



VITALS

A Weekly Safety Newsletter For Medical Transport Professionals

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Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) - Due Regard in your SOP

Your SOPs must show that your drivers are required by policy to demonstrate that Due Regard is given for the safety and protection of everyone in and around the vehicle. Due Regard can be translated into your SOP by the application of the National Consensus Standard which was adopted and published in the USDOT, NHTSA, EVOC for ambulance operators. For example, application of the Controlled Intersection Policy could result in a specific procedure.

The behaviors required by the procedure include: When approaching a controlled intersection plan to come to a complete stop and take the following actions: (1) Siren to wail mode 300 feet prior to the intersection, (2) Siren to yelp mode 150 feet prior to the intersection, (3) Brake to STOP at the crosswalk line, and (4) Give two blasts on the air horn. Now that you have come to a complete stop: (1) Look, make eye contact with each driver, (2) Continue yelp mode, stop at each lane, (3) Repeat this process at each lane prior to crossing and (4) Anticipate vehicles entering from right and left.

The National Consensus Standard should be used as the basis for every aspect of your emergency vehicle operations. The risks inherent to your particular operational environment should be addressed and dealt with in your SOP. The SOP should clearly define procedures and remove the guess-work and interpretation from selecting behaviors by which Due Regard is achieved.

The Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) document FA-197, Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures for Fire and EMS Department is available online at no cost. (Google.com then search FEMA FA-197) Next Week: Developing SOPs

About Billy Rutherford

Billy Rutherford, MS, President, American Integrated Training Systems, Inc. (AITS). As a contractor, Billy managed the development of the US Department of Transportation, Emergency Vehicle Course (EVOC) National Standard Curriculum (Ambulance) and the Train the Trainer (T3) Course to qualify personnel to conduct the National Standard Curriculum. AITS conducts the T3 courses nationwide. The schedule for these courses is published at www.AITStraining.com



Public Relations First Aid- A Resource Kit For Maintaining A Positive Public Image- Part 4

DO NOT PROCRASTINATE

If an event should cause a negative reaction from the public, timing is everything! In this age of technology, news spreads fast. One might think that news of a loss of a contract with your local municipality for EMS service might go unnoticed, but there is no time to waste! Prepare a press release to state your side of the matter. What seems like a benign happening of everyday business might turn out to be the spark that fuels the fire. In the public eye, this news might hint at the fact that your organization has become unqualified to handle general emergency response. You must take action immediately to decrease the spread of this news. Sometimes it only takes an hour or less for the media to form an angle and a story for the six o'clock news. Here are some steps you can take before you address the media:

- Find out the facts of the event so that you can speak about what you can confirm.
- Prepare a Press Release for immediate distribution
- Start being proactive by contacting your local media and asking to whom you should send a press release
- If necessary, contact legal counsel about the situation



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