focusing resources or considering structure.

# Review of Best Practices in Crisis Prevention and Response

## Reference Material

A study of best practices in crisis prevention and response included the review of reference material, articles, publications and debriefings of high-profile cases. In addition to conducting an inventory of best practices of Canadian Universities, experts were consulted in the areas of law enforcement, legal responsibilities, medicine and communications. Findings are on page 13 and are also included in the recommendations.

### *The Fabrikant Case at Concordia – By Edward J. Monahan*

Topic: Fabrikant Case

Description: Valery Fabrikant (born 28 January 1940[1] in Minsk, USSR), is a former Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Concordia University. He was the gunman in the school massacre referred to as the Concordia University massacre in which he killed four colleagues. The Fabrikant incident resulted in a series of investigations and a formalization of research ethics guidelines by Canada's research funding agencies. An investigation on the conduct of the faculty in Fabrikant's department revealed that some of Fabrikant's claims were indeed true. There were also a number of warnings and indications that Fabrikant may act on his threats to harm others.

### *"When there is no protocol," Special Edition: After the Virginia Tech Tragedy – VP Student Affairs at Texas A&M University*

Topic: Virginia Tech

Description: A special report that addresses keys to crisis management plans and other important tips.

### *"8 Action Steps for Student Affairs to Consider," Special Edition: After the Virginia Tech Tragedy – VP Student Affairs at Texas A&M University*

Topic: Virginia Tech

Description: A brief report outlining eight things that student affairs professionals should consider to prepare themselves and their institutions for tragic events.

### *Campus Law Enforcement News Brief – "Release of Governor's Panel on the Virginia Tech Massacre"*

Topic: Virginia Tech

Description: A briefing of the recommendations that came out of the Virginia Tech panel, which was appointed by the Governor. It included Diane Strickland (judge and jurist) who has been involved in mental health law for years.

### *Report to the President on Issues Raised by the Virginia Tech Tragedy*

Topic: Virginia Tech

Description: President Bush asked Secretary of Health Services M. Leavitt, Secretary of Education M. Spellings and Attorney General A. Gonzales to travel to communities across the US to meet with leaders and to report what they have learned.

### *Association of American Universities – "Survey on Safety on AAU Campuses after the Virginia*

*Tech Shootings,” Aug, 2007*

Topic: Virginia Tech

Description: Provides insight into best practices and current directions in emergency/crisis planning at universities following Virginia Tech. Forty-two institutions responded.

*“A Long-Overdue Trend – The Maturity of Crisis Management” – By Brian Zawada & Rob Giffin*

Topic: Crisis Management

Description: This article explores the business trends leading to a higher degree of organizational crisis management readiness and maturity.

*“How Prepared Are America’s Colleges and Universities for Major Crises” – By Ian Mitroff, Michael Diamond and Murat Alpaslan, Jan-Feb 2006*

Topic: Crisis Management

Description: This article speaks of how colleges and universities have been hit with different crises that range from grade tampering, alteration of key files and student records, computer hacking, major fires and explosions, student unrest, civil disturbances, violent confrontations, ethical breaches by top administrators, faculty and students, etc.; and how well are universities and colleges prepared to face them.

*The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective – Department of Justice, FBI*

Topic: Threat Assessment for School Shooters

Description: This paper prepared by the FBI recommends a systematic procedure for threat assessment and intervention. The model is designed to be used by educators, mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies.

*U of S Emergency Measures Plan, Revised May 2004*

Topic: U of S Planning document

Description: In June 1999, the Board of Governors approved the University of Saskatchewan Emergency Measures Policy 4.25, making the University Emergency Measures Planning Committee (UEMPC) responsible for the development of emergency plans relating to major emergencies and disasters.

*U of S Institutional Crisis Response Plan – Draft, March 2007*

Topic: U of S Planning document

Description: This is a draft internal document that was not finalized which recommended processes for dealing with an institutional crisis - defined as “a significant event that threatens the well-being of one or more individuals and/or the University as a whole.”

### Critical Incident Response Protocol, EAP, 1992 (no longer current)

Topic: U of S Protocol

Description: Developed by Norm Biram (EAP) to address personal trauma of staff/students caused by an event (such as death, injuries, major disasters that cause injury, death or threats to individuals, etc).

### Communications Protocol for Incidents of Violence on Campus, Updated on July, 2006 by Senior Communications Officer

Topic: U of S Protocol

Description: Protocol developed to ensure the safety of people on campus, respond to the personal needs of those directly affected, disseminate information to stakeholders and advise head of affected unit of required actions.

### Report of an Ad Hoc Committee on Student Mental Health Safety Risk Response Protocol, Susan Bens, April 2007

Topic: U of S Protocol

Description: Following two incidents in Nov 2006 involving students presenting imminent threat of suicide on campus, an ad hoc committee was struck. The initial purpose was to debrief these incidents and to clarify roles of campus service units in similar cases in the future.

### Debriefing Report – Blizzard of January 10-11, 2007. Prepared by Nowell Seaman. Debriefing from UEM Coordinator – UofS Crisis Response and Planning

Description: Document presents protocol and unresolved gaps and recommendations. The debriefing process included receipt and analysis of comments via e-mails and discussion from the campus community, as well as formal debriefing with the following groups: EPEC, Dean's Council, OHC, Management Team that coordinated University response.

### Other Protocols and Planning Documents

- Violence Response Protocol – prepared by DHSE, April 2007. It includes a Bomb Threat Check Sheet, examples of jobs and worksites at risk and actions to mitigate risk.
- Suicide / Emergency Response Protocol by Residence Department.
- Post Exercise Report – Emergency Preparedness Exercise Whirlwind. May 2005.
- Pandemic Influenza Planning – July 6, 2007.
- University of Alberta's Incident Command System.

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#### Advice of the National Centre for Higher Education Risk Management to “stop the madness”

“We are caught in a reactive mode, pinned by fear and deluged by services, contractors, consultants, devices, gadgets and gizmos assuring they can protect us...investments in these will make us feel safe, not make us safe...we need to press behavioural intervention as an institutional priority...for prevention.”

– The National Centre for Higher Education Risk Management

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## Themes/Concerns from Review of University Practices

Most campuses have comprehensive emergency measures plans in place; however, in almost all cases, serious obstacles exist, such as:

- It is a major challenge to keep plans current.
- Not enough time is spent in training and simulations.
- Adequate mass communication systems are not available or not effective.
- It is often difficult to get the involvement of colleges and units (because of other priorities and low likelihood of a major incident occurring).
- There are challenges concerning evacuations, lockdown procedures and communication.
- It is a challenge to establish clear lines of authority and determine roles.
- None have enough focus on prevention: identification and intervention.
- Universities in Ontario have commissioned a study so that they can appeal to government for budget to enhance security and communications systems.

## Best Practices for Prevention and Response

Historically, campuses have a tendency to focus most of their energies on response. Best practices indicate the need for a more balanced approach, incorporating more tactics aimed at the prevention of critical incidents.

### Best Practices for Prevention

- Educate faculty and staff regarding the warning signs of potentially violent (including potentially suicidal) individuals, and whom to contact if they have concerns.
- Focus on conduct (or words), NOT on stereotypes, fears, predictions or “profiles.”
- Encourage people to report concerns regarding class- or work-mates who they think may be in distress or at risk of harming themselves or others.
- Make it very clear to whom and how such concerns should be reported.
- Provide support and professional help to those in distress.
- Connect the dots! Communicate across organizational boundaries. Integrate and elevate preventative measures.
- Create a “Case Conference Group” or “Student Care Team” that meets regularly to review and share information regarding at-risk students, and organize intervention plans.
- Investigate changes to refine our cross-functional Threat Assessment Team.
- Provide Team members and other key individuals with threat assessment training.
- Ensure that all those involved have opportunities to exchange information and be involved in a coordinated response strategy (and broader interpretations of confidentiality).
- Develop heightened protocol and responses for dealing with reports of violence (to limit chance they will evolve into major emergencies).

- Ensure policies prohibit possession of firearms on campus (unless formally authorized by campus officials).
- Train for responding to violent incidents including active shooters (in conjunction with Police in our case).

### Best Practices for Response

- Update Emergency Response Plan, train for and practice the plan regularly (at least annually).
- Improve and streamline campus communication systems and processes.
- Establish clear lines of communication and decision-making, including emergency response instructions.
- Issue immediate warnings: inform campus community what you know as soon as you know it (using pre-determined messages).
- Ensure key decision-makers (including Campus Safety) have the ability and authority to communicate with the whole campus in emergency situations.
- Utilize multiple communication channels (website, announcements, e-mail, instant messaging, radios, PA systems where they exist, voice mail, VOIP capabilities, bullhorns, message boards, sirens, printed warnings, etc.).
- Plan for media intrusion if a major event occurs.
- Identify steps that can be taken to lock down or evacuate key portions of campus.
- Train administrators and response personnel in Incident Command processes and establish a fully equipped Command Centre which includes capacity for handling high volumes of incoming telephone traffic.

### A Benchmark Survey

To increase the focus on prevention, particularly with troubled students, the best approach is improved counselling, intervention, and early warning systems. The following information is from a survey by CUCCA (Canadian University and College Counselling Association) completed in 2006 (2004-2005 data) by 65 post-secondary institutions in Canada.

- Overall mean ratio of counsellors/students (across all types and sizes of institutions) is one counsellor/1,791 students.
- Based on this ratio, post-secondary institutions of our size (18,500 - 20,000 students) would have 10.33 – 11.17 FTE counsellors.
- The actual mean FTE's for post-secondary institutions with 15,000 – 25,000 students is 9.73; the median is 11.75.

Current U of S Counselling staff level is made up of 5.5 FTE positions for Clinical Counselling (5.3 FTE base budget, 0.2 FTE provisional registered practicum), plus 1.0 FTE for Counselling Outreach, and 0.3 FTE Administration.

# Assessment of Key Strengths and Weaknesses

## What is Working

### Response to Crises

- The University is better prepared to deal with high-risk, organization-wide (“macro”) crises than individual “human” critical incidents (“micro”) crises.
- Overall, the University has a good record of responding to safety and security crises.
- Once decisions are made, operations are effective and outcomes are positive.
- The University is committed and has the expertise to be effective in critical incident response.
- We possess high levels of good will and strong individual contributors.

### Incident Command

- Campus Safety is seen as first responder in most cases, especially for people (as opposed to physical) issues.
- First responders are generally excellent – they are responsive, professional, knowledgeable and effective.
- Campus Safety officers are trained in the Incident Command Model and use it effectively.
- Saskatoon Police Service serves as an alternate first responder and have an effective working relationship with Campus Safety.

### Understanding and Acceptance of Theory Behind Policies and Protocols

- Leaders/Deans look to knowledgeable resource people, rather than policies/protocols, for directions (this usually works well).
- Central Operating Units are more knowledgeable of and rely somewhat more on formal policies and procedures.
- Violence and threat assessment protocols are good in theory, although less effective in practice.

### Some Aspects of Communication

- The USASK Website has excellent potential and was invaluable during the blizzard and the strike.
- PAWS and campus-wide e-mail are very effective (except for those not at computers).
- Coordination of accurate and up-to-date information is generally shared well.
- Confidential issues remain confidential as appropriate.
- Communications within departments is effective.

### Structure and Roles Within Departments

- Consumer Services staff are to be commended for their response in crisis situations.

- The physical security of animal facilities is good – the Animal Care Committee is responsible, committed and effective.
- There is strong support for HSEMS (the Health, Safety, Environment Management System).
- Student Advocacy Network has been a rich and effective resource.
- Student judicial processes have dealt effectively with most non-academic conduct issues (but policy needs to be, and is being, revised).
- Recent improvements have been made to staff resources (e.g. Health and Wellness, Mediation Services, EAP and HR Consulting role for prevention).

## What is Not Working (or Missing)

### Better Equipped to Respond Than Prevent

While the University is better prepared to deal with larger, organization-wide events, we are not well prepared to deal with increasing frequency and complexity of mental health-related issues (students and staff) that have potential to escalate. The issues that are most likely to occur, and which employees feel the least equipped to deal with include:

- mental health related issues
- issues or cases that “fly under the radar”
- student/staff harassment and/or threats
- verbal outbursts/physical violence
- suicide threats/attempts, etc.

### Lack of Clarity in Authority/Decision Making

- There is lack of clarity in some quarters regarding who should be contacted first, and who these “first contacts” should inform. Campus Safety and Police not always contacted as first responders.
- It is unclear who has the authority to “declare” an incident as an emergency, or who escalates an incident to invoke a crisis response or emergency measure.
- There is lack of clarity regarding roles, responsibilities and authority for decision-making, which leads to delays and confusion (e.g. who has the decision-making authority to “close” or open the institution, or cancel classes).

### Too Many and/or Ineffective Policies, Procedures and/or Protocols

- The large number of policies, procedures and protocols cause confusion and duplication of effort.
- Too many people have been involved in threat assessment and response, their roles and purposes are not clear, and duplication of effort has led to over-reaction and/or conflict.
- Many staff and units are experiencing “crisis planning fatigue.”
- There is a general lack of awareness of/compliance with existing policies and procedures.
- Leaders/Deans are unaware of or confused about policies and procedures.

- Central operating units are more knowledgeable regarding formal policies and procedures, but feel they are difficult to find and are uncertain whether they are current.
- There is no clear process for the reporting of aberrant, dangerous or threatening behaviour including:
  - clear standards of expected conduct across campus
  - clear understanding of what actions can/should be taken

### Responsibility and Accountability for Crises Prevention and Response is Fragmented

- Corporate Administration – emergency planning and preparedness.
- Department of Campus Safety – critical incidence response in most cases.
- Department of Health, Safety and Environment – violence prevention planning and threat assessment, and response to physical incidents.
- University Secretary and Associate Vice-President, SESD – student (non-academic) misconduct issues.
- Student Health and Counselling (SESD) – individual students in distress/crisis situations.
- Human Resources (with appropriate administrators) – staff conduct.
- Employee Assistance Programming (EAP) – staff counselling.
- Discrimination and Harassment Prevention – student and staff harassment/discrimination situations.
- Unit leaders and supervisors – limited understanding of their roles/responsibilities for crises prevention and response and risk management.

### Number and Nature of Committees

- There are too many committees that deal with risk, safety, threat assessment, and so on – their work is not integrated – accountabilities are unclear.
- Of most concern is the Threat Assessment Team, there is critical need for improvement:
  - individual threat assessment/management is not most effectively dealt with through a large committee
  - too many and/or not always the right people are involved
  - there is confusion/lack of clarity regarding who should participate and in what circumstances
  - there is uncertainty regarding authority and decision-making
  - the right skills and experience are not always at the table

### Communications Strategy

- Organizational and technical problems are sometimes confused (roles, responsibilities, how messages are to be communicated, what technology is available).
- Clarification regarding the role of University Communications is required: to what extent should they be assessing risks and participating in decision-making versus developing communication strategies and/or advising on the appropriate level of staff communications depending on the situation.

- It is particularly challenging to effectively alert/communicate with non-University entities on campus.
- Our organizational culture does not take risks seriously and fosters an “it can’t happen here” mentality.
- The process of sanitizing messages to create a positive spin risks delaying communications to the campus community. There is tension between “giving the facts” versus “giving things a positive spin to protect the University’s image.”
- We need to have messages for various scenarios ready in advance.
- Campus Safety and/or administrative officials currently cannot send emergency messages without getting appropriate approvals.
- Communication across departments is ineffective.
- Many do not know who to contact and information is not coordinated.
- Lockdowns and building evacuations cannot be applied consistently because primary building contacts have not been identified and collected in a central location.
- Lines of authority, processes and communications are typically according to organizational structures rather than by buildings.

### Communications Technology

- There needs to be a single known and authoritative place to get accurate information.
- More effective technology, such as a link on the University’s home page, is required to communicate to an entire campus.
- Text messaging is receiving a lot of attention and discussion, however there is no or little evidence that it is an effective mechanism for communicating and is not recommended at this time.
- A mechanism is required to clear a building or return people to buildings.
- We need to take better advantage of existing technology (i.e. two-way radios, ‘cross-channel’ radio communications).
- Up-to-date organizational structures must be made available to staff and faculty, including contact lists and protocols for each college and unit.
- Key ‘front-line’ people (e.g. switchboard, student central, ITS help desk) are often not kept informed and need appropriate messaging to deliver to their callers.

### Structure, Roles and Responsibilities

- There is lack of clarity regarding accountabilities, levels of authority, role overlap, confusion, duplication and unequal or inadequate resource levels.
  - Role of President, VP and AVP’s with respect to cross-functional operations and institution-wide decision making
  - Roles and authorities of Deans/Department Heads/Directors/Managers
  - Roles and responsibilities of University Advancement Communications staff

## Resources

- Employees feel least equipped to deal with mental health issues involving students or employees, an area with increased incidents reported.
  - We do not have enough qualified counsellors for our student population relative to other comparable institutions
  - There is a lack of adequate counselling resources to respond to emergent student situations “on-site” or outside of regular business hours
  - There is a gap in after-hours resources to provide professional support for students in crisis, especially for those students living in Residence
- Leadership training and improved coordination between units is needed to achieve improvements to staff conduct issues.
- Additional new roles and responsibilities require that the role of Risk Manager needs to be clarified, reduced and/or resources increased.

## Training

- Training is currently provided with serious gaps and in an ad-hoc or insufficient way.
- Campus Safety has no training budget, so can't take advantage of training opportunities.
- Training priorities that are not being addressed include:
  - Preparatory training for critical incidents/emergencies for select front-line employees, UEOC
  - Incident command training for Deans, Senior Administration and Department Heads
  - “Table-top” simulation exercises (especially for large-scale incidents)
  - Dealing with and coordinating responses regarding individual cases
  - Threat Assessment Training
  - Violence prevention and assessment
  - Victim support and service
  - Sensitivity training for Campus Safety Dispatchers and Officers, especially for mental health related incidents/emergencies
- Health, Safety and Environment training programs are seen as ‘dry’ and ineffective by some.

## Summary of Findings

The University of Saskatchewan is currently better prepared for large- than small-scale incidents. Work must continue in the area of practicing our responses, but more effort should be directed toward prevention with the goal of creating a better balance between the two. More effort is also required to learn how to manage mental health issues, as they are growing in frequency and complexity. Here also, a balance should be struck between behavioural (preventative) and security (response) approaches.

Organizational and human challenges require the most emphasis, as we are technically well equipped. Continued role clarification, resource identification and restructuring will be essential. We need to share information and concerns, coordinate responses, integrate and elevate attention to these critical issues.

## Recommendations

### Priority #1

#### Create an Operational Risk Management Committee:

This Committee will be initially chaired by the Vice-President Finance and Resources and will be the Operating Committee that supports the [current Enterprise Risk Management Framework and Emergency Measures Planning](#). The purpose of the Committee is to bring together the Associate Vice-Presidents and Directors of key colleges and units to identify and prioritize operational risks and assign and monitor accountability to address those risks. This Committee should have as its initial priority to assign accountability for the recommendations of this report.

### Priority #2

#### Implement new Conceptual Framework:

The Conceptual Framework shown on page 7 of this report provides a contextual understanding of the different types of critical incident/crises situations that may occur. This leads to a better understanding of the best response to an incident and/or when the University should escalate an incident to a crisis. The Framework also highlights the need for increased attention to prevention.

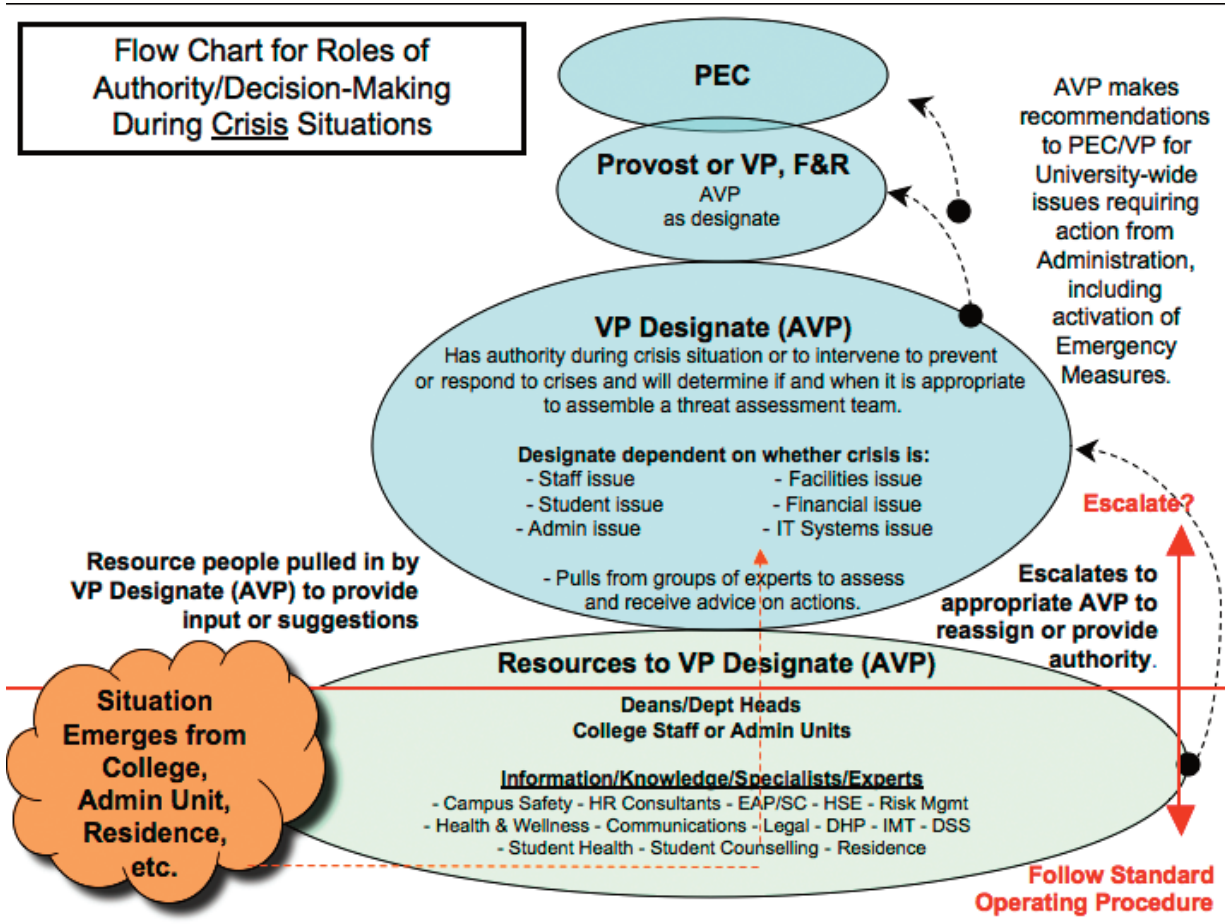
The Conceptual Framework leads to the awareness of the need to improve governance and authority structures, which must be capable of changing according to the needs of the University campus and community. The Framework also provides guidance for the improvement of policies, communications strategy and technology, structure, role clarity, committees, resources and training.

Further development and re-evaluation of the Conceptual Framework will continue to improve the methods by which we identify and assess crises. It will also help to strengthen our ability to deliver an appropriate organizational response.

#### Review and execute new governance/authority structure:

Through application of the Conceptual Framework, more appropriate and effective prevention and response can be determined through the governance model developed on the following page. Someone needs to be 'in charge' in critical situations that affect the whole campus. Improved accountability to Senior Administration and the Board is also required – without a need for their involvement in operational level (micro management). Decisions regarding cancelling classes/sending people home, etc. must be made in a centralized, institution-wide manner and not left to individual colleges or units.

- The authority to determine which type of action is required and whether or not to escalate a situation will be vested in this new structure.
- Communication and education is required on the various situations where the decision-making should be escalated to the “designated decision-maker,” and on how this escalation process should take place.
- For events that affect the entire campus, the University needs to clarify who has the responsibility and authority for deciding whether classes should be cancelled, staff sent home and/or non-critical operations reduced. In addition, clear processes need to be developed for communicating these decisions/actions in a timely manner to affected areas of the campus, or the campus as a whole.



- Deans, Department Heads and Administrative Unit leaders should be provided with a concise summary of critical incident and emergency response plans and processes, including information regarding who should be contacted if a critical incident or emergency occurs. This information should be provided in both print and online versions, and updated at least annually.
- Critical operations and services should develop and maintain emergency and contingency plans to support their role during emergency.
- In addition to our existing crisis response plans, the University should develop plans that outline actions/responses according to the campus' physical layout (i.e. building-based rather than organizational structure-based plan), as many colleges and units are spread across multiple buildings on campus. Such plans would be similar to our current fire evacuation plans, and should be developed, and possibly led by, key building contacts (in consultation with FMD and Campus Safety).
- Meetings/discussions regarding particular crisis/critical incidents should generally be held on "neutral" ground, rather than in the affected unit/area, especially if there is a possibility of significant impact on other students or staff.

#### Renew centralized, institution-wide, decision-making for crisis response:

In critical incident/crises situations that affect (or have the potential to affect) the whole campus (or significant parts of it), decisions must be made in a centralized, institution-wide manner, rather than leaving decision-making to individual colleges or administration units. Someone needs to be "in charge" in such situations.

- Critical incident/crisis situations that need to be escalated to the institutional level should be reported to a member (or members) of the AVP Group, which should serve as the key group to manage and respond to such incidents. The AVP(s) will identify and bring in additional resource persons as necessary, depending on the nature of the incident.
- Senior decision-makers need to systematically appoint "acting" designates when away. Problems exist regarding what to do if key people/decision-makers are away. "Back-up" people or designates need to be identified in advance.
- The University needs clear and consistent methods for responding to critical incidents, crises and threats (including student threats). This includes clear responsibility and authority for decision-making and for taking actions to respond to and limit threats.

#### Revise approach to policy development:

There are currently more than 20 existing U of S Policies, Plans, Protocols and Guidelines on the subject of crisis prevention and response (see pages 8 and 9). Recommendations include:

- Develop a set of principles and values that will guide decision-making during critical incident/crises situations. Consider consolidating these into one "business continuity plan" for response that combines emergency, pandemic, labour contingency, systems, etc.
- Review and reduce number of policies and plans and ensure policies support prevention:
  - Expected standards of conduct must be clear
  - There must be a means to recognize and assist staff and students in distress
  - A University authority must appropriately intervene if someone poses a threat or danger to themselves or others

- There must be a requirement, when necessary, to report dangerous/threatening behaviour to appropriate resources, counselling and students’ parents
- We must work toward zero tolerance of firearms and other weapons on campus
- We need to develop a mechanism by which disruptive, violent or at-risk students can be temporarily prevented from attending classes until other longer-term solutions can be put in place (similar to staff responses)
- We need to establish procedures for centralized record keeping with respect to student and staff threats or a potential for violence
- Insubordination and misconduct must not be confused with, or treated as, academic quality issues
- A student “care team” should be developed, incorporating representation from SESD, Campus Safety, Colleges, Residence and others

#### Continue, stop, start or integrate relevant committees:

- Review and reduce the number of safety committees based on new decision-making principles and values.
- Train and empower key individuals to take actions such as:
  - Reviewing and recommending policy
  - Educating the community to improve prevention
  - Gathering background information
  - Identifying additional dangerous warning signs
  - Assessing and stabilizing threat-potential risk levels (0-10)
  - Contributing information for hearings
  - Disseminating warning information

### Priority #3

#### Redefine structure and roles/responsibilities:

- Approval must be attained for suggested changes to the Department of Health, Safety and Environment, including the role and placement of the Community Safety Officer Position, as well as clarifications to the role of Discrimination, Harassment and Prevention Services.
- Responsibility for decision-making regarding managing/responding to individual situations/critical incidents (involving students or staff) should be clarified, especially the roles of the Dean or Administration Unit Head and the relevant AVP. The role and authority of Deans in managing and responding to and making decisions regarding student or staff “critical incidents” needs to be clarified.
- The role of University Communications should be clarified, particularly with respect to when they should become involved in dealing with a critical incident/crisis situation and what their role should be in helping to manage/respond to these situations.
- The role of the Manager, Risk Management and Insurance Services must be clarified and communicated, as there are varying thoughts on the role this person plays in a crisis, particularly one involving individual staff/student situations.

- Strengthen relationships and the sense of “team” among those who will be called to respond in crises/critical incident situations.

## Priority #4

### Propose resources in key areas:

- \* The number, complexity and severity of mental health situations is increasing at all universities. Early detection, referral and treatment is critical for people showing signs of violence and/or mental illness.
- Improvements must be made to the Student and Enrolment Services Division (SESD) Student Health and Counselling Services, including adding staff resources, making provisions for providing counselling support at crisis sites (which has been identified as a need in several areas), and improving services outside normal operating hours (note: U of S Student Counselling staff levels are significantly lower than national averages for institutions of our size).
- Victim services professionals should be included in the planning, training and execution of crises response plans.
- Emergency management plans should include a section on victim services that addresses the significant impact of homicide and other disaster-caused death on survivors and the role of victim services providers in the overall plan.
- Improved access to culturally competent mental health services and adequate resources for specialized, professional assessment services (i.e. violence/forensic assessment) for both staff and students needs to be jointly coordinated through Human Resources and SESD.

## Priority #5

### Develop an ongoing communications strategy:

- The first phase should be to develop a communications plan to roll out the results of the crisis assessment process and recommendations – this in itself creates increased awareness. Some of this has been completed already through two presentations to key stakeholders before this report was finalized.
- Similar to the Campus Safety campaign, communications should be developed to remind everyone at the University of the protocol – who to call – in the event of a minor or major crisis. The Department of Campus Safety can monitor ongoing communications to determine if general awareness communications should be increased – when there isn’t a crisis.
- The overall communication strategy during a crisis should be developed using the same Framework and authority structure developed above.
- Mechanisms need to be developed for the sharing of critical information across departments and disciplines in situations of risk and/or possible threat is critical. Critical information sharing faces significant obstacles: Education officials, healthcare providers, law enforcement personnel, and others are not fully informed about when they can share critical information on persons who are likely to be a danger to self or others, and the resulting confusion may chill legitimate information sharing.

- The level of communication required in critical incident or crises situation should be determined by the severity and scope of the crisis with increasing input from central communications experts as warranted by the Conceptual Framework, based on the severity and magnitude of the situation. For small scale, low severity incidents, broad communication is likely not necessary and may escalate a situation or negatively affect a timely response (based on feedback re: current Threat Assessment Protocol).
- The University should continue to work to ensure that it has adequate plans to set up an information/communications “command” centre and a media centre during major incidents on campus. The outside resources that are available and the means for obtaining their assistance quickly should be made available. Management of the media and of self-directed volunteers should be included. The location should be predetermined.
- Campus Safety, as well as key administrative officials, should have the authority and capability to send emergency messages when needed. Our system currently requires that the Threat Assessment Team make this decision, and then it MUST be approved by the Director of Communications. Neither Campus Safety or Senior Administrative personnel have the ability to send out notices to the broad University community.
- A known, high-profile place to get authoritative, accurate and up-to-date information is required – and not just for full scale emergencies. We recommend that a dedicated web site (linked from the U of S home page and PAWS) be created to carry the most current and up-to-date information for staff and students. This should be set up as the authoritative source of information with contacts as appropriate and links to all of the University Resources (to replace the Sensitive Issues Brochure).
- A central site should be developed to post bulletins concerning college operations during an emergency and all colleges should know the location and procedure for using the site.
- It is important that we clarify our responsibilities under the Province’s FOI legislation regarding the sharing of personal information, and especially the circumstances under which it is appropriate to contact a student’s (or staff member’s) family with respect to threat-related or critical incident situations that occur on our campus.

#### Develop communications messages with clear content and purpose:

- In emergency situations, immediate, pre-prepared messages must be developed and sent to the broad campus community that provide clear information regarding the nature of the emergency and actions to be taken. The tendency to soften, sanitize or “spin” messages has delayed the communication of critical information in some situations. It is critical that key information be communicated to the campus community quickly, in a no-nonsense method, and that this information be relevant and to the point, not candy-coated. All key facts should be included in an alerting message and it should be disseminated as quickly as possible, with explicit information. The initial messages should be followed up by update messages as more information becomes known.
- Recipients of emergency messages should be urged to inform others.
- Managers and human resource specialists now engaged in communications must identify and design communications processes, recognizing the difference between crisis management and crisis communication. Crisis management is the response process where decisions and actions originate. Crisis communications is the process to make all stakeholders aware of these decisions and expectations.

### Efficiently utilize existing communications operations and technology:

- When issuing e-mail or other communications to the University community that may generate significant numbers of return telephone or e-mail inquiries, there needs to be a call-back number to a separate “Information Centre,” not to Campus Safety dispatch. This requires that a call centre be made available on short notice and that it be adequately staffed. We recommend that University Advancement’s call centre be equipped to handle large numbers of incoming calls, and be used for emergency situations. The decision of who should field calls and the protocol for accessing the space will need to be made very clear for all involved in advance of any emergency.
- We need to identify and make readily available to those managing critical incident/crisis situations a variety of communication methods (e.g. e-mail, PAWS announcements, telephone, large screen tv’s, text messaging, etc.), and establish better ways to coordinate these various methods of communication during emergency situations.
- We need to create a set of easily accessible emergency e-mail lists/systems and “calling tree” lists for employees involved in responding to/managing critical incident/emergency situations. These could be created by unit and/or building, could be web-based, and need to be systematically updated.

### Priority #6

#### Implement appropriate training in crisis prevention and response:

- Train for crisis prevention and response as a leadership imperative
  - Universities should do a risk analysis (threat assessment) and then choose a level of security appropriate for their campus. How far to go in safeguarding campuses, and from which threats, needs to be considered by each institution. Security requirements vary across universities, and each must do its own threat assessment to determine what security measures are appropriate.
  - We can systematically review and learn from crises experienced and avoided by our own campus and faced by other organizations.
  - We must make sure the crisis management team is trained to handle a series of broad-ranging and often unanticipated crises.
- Hold tabletop simulation/drills on an annual basis
  - Yearly regional disaster drills should be held involving all stakeholders (city, hospital, police, etc). The University Emergency Measures Planning Committee (UEMPC) should investigate possible options, including alternate routes, to address evacuation if campus exits and/or College Drive are blocked due to large, UEM-type disasters or smaller, individual threat situations.
- Train regularly for critical incident response
  - Clearer protocols, directions and training is required – what to do if a critical incident/crisis occurs in the workplace (i.e. physical violence, weapon, yelling, etc.). This is especially required for “front-line” individuals and units, and those in high profile and vulnerable physical spaces.
- Train for mental health situations

- Mental health-related issues and incidents (student and staff) are increasing in frequency and becoming more complicated; the University is not positioned to effectively and efficiently deal with these cases. It is suggested that a plan for training, education, communication and response for dealing with mental health situations (tied to the University's single crisis escalation plan) be developed. This would include preventative steps/training to prepare our employees to identify potential or warning situations.
- Obstacles to critical info sharing need to be reduced. Learnings from Virginia Tech and other tragedies indicate a need for coordination and sharing of information that may traditionally be seen as "confidential." This information needs to be shared on a need-to-know basis. All staff should know who to contact in the first instance if they have concerns about such situations, and they need to know what steps to take, and who they need to involve to pull together threat assessment or critical incident teams, etc.
- Campus Safety dispatchers need to be trained to identify issues that should be escalated, as well as to recognize mental health or violent situations that may require outside assistance (City Police, Mobile Counselling Services).
- Train to deliver appropriate communications
  - Students, faculty and staff should be informed annually about responding to various emergencies and about the notification system that will be used. An annual reminder provided as part of registration should be considered. No training is currently provided. The Campus Safety Plan has an initiative to train faculty and staff who are in decision-making positions in basic Incident Command training. This needs to be expanded and developed.
- Train for lockdowns
  - We need to develop a consistent lockdown process and train the community (expanding on current fire warden system).
- Train for handling active shooters
  - The Saskatoon Police train officers for responding to active shooters. Joint training initiatives are recommended for both Saskatoon Police and Campus Safety.
  - Campus Police should also train for active shooters (as did the Virginia Tech Police Department). Experience has shown that waiting for a SWAT team can cost lives. While Campus Safety currently observes Saskatoon Police training, our officers are not armed and cannot directly participate in active shooter scenarios. Our role is to staff the perimeter only.
  - Saskatoon Police use a 'rapid deployment' system requiring a team of five officers that can be assembled in 10 minutes. This team assesses the situation and decides whether to enter the scene. The Emergency Response Team (EMT) responds in a minimum of 60 to 70 minutes. Past practice tells us that our officers, with the proper training, could be deployed in less time.

## Summary and Next Steps

Through this exercise, we learned we are better prepared for large- than small-scale incidents. We also learned that we must work toward achieving balance between our efforts in prevention and our response practices. A similar type of balance will be beneficial when managing mental health issues as they grow in frequency and complexity.

Organizational and human challenges require the most emphasis, as we are technically well equipped. Continued role clarification, resource identification and restructuring will be essential. We need to share information and concerns, and coordinate responses.

Through our knowledge of the issues facing us (gained by developing the Conceptual Framework), and through our understanding of the current governance and crisis management model at the U of S, combined with an identification of best practices, we have developed and prioritized the following list of recommendations, some of which can be acted on concurrently:

### Priority #1

- Create an Operational Risk Management Committee

### Priority #2

- Implement the new Conceptual Framework
- Review and execute the new governance/authority structure
- Renew centralized, institution-wide decision-making for crisis response
- Revise approach to policy development
- Continue, stop, start or integrate relevant committees

### Priority #3

- Redefine structure and roles/responsibilities

### Priority #4

- Propose resources in key areas

### Priority #5

- Develop an ongoing communications strategy
- Develop communications messages with clear content and purpose
- Efficiently utilize existing communications operations and technology

### Priority #6

- Implement appropriate training in crisis prevention and response