

RISK COMMUNIQUÉ

Maximum Response Speed

Due to the enormous risk associated with Emergency Vehicle Response, it is critical that specific written procedures be developed, distributed and enforced. One policy which should be included is maximum response speed. Excessive speed is a critical factor in many serious accidents and in the ability to keep the emergency vehicle under control.

Although many states permit emergency vehicles to exceed the posted speed limit, VFIS has found that excessive speed does not improve response times significantly enough to overcome the risk involved. Standard Operating Guidelines should include but not be limited to the following recommendations which are designed to supplement the state and local requirements for the operation of an emergency vehicle during emergency response.

Maximum Response Speed Recommendations

- The recommended maximum response speed is the posted speed limit, but not to exceed 10 mph over the posted speed limit, even if permitted by the state vehicle code.
- Maximum response speed will be reduced whenever road, traffic or weather conditions do not permit the safe operation of your emergency vehicle regardless of the posted speed limit.
- During periods of inclement weather (wet, snow or icy conditions), the maximum response speed will (shall) not exceed the posted speed limit.
- The maximum speed when proceeding through any uncontrolled intersection or green light should be no greater than the posted speed limit.