



TAILBOARD TRAINING

VFIS “Tailboard Training” is a bi-weekly loss prevention program for clients. The program is intended to provide information on current safety issues facing emergency responders in a format that will quickly and effectively communicate a safe practice to implement and relate directly to your organization. These are released every other Thursday by VFIS.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS #1

Situational Awareness can best be described as “knowing what is going on in the environment around you.” Others say it is “survival instinct.” While there may be a component of basic training devoted to situational awareness, most would say it is best learned through experience. In the public safety industry, however, this has proven quite difficult. If something is identified that is threatening you and your environment, you have an obligation to take action to protect yourself, your crew and your department.

Situation #1 – Vehicle fires

Each of us has, at one time or another, responded to a vehicle fire. While these types of incidents may seem to be routine with little risk associated, they can potentially be deadly. At a vehicle fire in particular, there are not only risks associated with fighting the fire, but those risks of working on a highway, exposure to hazardous materials, limited resources, etc. In addition, vehicle fires typically happen quickly and there is little time and limited resources available to have a safety officer present, placing more responsibility on the individual firefighter to be aware of their situation.

Review any existing SOGs you may have on this topic prior to conducting the Tailboard Training. Ask a member to review the last incident you responded to on a highway where this scenario may have existed. Have the group then discuss the actions that were taken. Were they done in a safe manner? Were there any actions taken that could have been done differently?

The objective is to complete the training in 15 minutes or less with participants leaving the session with a better understanding of how to keep from getting hurt.

1. Review any existing protocols, strategic approaches or SOGs you may have on this topic prior to conducting the *Tailboard Training*.
2. Ask a member to review the last incident you responded to where “reading” the situation resulted in a specific action and why.
3. Have the group then discuss the actions that were taken.
4. Were they done in a safe manner?
5. Were there any actions taken that could have been done differently?

NOTE: Most “after action reviews” such as this develop a number of suggestions that actions should have been, or should be done differently. The officers need to balance this immediate reaction, to the reality of the situation. Was the outcome positive or negative? Would the outcome have changed if actions were done differently? Should any additional safety precautions have been taken? If so, how and what?

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