



## 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.

# HIGHWAY SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS FOR FIRE/EMS PERSONNEL

## Scenario 5

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Each year approximately 25 firefighters/EMTs are killed in the line of duty at incidents on the highway, while more than 30 firefighters/EMTs are injured and some 15 vehicles are struck<sup>1</sup>. Though the numbers may seem small, they can be tragic to an organization who suffers one of these incidents. By analyzing the fatal accidents, NIOSH (The National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health) has established several recommended practices for safe operation on highways.

Every fire department and emergency medical services agency responds to a highway incident from time to time. This is one of several VFIS Tailboard Training segments that will deal with a specific recommended practice, applied to a case study you have no-doubt experienced in your department over the years.

### Highway Safety Best Practice #5:

Use variable message signs, or similar devices, as much as possible to inform motorists of hazardous conditions or vehicular accidents.

### SCENARIO

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 taken that were taken. Were they done in a safe manner? Were there any actions taken that could have been done differently?

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<sup>1</sup> “Highway Safety for the Emergency Services” video, VFIS Safety and Risk Management Video Series, 2002.

NOTE: Most “after action reviews” such as this develop a number of suggestions based upon actions that should have been avoided. 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?

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 References:**

<http://www.vfis.com/pdf/VFIS%2004-4.pdf>

**VFIS Traffic Control Safety Checklist**

**Highway Responder Safety Training Course**

[https://secure.glatfelters.com/vfis/vfisresourcecenter.nsf/\(vfisweb-viewlist+by+category+anonymous+new\)/5A20FEFBE4A5F50F85256E94004F4E47/\\$FILE/Personal+Vehicle+Response.pdf](https://secure.glatfelters.com/vfis/vfisresourcecenter.nsf/(vfisweb-viewlist+by+category+anonymous+new)/5A20FEFBE4A5F50F85256E94004F4E47/$FILE/Personal+Vehicle+Response.pdf) **Highway Incident Safety Communique**

<http://www.vfis.com/onlinestore.htm> **Highway Safety Kit**

[www.respondersafety.com](http://www.respondersafety.com) **Highway Responder Safety Institute web site**

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