



# Coffee Break Training - Responder Health and Safety

## Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department Safety Officers

No. HS-2012-1 March 7, 2012

**Learning Objective:** The student shall identify the roles and responsibilities of the Health and Safety Officer (HSO) and Incident Safety Officer (ISO).

**S**afety is the responsibility of all personnel. Through education, engineering, and enforcement, agency managers are responsible for the safety of their personnel. Day to day, or pre- and postresponse, the department's HSO is tasked with management of the department's occupational health and safety program. During incident or event response activities, the ISO is tasked with minimizing risk to personnel.

### Health and Safety Officer

Standards for the HSO are defined in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1521, *Standard for Fire Department Safety Officer*. Roles and responsibilities and examples of the standards include

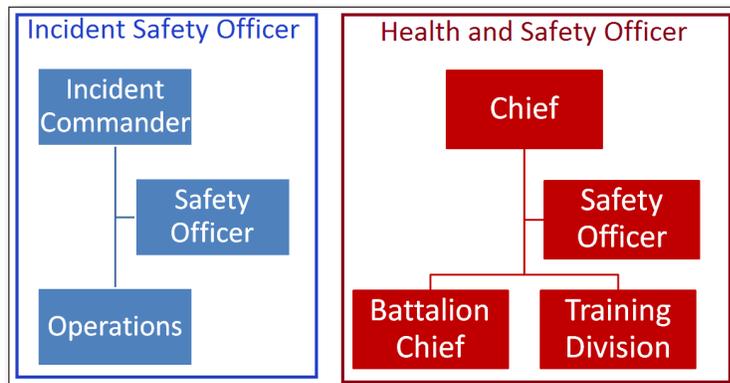
- Develop an occupational health and safety policy and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for high-risk activities and provide input to all department SOPs to ensure safety considerations.
- Develop, deliver, and manage safety training for department personnel.
- Develop, implement, and maintain appropriate health maintenance and physical fitness programs.
- The fire chief or authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) should appoint an HSO who reports directly to the department's chief.
- Have and maintain a knowledge of occupational health and safety hazards, current health maintenance and physical fitness issues, infection control practices and procedures, practices and procedures for live fire training evolutions, and current applicable laws, codes, and standards for occupational safety and health in fire and emergency medical services (EMS).

### Incident Safety Officer

Roles and responsibilities for the ISO are found in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) and NFPA 1521. The ISO is only active during an incident or event response and is assigned or designated by the Incident Commander (IC). An HSO may be assigned as the ISO, if qualified. Roles and responsibilities include

- monitor and assess safety hazards or unsafe situations and develop measures for ensuring personnel safety;
- authority to alter, suspend, or terminate unsafe acts or hazardous activities;
- ensure that a personnel rehabilitation area is established (the Rehab Unit is part of the Logistics Section, if established); and
- documentation for an Incident Action Plan (IAP) (ICS Form 215A, *Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis*), after-action review, and departmental Health and Safety Officer followup.

NFPA standards can be referenced through the NFPA website at: [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) NIMS documents can be referenced through the NIMS Resources Center at: [www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/](http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/)



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