

Safety Alert

July 31, 2008

SUBJECT: Incident Medivac Plans and Emergency Communications within an incident

AREA OF CONCERN: All

DISTRIBUTION: All

DISCUSSION: Reduced visibility due to smoky conditions surrounding incidents, in combination with highly congested communications traffic can contribute to a delay in response time.

SAFETY CONCERNS TO EMPLOYEES:

In the event of a medical emergency on the fire line, request that channels be cleared for emergency traffic.

Incident dispatch should immediately obtain from personnel on scene the following information: mechanism of injury, all significant medical findings, initial vital signs, patient location, urgency, need for additional resources, and any other pertinent information with a bearing on resolving the incident.

As a minimum, incident dispatch should immediately communicate this information to the Incident Commander, Operations Section Chief, Incident Medical Unit Leader, and Incident Safety Officer.

All employees on an incident need to read and understand the Medical Plan *each* day.

- **Employees on the fire line need to know their location on the line, distance from drop point and other access points.**
- **Supervisors on the fire line need to know where employees are working on the line.**
- **Know the process. Know the procedures. Know your role in each.**

Medivac Plans need to specify the appropriate resources that *directly* apply to the specific area, weather conditions, and resources for that day.

Medivac Plans need to clearly identify appropriate timeframes:

- **Medivac Plans should account for time lags due to the dispatch, travel to incident patient assessment, packaging and travel to medical facility.**
- **In a medical emergency the urgency and severity of the situation, often indicated by the victim's vital signs, needs to be clearly communicated to medical responders.**

Remember just like having good Situational Awareness, escape routes and safety zones, continually assess your situation and always keep in mind the nearest medical evacuation location, know your Medivac Plan and clearly identify your emergency traffic.