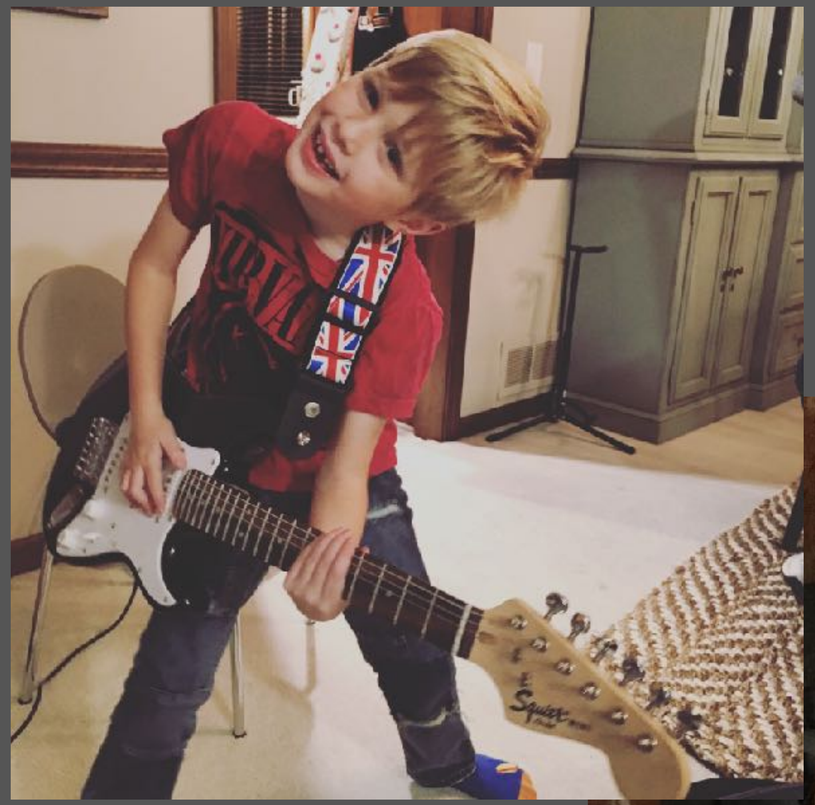
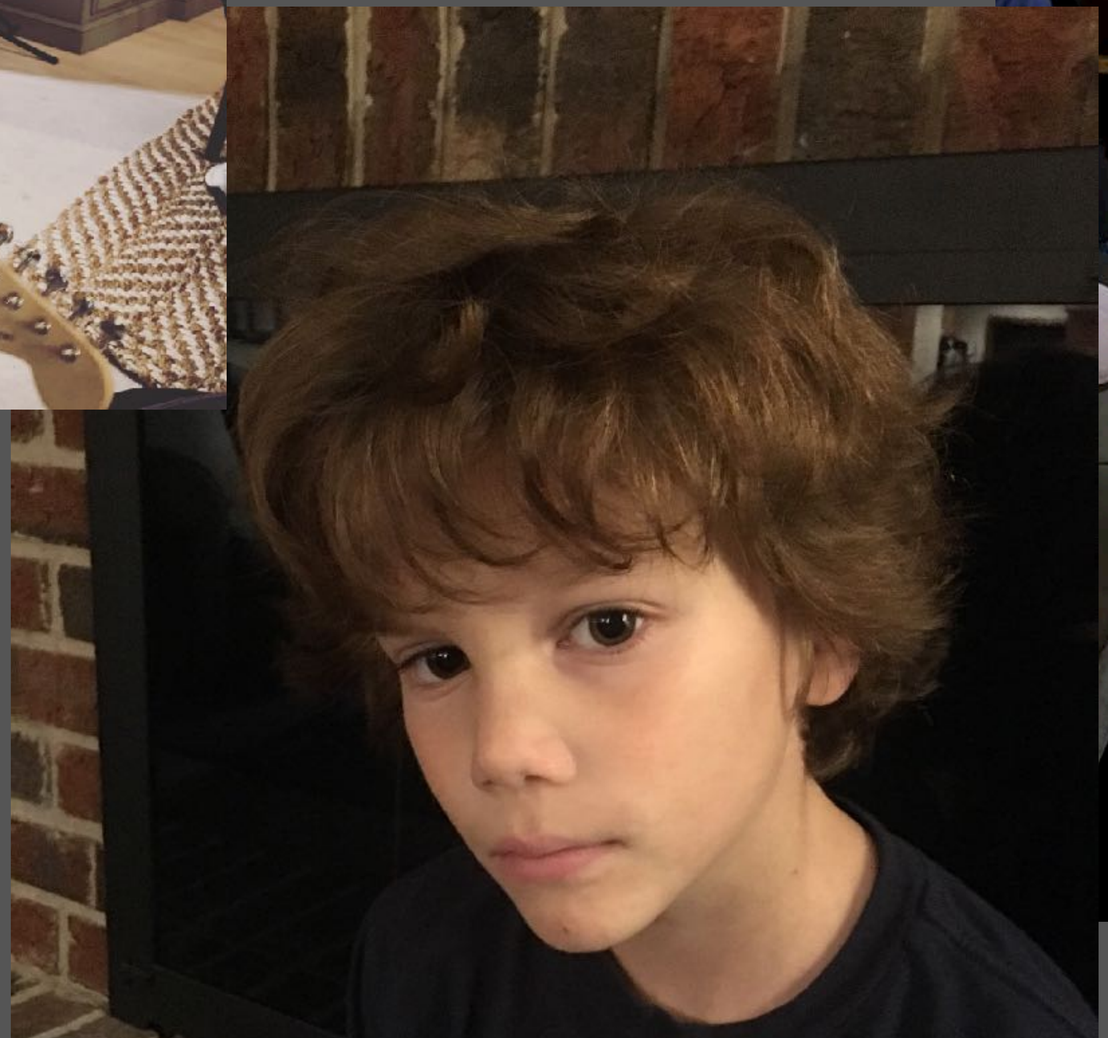
pagerduty

Incidents & Accidents

Matty Stratton, DevOps Evangelist, PagerDuty

@mattstratton





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Disclaimer, part the first: Learn from other industries, do not take on their stresses.

Disclaimer, part the second: This is a topic with a surprisingly large number of details.

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Before, during, after

Before

Have criteria defined for when to have and not have a call.

Any unplanned disruption or degradation of service that is actively affecting customers' ability to use the product.

Post incident criteria widely. Don’t litigate during a call.

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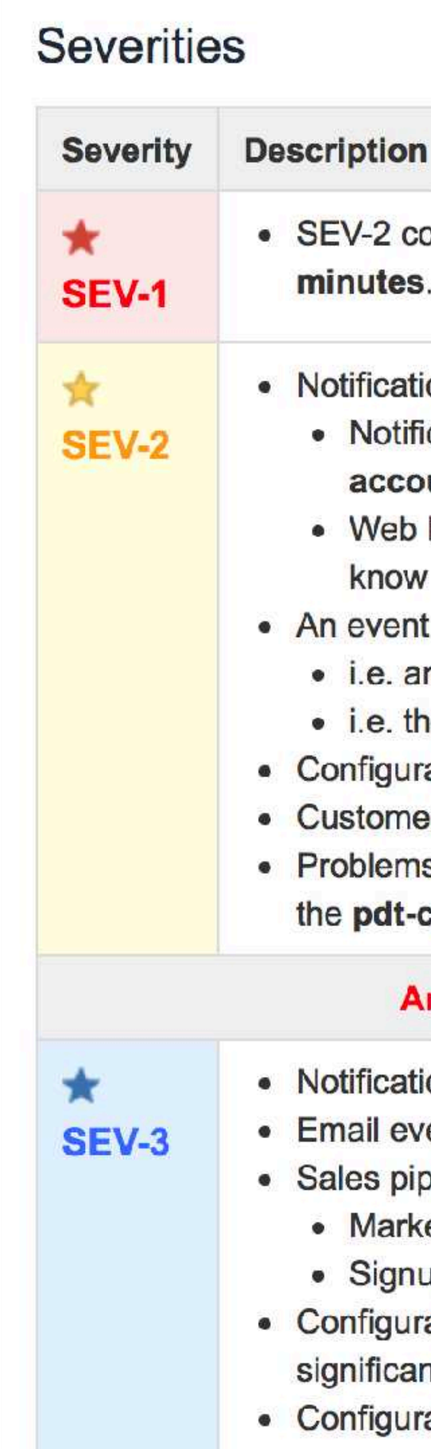


Severities

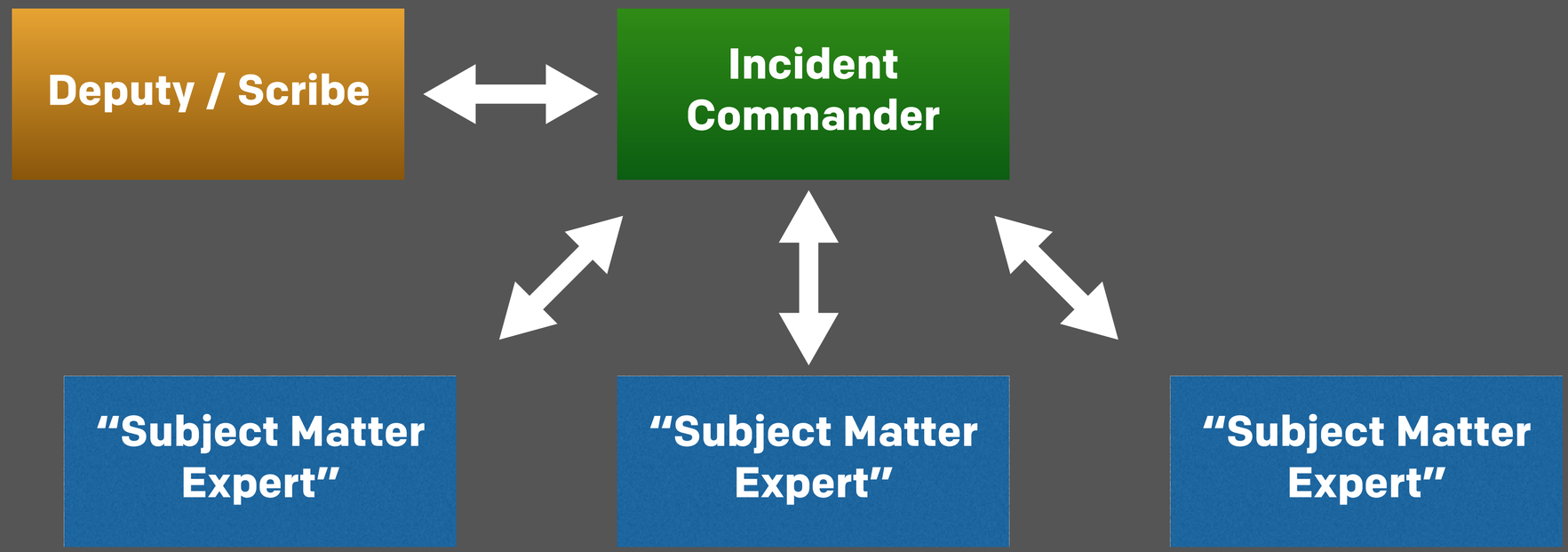
Severity	Description
SEV-1	• SEV-2 co **minutes**
SEV-2	• Notificati • Notifi **accou** • Web know • An event • i.e. ar • i.e. th • Configura • Custome • Problems the **pdt-c**
A	
SEV-3	• Notificati • Email eve • Sales pip • Marke • Signu • Configura significan • Configura

Monitor the business criteria, and act accordingly.

People are expensive.

Practice still makes perfect.

“Know your role”


Deputy / Scribe
Incident Commander
“Subject Matter Expert”
“Subject Matter Expert”
“Subject Matter Expert”

Have a clear understanding of who is supposed to be involved in each role.

During

I'm Matty.

I'm the Incident Commander.

DON’T DO THIS

Let’s get the IC on the RC, then get a BLT for all the SME’s.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Clear is better than concise.

The IC becomes the highest authority.

(Yes, even higher than the CEO)

The IC manages the flow of conversation.

“Can someone...”

Rich, I'd like you to investigate the increased latency, try to find the cause. I'll come back to you in 5 minutes. Understood?

Understood.

Humor is best in context.

DT5: Roger that

GND: Delta Tug 5, you can go right on bravo

DT5: Right on bravo, taxi.

(...): Testing, testing. 1-2-3-4.

GND: Well, you can count to 4. It's a step in the right direction. Find another frequency to test on now.

(...): Sorry

Have a clear roster of who's been engaged.

Rally fast, disband faster.

Have a way to contribute information to the call.

Have a clear mechanism for making decisions.

“IC, I think we should do X”
“The proposed action is X,
is there any strong objection?”

Capture everything, and call out what's important now vs. later.

“One last thing...”
(Assign an owner at the end of an incident)

After

“After action reports”, “Postmortems”, “Learning Reviews”

The impact to people is a part of your incident review as well.

Record incident calls, review them afterwards.

Regularly review the incident process itself.

FD: “OK, why don’t, you gotta pass the data for the crew checklist anyway onboard, don't you?”

MC: “Right”

FD: “Don’tcha got a page update? Well why don't we read it up to them and that'll serve both purposes?”

MC: “Alright.”

FD: “Both that mattered as well as what page you want it in the checklist?”

MC: “OK.”

TELMU: "Flight, TELMU.”

FD: "Go TELMU.”

TELMU: "We show the LEM overhead hatch is closed, and the heater current looks normal.”

FD: "OK."

GUIDE: "Flight, Guidance."

FD: "Go Guidance"

GUIDE: "We've had a hardware restart, I don't know what it was."

FD: "GNC, you wanna look at it? See if you've seen a problem"

Lovell: "Houston, we've had a problem ..."

FD: "Rog, we're copying it CAPCOM, we see a hardware restart"

Lovell: "... Main B Bus undervolt"

FD: "You see an AC bus undervolt there guidance, er, ah, EECOM?"

EECOM: "Negative flight"

FD: "I believe the crew reported it."

???: "We got a main B undervolt"

EECOM: "OK flight we've got some instrumentation issues ... let me add em up”

FD: "Rog"

CAPCOM: "OK stand by 13 we're looking at it"

EECOM: "We may have had an instrumentation problem flight"

FD: "Rog"

INCO: "Flight, INCO”

FD: "Go INCO”

INCO: "We switched to wide beam about the time he had that problem"

Haise: "...the voltage is looking good. And we had a pretty large bang associated with the caution and warning there. And as I recall main B was the one that had had an amp spike on it once before."

FD: "OK"

CAPCOM: "Roger, Fred."

FD: "INCO, you said you went to wide beam with that?"

INCO: "Yes"

FD: "Let's see if we can correlate those times get the time when you went to wide-beam there INCO"

INCO: "OK"


APOLLO XIII
EX LUNA, SCIENTIA

Have structure in place beforehand

Practice, practice, practice

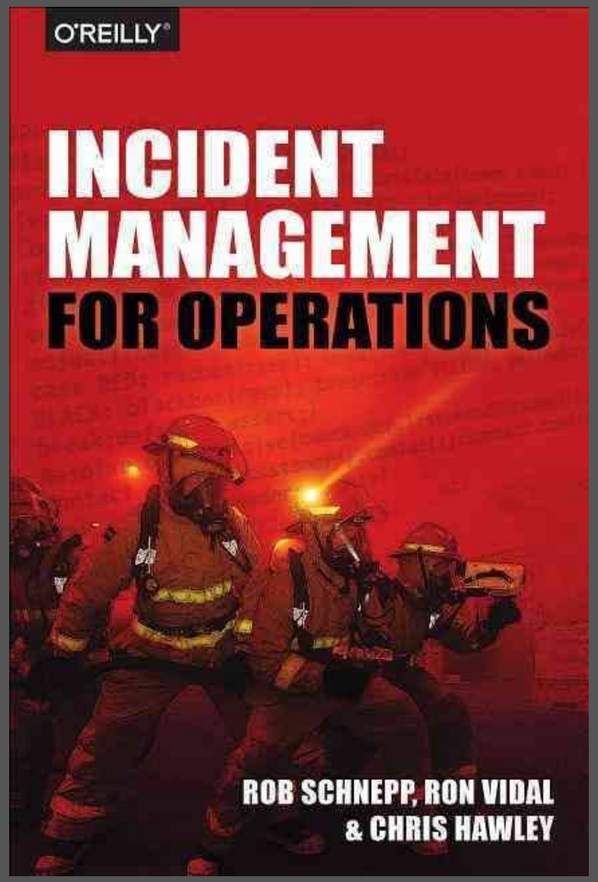
Have clearly delineated roles

Manage the conversation flow

Make clear decisions

Rally fast, disband faster

Review regularly


O'REILLY
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT FOR OPERATIONS
ROB SCHNEPP, RON VIDAL & CHRIS HAWLEY

Don’t panic.
Stay calm.
Calm people stay alive.

https://response.pagerduty.com

Credit: NASA

So you want to be an incident commander? You've come to the right place! You don't need to be a senior team member to become an IC, anyone can do it providing you have the requisite knowledge (yes, even an intern)!

Purpose

If you could boil down the definition of an Incident Commander to one sentence, it would be,

> *Take whatever actions are necessary to protect PagerDuty systems and customers.*

The purpose of the Incident Commander is to be the decision maker during an major incident; Delegating tasks and listening to input from subject matter experts in order to bring the incident to resolution.

The Incident Commander becomes the highest ranking individual on any major incident call, regardless of their day-to-day rank. Their decisions made as commander are final.

Your job as an IC is to listen to the call and to watch the incident Slack room in order to provide clear coordination, recruiting others to gather context/details. **You should not be performing any actions or remediations, checking graphs, or investigating logs.** Those tasks

Resources:

- Angry Air Traffic Controllers and Pilots - https://youtu.be/Zb5e4SzAkkI
- Blameless Post-Mortems (Etsy Code as Craft) - https://codeascraft.com/2012/05/22/blameless-postmortems/
- Incidents And Accidents: Examining Failure Without Blame (Arrested DevOps) - https://www.arresteddevops.com/blameless/
- PagerDuty Incident Response Process - https://response.pagerduty.com/

Thank you!

Questions?