

# Safety Incidents

## What do incident commanders tend to do?

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### Introduction

Incident Commanders play a key role in ensuring that safety incidents are managed effectively.

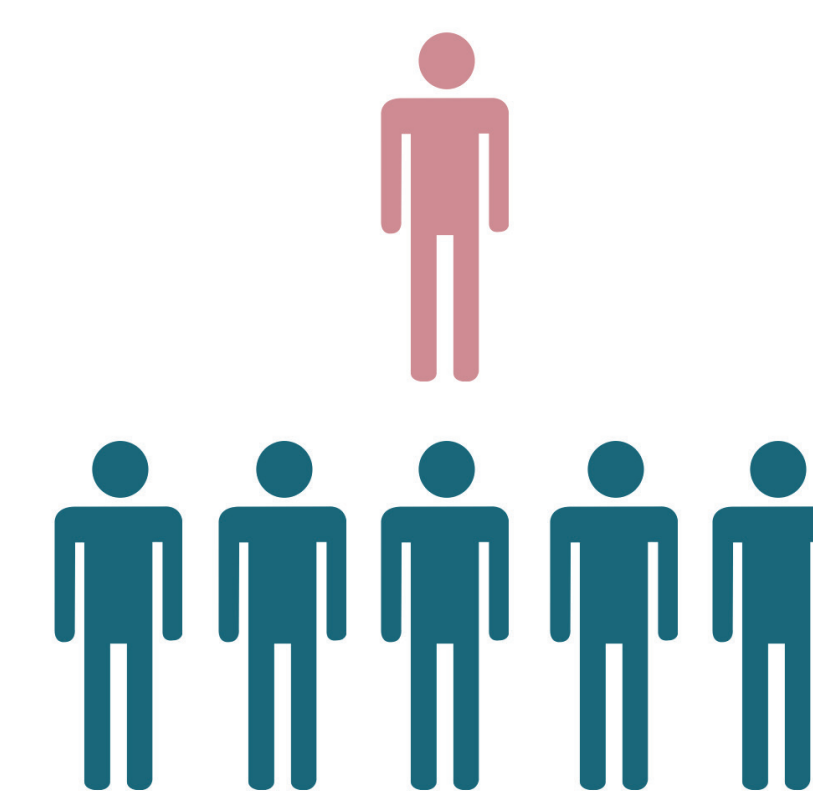


Morgeson's (2010) functional leadership framework provides a theoretical foundation to study team leadership.

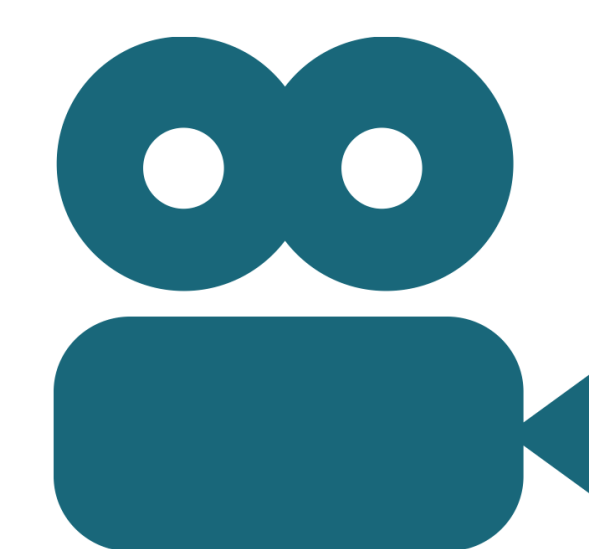
Transition Phase (Time-Out)	Action Phase (In between Time-Outs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compose team</li> <li>• Define mission</li> <li>• Train and develop team</li> <li>• Establish expectations and goals</li> <li>• Structure and plan</li> <li>• Sense making</li> <li>• Provide feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge team</li> <li>• Encourage team self-management</li> <li>• Perform team task</li> <li>• Solve problems</li> <li>• Monitor team</li> <li>• Manage team boundaries</li> <li>• Provide resources</li> <li>• Support social climate</li> </ul>

**Project Aim:** To gain initial insights into the critical functions that Incident Commanders perform for their teams in order to ensure effective incident management

### Methods



Ten real incident response teams underwent simulated training at ERGT Australia. Each of these teams had a designated leader and 5-6 group members.



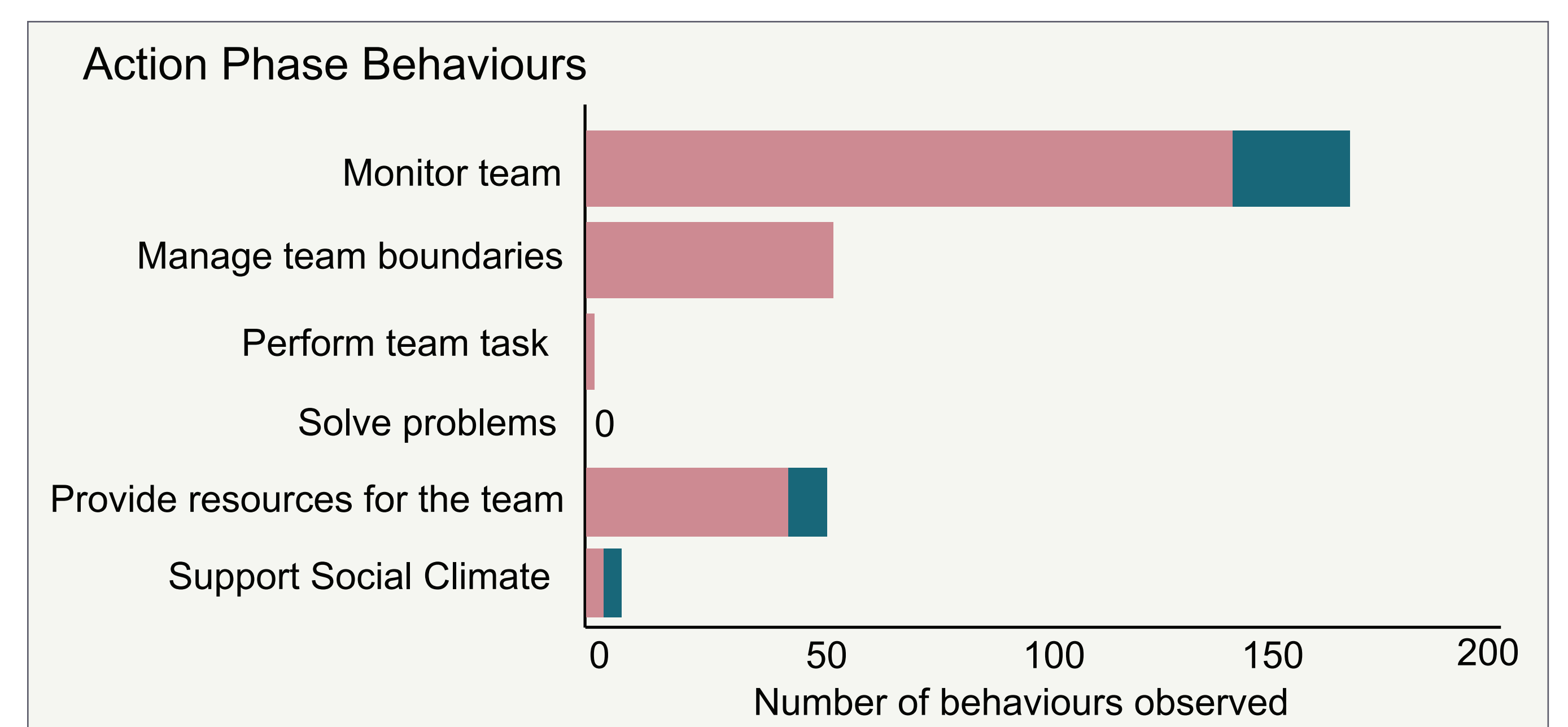
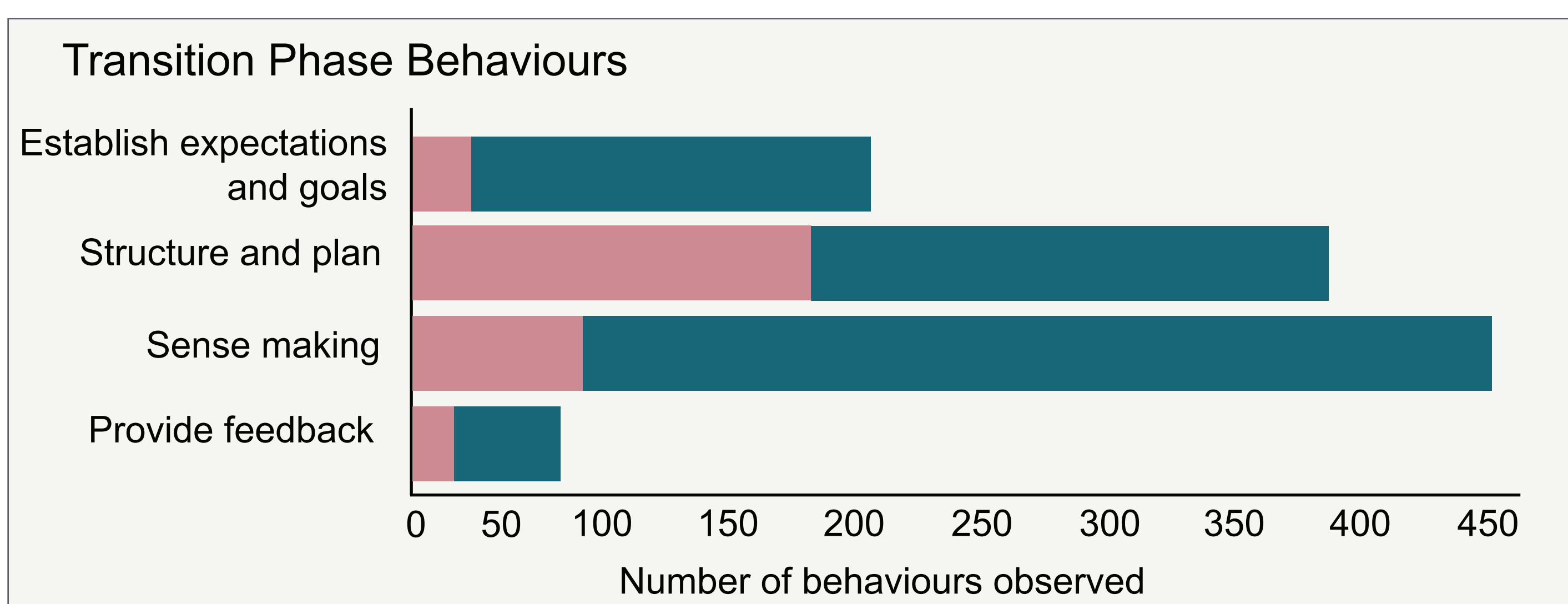
We analysed videos of these training scenarios, recording how many times behaviours associated with the Transition Phase and Action Phase occurred.



Teams were rated on their performance.

1. Overall effectiveness
2. Extent to which they protected PEAR (People, Environment, Assets and Reputation)

## Results: Frequency of behaviours during each phase



### Discussion

What behaviours were demonstrated?	Incident Commanders demonstrated relevant behaviours for this context (and did not demonstrate irrelevant behaviours)
Were the behaviours demonstrated in the right phase (Transition vs. Action)?	Incident Commanders demonstrated these behaviours at appropriate times (i.e., during transition vs action phases)
What was unexpected?	Incident Commanders are engaging in a lot of sense making, planning, goal-setting and monitoring, but do not provide much feedback or support for the social climate
Did the frequency of behaviours change over time?	Incident Commanders tended to be less active as time went on (as they were gaining control?)
Did different Incident Commanders do things differently?	Effective Incident Commanders provided more feedback and demonstrated less sense making (gained control more quickly?)

### Practical Implications

- Continue to encourage team leaders in the importance of setting goals, planning, making sense of the incident and monitoring progress via training and performance management
- May benefit from encouraging and training Incident Commanders to actively and outwardly support their team
- May benefit from encouraging Incident Commanders to provide feedback

