



THE FIRST 72 HOURS AFTER A DIFFICULT CALL

Supervisor & Owner Quick-Reference Checklist

Some calls stay with you. What happens after the call matters too.

0–24 HOURS | Stabilize & Check In

- Confirm the operator is physically safe and has returned from the scene.
- Give them time to decompress before pushing paperwork or operational details.
- Ask: **“How are you doing right now?”** Then listen.
- Do not pressure them to describe graphic or personal details.
- Discuss whether they feel able to continue working or would prefer to go home.
- If they should not drive, arrange a safe way home.
- Complete required incident reporting without turning the process into an interrogation.
- Give them a clear point of contact and let them know you will check in again.
- Provide Beyond the Call / professional-resource information.

24–48 HOURS | Follow Up & Watch

- Check in again — do not wait for the operator to reach out first.
- Ask how they are sleeping, concentrating and feeling about returning to work.
- Remember: **“I’m fine” does not always mean “I don’t need support.”**
- Offer reasonable flexibility with dispatches, duties or shifts where practical.
- Watch for major changes in behaviour, isolation, anger, distress or difficulty functioning.
- Do not minimize the event with comparisons such as “I’ve seen worse.”
- Encourage professional support if they are struggling or want to talk to someone.

48–72 HOURS | Continue Support

- Complete another private, one-on-one check-in.
- Ask: **“How are you doing now compared with the first day?”**
- Discuss whether returning to normal duties feels manageable.
- Continue reasonable workplace support or accommodations where appropriate.
- Provide professional-resource information again — even if they declined it earlier.
- Document support provided while respecting privacy and company requirements.
- Schedule another follow-up. **72 hours is not the end of the process.**

AVOID

- Pressuring them to talk
- Telling them to “toughen up”
- Assuming everyone reacts the same way
- Treating time off as the only solution
- Promising absolute confidentiality if you cannot provide it

REMEMBER

- **Listen more than you speak.**
- Reactions can change over the days and weeks after an incident.
- You do not need to diagnose the operator.
- You can support them without trying to be their therapist.
- If there is an immediate safety or crisis concern, connect them with appropriate emergency or crisis support.

THE CALL MAY BE OVER. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE OPERATOR DOESN'T HAVE TO BE.

This checklist is a practical workplace support tool, not a diagnostic or clinical assessment. Use your organization's policies and applicable professional, emergency and occupational-health resources when needed.