



## 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.

# Rules of Engagement for Firefighter Safety: Introduction

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“Rules of Engagement” is an initiative developed by the International Association of Fire Chief’s Safety, Health and Survival Section. The goal is to ensure everyone in the fire service industry makes it home from each emergency event. Similar to “rules of engagement” for military actions, this takes a risk-reward approach to help assure situational awareness and offers a better understanding of what risks need to be considered when taking action at emergencies.

In the fire service, we accept a basic level of risk to do our job with appropriate controls to hopefully protect lives and property. A higher level of risk may only be acceptable if life is in danger. By evaluating the situation, you practice actions similar to that of military officers who make calculated decisions to enter hostile situations. Evaluating every situation will help guide you in determining the level of asset you are willing to risk.

There are a total of 11 Firefighter Level Rules of Engagement and 14 Incident Commander Level Rules of Engagement. Each of these has its own Tailboard Training segment.

## Rules of Engagement – Introduction:

**Understanding Rules of Engagement helps support the global effort in reducing firefighter injuries and fatalities.**

To introduce the concept, review the following questions with your members:

1. What process did you use to “size up” your assigned area or objective?
2. What risks did you observe?
3. What process did you use to reduce the risk to yourself?

Download a copy of the Rules of Engagement poster from the IAFC Safety, Health & Survival Section.

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. **Have you had any such incidents in your department or in nearby departments? If so, describe a type of injury, accident or incident that has actually occurred.**
  
2. **Commentary on how to prevent the incident.**
  
3. **Review of any related departmental standard operating guidelines that may apply.**
  
4. **Have a short open dialogue on the subject with your personnel.**
  
5. **VFIS and IAFC References:**  
[http://www.iafc.org/downloads/Rules\\_of\\_Engagement.pdf](http://www.iafc.org/downloads/Rules_of_Engagement.pdf)  
<http://vfis.sju.edu>  
<http://www.iafc.org/displayindustryarticle.cfm?articlenbr=39522>  
<http://www.vfis.com>

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