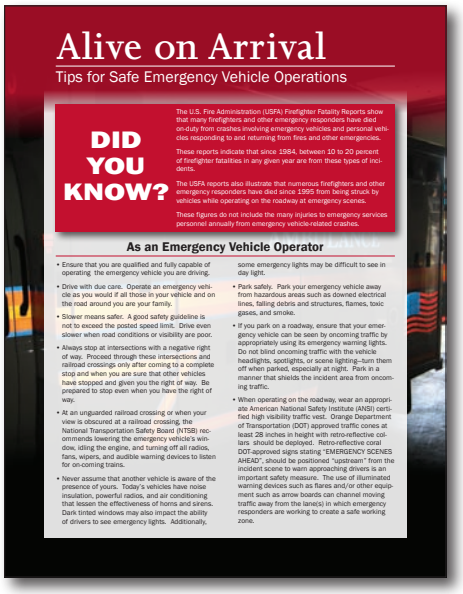
Coffee Break Training - Responder Health and Safety

Alive on Arrival

No. HS-2012-2 March 14, 2012

Learning Objective: *The student shall identify techniques for improved safety during emergency vehicle operations.*

Year after year, a leading cause of onduty firefighter deaths is from vehicle crashes. These should be among the most preventable types for all emergency responders.



U.S. Fire Administration Publication: "Alive on Arrival–Tips for Safe Emergency Vehicle Operations"

What Can Be Done?

Selection and Training—Have a selection process on who drives emergency vehicles as well as those who are allowed to respond in their own personally owned vehicle (POV). Ensure adequate training for all who drive emergency vehicles. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1002, *Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications* specifies the job performance requirements for personnel who drive and operate fire apparatus. In addition, NFPA 1451, *Standard for a Fire Service Vehicle Operations Training Program* establishes minimum requirements in this area. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) *Emergency Vehicle Operator Course*, and similar courses, provides classroom and operational (driving range) instruction. For POVs, training that details relevant safety procedures and your State law/motor vehicle code related to personal vehicle response should be provided.

Seatbelts—There is no reason that anyone driving or riding as a passenger in any fire department vehicle or personal vehicle should not be wearing a seatbelt.

Slow Down—Slower means safer in any fire department vehicle or while responding in a POV. A good safety guideline is not to exceed the posted speed limit. Drive even slower when road conditions or visibility are poor.

Stop—When driving an emergency response vehicle, always stop at intersections with a negative right of way. Proceed through these intersections and railroad crossings only after coming to a complete stop and when you are sure that other vehicles have stopped and given you the right of way. Never assume that another vehicle is aware of your presence. Today's vehicles have noise insulation, powerful radios, and air conditioning that lessens the effectiveness of horns and sirens. Dark tinted windows may also impact the ability of drivers to see emergency lights.

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) has developed the numerous initiatives, programs, and partnerships aimed to prevent vehicle crashes. View them at: www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/research/safety/vehicle.shtm