



Fire Chiefs' Association of Broward County Standard Operating Guidelines

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Subject: Incident Safety Officer (ISO)

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I. Purpose:

The purpose of this guideline is to enhance the safety of Fire Rescue personnel during emergency incidents and training activities.

II. Overview:

The Incident Safety Officer (ISO) is responsible for prioritizing firefighter safety from the arrival of the first unit until the incident is stabilized. Any firefighter observing an unsafe act has the authority and duty to intervene to prevent injury or worse. Safety considerations are integrated into the strategic decision-making process, evaluating critical fireground factors and applying a risk management profile to develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP). Initially, the Incident Commander (IC) assumes the role of the ISO until an ISO is assigned or the incident is terminated. The ISO, part of the Command Staff, reports directly to the IC and continuously monitors and mitigates hazards at any incident scene, planned event, or training exercise.

All personnel are responsible for maintaining safe work behaviors and following standard operating procedures. Company officers must ensure their crew operates safely, and Chief Officers and sector officers must oversee safe operations.

III. Recommended Staffing:

Any individual appointed by command, preferably an officer with Incident Safety Officer, Fire Officer I, and ICS experience. Exception: At HazMat incidents, the Safety Officer must be a HazMat Technician.

IV. Procedure:

1. Obtain a briefing from the Incident Commander. Once assigned, the ISO will be identified as "SAFETY" on the operations channel.
2. Comply with NFPA 1521 or current safety standards and requirements.
3. Refer to the FCABC Safety Officer FOG.
4. Monitor conditions, activities, and operations, intervening for any identified risks.
 - a. Ensure the ISO dons appropriate identification such as a green vest, SCBA band, or tag. Full PPE and SCBA if operating near hazardous conditions.
 - b. Assign Assistant Safety Officers if needed based on hazards, location, or the size of the incident.
 - c. Confirm all personnel wear the proper level of PPE and check atmospheric conditions for potential respiratory hazards.
 - d. Perform a 360-degree assessment to identify access/egress points and confirm RIT/RIC assignment and utility shutdown.
 - e. Continuously evaluate and address hazards, utilizing risk control techniques and monitoring to ensure firefighter safety.
 - f. Ensure PARs (Personnel Accountability Reports) are conducted by the IC and monitor the span of control.

- g. Establish a rehab area out of the elements and ensure all firefighters complete decontamination before entering. Consider monitoring area with a 4-gas meter if available.
- h. Investigate and document any firefighter injuries, preserving the scene and coordinating with relevant agencies.
- i. Coordinate critical incident stress resources for affected personnel.
- j. Participate in developing and reviewing the IAP, including the medical plan and safety messages.
- k. Ensure proper decontamination and handling of contaminated gear.

V. Intervention:

Intervention at scene operations involves three approaches:

1. **First Approach - Life-Threatening Conditions:** Any life-threatening conditions must be corrected immediately. The IC should be notified if time permits. If immediate action is required, the Safety Officer must intervene directly, understanding their accountability to the IC. Command must be notified of any direct interventions.
2. **Second Approach - Non-Life-Threatening Conditions:** For non-life-threatening situations, the ISO corrects safety issues with individual firefighters, company officers, or division officers. This does not typically require notifying the IC but should be documented for post-incident review.
3. **Third Approach - Ongoing Incident Planning:** The Safety Officer reviews and provides recommendations for the IAP. They ensure a safety plan is in place and coordinate with the IC for any adjustments that affect overall operations or the strategic plan.

VI. Specific Incident Types: Tailor safety measures to specific incident types:

1. **HazMat Incidents:**
 - a. Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) incidents require the appointment of both an Incident Safety Officer and Assistant Hazardous Materials Safety Officer (HMSO).
 - b. Review site safety plan, confirm decon area is established, designate an Access Control Officer, and control zones.
2. **Dive Operations:**
 - a. Designate a work area, ensure PFDs, safety diver, 90% diver, and confirm rapid neuro exam post-dive operation for all divers.
 - b. Backfill dive team members as needed and confirm additional rescue teams are on standby.
3. **Structure Fires:**
 - a. Evaluate construction type for structural stability, confirm CO values in rehab, identify collapse zones, and monitor ladder work/aerial operations.
 - b. Ensure frequent rehab based on working conditions.
4. **Brush Fires:**
 - a. Identify escape routes/safety zones, fireline safety, entry/exit points, and monitor hydration.
 - b. Consider additional alarms for crew rotation.
5. **Traffic Incidents:**
 - a. Confirm proper apparatus placement, lane closures, use of traffic vests, and cone/signage for blocking notifications.
6. **EOD/Bomb Incidents:**
 - a. Establish inner and outer perimeters, designate zones, appoint an Access Control Officer, and verify radio silence.
7. **All Incident Types:**
 - a. Evaluate weather conditions for wind speed/direction, forecast, humidity/temperature, and use radar apps/websites for updates.