

3.1.2.3 Safety Officer



YOUR ORGANIZATION
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

TITLE: Safety Officer

SECTION/TOPIC: Safety at Emergency Incidents

NUMBER: 3.1.2.3

ISSUE DATE:

REVISED DATE:

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

X

Preparer

X

Approver

These SOPs/SOGs are based on FEMA guidelines FA-197

1.0 POLICY REFERENCE

CFR

NFPA

NIMS

2.0 PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure/guideline addresses authority and responsibilities of the Incident Safety Officer and the Health and Safety Officer, incident scene safety management procedures, post-incident follow up, reporting and documentation.

3.0 SCOPE

This SOP/SOG pertains to all personnel in this organization.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

These definitions are pertinent to this SOP/SOG.

5.0 PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

5.1 Authority and Responsibilities of the Incident Safety Officer and the Health and Safety Officer:

It will be standard practice to implement a "Safety Sector/Section" at any first alarm or multiple alarm incident, special operations rescue, trench rescue, confined space rescue, and first alarm hazardous materials incidents. In addition, a Safety Sector/Section/Incident Safety Officer should be implemented at any incident of special hazard presenting an unusual risk to fire fighters, customers, or the general public.

This procedure in no way diminishes the responsibility of each and every member's commitment to safe work behaviors and to operate within standard operating procedures at all times. Company officers carry an additional responsibility of ensuring that all members of their crew are operating in a safe manner. Chief officers and sector officers must also insure that operations are conducted safely.

Command will be established by the first arriving member or company and the Incident Command System will be implemented at all working incidents involving three or more companies.

Command is responsible for assigning a Safety Sector.

The designated Safety Officer, from the appropriate department, will normally respond to multiple alarms, trench rescue, confined space rescue, or other significantly high risk incidents. Command may special call the Safety Officer to any incident.

THE SAFETY OFFICER WILL AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME THE INCIDENT SAFETY OFFICER (ISO) SAFETY SECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES UPON HIS/HER ARRIVAL AT THE INCIDENT FOLLOWING THE APPROPRIATE COMMAND PROCEDURES AND A BRIEFING. COMMAND MUST BE NOTIFIED OF THE ASSUMPTION OF SAFETY SECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND SCENE MANAGEMENT PURPOSES.

It will be the responsibility of Command to declare a strategy; write an action plan that includes incident safety. This safety plan must be communicated to the Safety Sector/Section and other sector officers. Command may request the Safety Sector/Section to develop and recommend an appropriate safety plan.

THE SAFETY SECTOR REPORTS DIRECTLY TO COMMAND AND HAS FULL AUTHORITY TO TERMINATE, SUSPEND OR ALTER ANY UNSAFE CONDITION OR ACTION.

The Safety Sector/Section intervention at scene operations involves three approaches. First is for life threatening situations, the second is for non-life threatening situations; the third approach occurs in the on-going incident planning process.

Any LIFE THREATENING conditions will be corrected immediately and directly. Where time permits, Command must be notified. Corrective action will be initiated by Command immediately. In obvious life threatening situations that do not allow time for Command's intervention, the Safety

Sector/Section shall immediately stop any action, or countermand any order, under these circumstances by DIRECT and IMMEDIATE intervention (i.e., order crews out of a building, countermand an order for crews to go to the roof etc.). Such action may be taken with the understanding that the Safety Sector/Section works for Command and is accountable to Command for actions taken. **COMMAND MUST BE IMMEDIATELY ADVISED OF ANY DIRECT INTERVENTION BY THE SAFETY SECTOR/SECTION UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.** A change of strategy and/or tactics by Command or Sector officers may be required as a result of the Safety officer's actions. Sector officers must be notified of hazards, required safety corrections, or updated on the strategic plan, tactics, and objectives.

**EMERGENCY TRAFFIC SHOULD BE USED FOR ANY CRITICAL EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS/
ALERTS REQUIRED AT THE INCIDENT SCENE!**

The second approach is for non-life threatening situations and involves a more "one on one" correction of safety problems with individual firefighters, company officers, and/or sector officers (i.e. require SCBA, correct ladder position) and often does not affect incident strategy. This approach is the most frequent type of interaction. Where corrective action does not affect Command's strategy, Command may not need to be notified. Corrected items should, however, be noted for discussion at a critique of the incident.

The third approach occurs in the on-going incident planning process. Upon the implementation of the Safety Sector/Section, Command must provide the Safety Sector/Section an overview of the incident action plan and specific details of the safety plan. The Safety officer, upon his/her arrival, will confirm that a safety plan is in effect, review it, and provide recommendations as needed. In some cases Command may request that the Safety Sector/Section officer develop a proposed safety plan and recommendations for Command.

Command must be kept aware of any adjustments that affect overall site operations, or the strategic plan, via frequent and timely progress reports.

The Safety Sector must remain a part of the on-going planning process with Command and/or the Safety Section Chief.

The officer, assuming Safety Section responsibilities, may utilize any previous Safety Sector Officers to his/her best advantage, coordinating resources and incident assignments as approved by Command.

5.2 Incident Scene Safety Management Procedures:

SAFETY SECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Safety officer or the Special Operations responder announces on-scene and has a face to face conversation with a member of the Command team. (If both arrive together, they will team-up.)
2. After confirming a safety plan with Command, the Safety officer or the Special Operations responder will assume Safety Sector.
3. Safety officer will don full protective clothing and begin to observe all exterior areas of the incident and identify any structural or hazardous conditions. He or she will then give a report of these conditions to Command.
4. Insure that IRIC/RIC's are properly positioned and that all personnel are wearing proper protective clothing and equipment.
5. Insure that all crews and personnel are operating safely and consistently within existing safety standards.
6. Safety officer has the authority to terminate, suspend or alter any unsafe operations or actions. He/she can initiate emergency traffic if needed.
7. When assigned this function by Command, coordinate the use of Fire Protection Engineers, Building Department Officials, and other technical specialists, in the continual evaluation of incident risk and provide corrective measures as needed. These functions many times occur within the Safety Section.
8. Monitor the health and welfare of all personnel and insure that they are not over-extended, and are rehabilitated in an effective manner. Rehab Sector should be a component of the safety plan.
9. Provide Command frequent progress reports on safety related issues.
10. On large operations, it may be advisable to establish a Safety Branch or multiple safety sectors such as North, South, and possibly roof-top (geographically functional areas).
11. Safety Sector will maintain a liaison with Command or Safety Section chief to update and review the on-going incident safety plan.
12. Review and address accountability and rehab.

5.3 Post-Incident Follow Up:

5.4 Reporting and Documentation: