Charlotte, NC – Paramedic Tim Hayes’s legs severed, while working a wreck on I-77. A tractor trailer struck a stopped vehicle which then pinned the paramedic against the guardrail. (01-23-03)
March 9, 1998

“ It Was Just A Routine Call……”

Have “Emergency Medical Services” changed in the last 30 years?

What Has Changed?

• Ambulances & Patient Transport
• Medical Equipment/Procedures
• EMT/PM Safety and PPE
• EMS/PM training and specialty skills
Ambulances

Medical Helicopters
1970’s Telemetry Radios

Motorola MCD 90 Telemetry Radio

MDT “Orange Box” Telemetry Radio

2015
**Safety Program Strategies**

- Top management endorsement and "active leadership"
- Minimum program standards & policies
  - OSHA/VOSH, NFPA 1500, OEMS ???
- Establish "activities" to achieve minimum standards
- Management "responsibilities" and training at all levels

**Safety Program Strategies**

- Incident Investigation & Analysis
- Safety "motivation" and training for all employees
- "Functional" safety committees
- A system of tracking results

**Safety Leadership Attributes**

- **Leadership Personnel**
  - Safety is not a priority
  - Safety is an expectation!
  - Walk the Talk
  - Lead by Example
  - Don’t just walk by…
Examples
Active Leadership

• Stop the car!

• Nice job Jonesy!

Involved Vs Committed

Safety Leadership Attributes

• Open Communications
  • Shared understanding of safety expectations
  • Management must repeat and reinforce
  • Seek Feedback
    • Verify that the message has been received and understood
  • Positive Reinforcement
EMS Safety Officer

- Sells “safety” to management and the workforce
- Serve as a consultant to management
- Involves employees in safety process

EMS Safety Officers

- Protect our people!
  - Anticipate, identify & evaluate
    - Hazardous conditions or practices
  - Develop hazard control methodologies
  - Implement hazard controls and programs
  - Measure, audit and evaluate the effectiveness of controls and programs

Benefits: EMS Safety Officers

- Compliance & Legislation
  - State, Federal Laws
- Ethical Reasons
  - Concern for the workers
- Economic Reasons
  - Protect agency assets
  - Reduce Workers’ Comp costs
The Tip of the Iceberg!

- Insured Costs
  - Overtime Costs
  - Loss of Public Image
  - Loss of Staff
  - Cost to Train New Staff
  - Extra Management Time
  - Loss of Expertise

(Average 4 Times Greater)

Safety Program
Standards & Policies

- Compliance
  - OSHA / VOSH – PPE, BBP, HazMat
  - Department or Agency Policies
  - Industry Standards, State Laws

- Best Practices
  - Technology improvements
  - Industry experience
  - Things that work!

Safety Administration (SO)

1. Risk Management Plan
   - Admin., Facilities, Training, Vehicle Ops, PPE, Emergency Ops, Non-Emergency Ops

2. Safety & Health Policy
   - Goals & objectives
     - No Fatalities – Everyone Goes Home
     - Preventing injuries & eliminating accidents
     - Controlling exposures to disease & illness
Risk Management Process

- **Risk Identification**
  - What can go wrong? What could happen?
  - Low frequency/high severity – **Danger!**

- **Risk Evaluation**
  - “Predictable is Preventable”

- **Establish Priorities**
  - High, moderate, low

- **Risk Controls**
  - Avoidance, control measures, transfer

Safety Administration (SO)

3. **Occupational Safety & Health Program**

- Comply with laws & legal requirements
- Establish & enforce rules and SOPs
- Incident Investigation Procedure
- Occ. Safety & Health Committee

SO Activities

- Check for hazards & exposures
- Evaluate existing & potential controls
- Review injury/incident experience
  - The agency/department
  - Other emergency services operations
What are the risks?

Photo by Brian Stitely

What are the risks?
More “SO” Activities

• Monitor Performance
  • “What gets measured – gets done!”
  • Monitor injuries & Incidents (Close calls)
    • Reinforce positive trends
    • Negative trends need corrective action
  • Injuries should be investigated for cause
    • Lessons from losses

What are the risks?

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  • “What gets measured – gets done!”
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Measuring Results

• How many safety meetings?
• How many hours of safety training?
• How many safety checks?
• Deficiencies corrected?
• How many effective injury or close call investigations completed?

Safety Program Attributes

• Basic qualifications and training
  • Safe way of “how to do it”
  • Practices with safety embedded
  • Certain activity is far too risky
  • If you can’t do it safely…….Don’t do it!

Safety Training & Motivation

• Provide the right training
• Provide it at the right time
• Review periodically and reinforce
Incident Investigations
- All injuries should be investigated
  - Develop facts
  - Causal factors
  - Outline actions to prevent a reoccurrence
- Loss analysis
  - What has happened before?
  - Good prediction of the future
  - Helps with establishing priorities

Safety Committee
- Right people
- Meeting regularly
- Agenda and minutes documented
- Taking action and doing follow-up

Other “SO” Activities
- Ensure facility safety & compliance
- Review & recommend equipment specs
- Encourage health maintenance
- Serve as internal & external liaison
- Infection Control Officer
- Critical Incident Stress Management
- Address workplace violence exposures
Top 10 Flaws of Safety Programs

- Lack of Management Commitment
- Failure to Clearly Define & Assign Accountability
- Failure to Establish Program Objectives (Plan)
- Misunderstanding the Role of the Safety Staff
- Lack of Supervisory Involvement

Top 10 Flaws of Safety Programs

- Failure to Involve All Employees
- Nonexistent or Inadequate Training
- Inconsistent Enforcement of Safety Rules
- No Program for Controlling Losses "After-the-Fact"
- Failure to Consider the Interdependency of all the Program Elements
Safety Officer Essentials

- Lead by example
- Stay current
- Motivate others
- Demonstrate competence
- Create trust
- Provide training
- Help solve problems

Leadership is NOT Management

Being promoted into a company officer position does not make you a leader

Leadership

- “The art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it” – Dwight D. Eisenhower
- “Someone who people choose to follow”
SAFETY

“Those things happen to other people….”

S.O. Resources

• FA-144 - EMS Safety, Techniques and Applications

• NFPA 1500 Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program
  www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1500

• NFPA 1521: Standard for FD Safety Officer
  www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1521

• NFPA 1999 - Standard on Protective Clothing and Ensembles for Emergency Medical Operations

• NFPA 450: Guide for Emergency Medical Services & Systems
  http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=450

• EMS1.com – Line-Of-Duty Deaths

• EMSCloseCalls.com
  http://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/emshome.php

• IFSTA Fire Department Safety Officer
  http://info.ifsta.org/products/36472