

# LAKWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

SOG NUMBER: 301.20	OPERATING PROCEDURES
DATE IMPLEMENTED: NOVEMBER 14, 2022 DATE REVISED:	TITLE: INCIDENT SAFETY OFFICER (ISO)

## **PURPOSE:**

The Lakewood Fire District holds the safety of our members as our highest priority. The purpose of this procedure is to describe the Incident Safety System that assigns the responsibility for firefighter safety to an individual beginning with the first arriving company officer and the process by which this responsibility is transferred, expanded, and continued as the incident grows up to and including termination of command.

## **SCOPE:**

This guideline shall apply to all department personnel operating at any emergency scene or training exercise.

## **PREFACE:**

The Incident Safety Officer (ISO) is designated by the Incident Commander. The ISO's primary role is to monitor and assess safety hazards of unsafe situations at an incident scene or training evolution. The ISO reports directly to the Incident Commander (IC) as part of the incident command system. It is the policy of the Lakewood Fire Department that any member witnessing an unsafe act by another member that may result in injury or worse to one of our members has the authority and obligation to intervene and stop the unsafe act. This Procedure describes how an Incident Safety Officer (ISO) is integrated into our Incident Management System, automatically, every time we respond to an incident.

This procedure in no way diminishes the responsibility of each member to safe work behaviors and to always operate within standard operating procedures. Company officers carry an additional responsibility of ensuring that all members of their crew are operating in a safe manner. Chief officers and division officers must also ensure that operations are conducted safely.

## **GENERAL:**

1. This assignment is performed at a professional level focusing on the safety aspects of the incident or training scenario, including the welfare of fire department personnel.
2. The position acts as the eyes and ears of the Incident Commander (IC) on matters related to safety. The ISO shall have the authority to alter, suspend, or terminate activities at an emergency scene or training exercise when he/ she judges those activities to be unsafe or an imminent hazard. At no time shall the ISO give orders at an incident, without authorization from the IC, unless it involves a situation that the outcome will be death or serious injury.

3. ISO acts in a support role to the IC. The ISO shall report related concerns directly to the IC. The IC shall receive the report of the ISO and relay any pertinent information to operating officers and personnel.
4. ISO shall be known as Safety on the radio.
5. Monitor conditions, hazards, and risks, including conducting a 360-degree primary survey noting accessibility of entry and egress of the structure.
6. Monitor collapse/ safety zones.
7. Ensure that an accountability system is in place.
8. Evaluate traffic hazards.
9. Monitor smoke/fire conditions, fire extension, collapse potential or any other event that could pose a threat to operating personnel or the public.
10. Survey scene conditions to ensure adequate lighting; removal or marking of tripping or similar hazards; monitoring of, and precautions against, toxic chemicals; etc. In addition, the safety of members of other agencies, and bystanders, must be maintained.
11. Report status of hazards, risks, and conditions to the IC. If an imminent life-threatening situation exists EXERCISE EMERGENCY AUTHORITY TO STOP, ALTER OR SUSPEND OPERATIONS. If this action is taken, report it immediately to the IC.
12. Ensure that a rehabilitation sector is established, with the assistance of other agencies, when firefighters will be operating for prolonged time periods or under adverse conditions. The rehabilitation sector will offer medical screening and care, rest, nourishment, and other required ancillary services.
13. Ensure that immediate emergency care is rendered to personnel who are sick or injured at an emergency, and where necessary, that sick or injured personnel are transported to a medical facility. The ISO shall designate an officer to accompany any personnel who are hospitalized to ensure that adequate care is rendered
14. Co-ordinate with emergency and medical services, fire police, police officers, or other support agencies and unites where necessary to guarantee the health and safety of personnel, including adequate protection from traffic hazards.

## **PROCEDURE:**

The IC should only assign qualified individuals as ISO. The IC shall be the ISO until assigned to other members. Once the IC assigns an ISO they will be identified as SAFETY on the operations channel. Intervention at scene operations involves three approaches. First is for life threatening situations, the second is for non-life-threatening situations; the third approach occurs in the on-going incident planning process:

### **First Approach - life threatening conditions:**

Any LIFE-THREATENING conditions will be corrected immediately and directly. Where time permits, the IC must be notified. Corrective action will be initiated by the IC immediately. In obvious life-threatening situations that do not allow time for Command's intervention, the Safety Officer shall immediately stop any action, or countermand any order, under these circumstances by DIRECT and IMMEDIATE intervention (i.e., order crews out of a building, countermand an order for crews to go to the roof etc.). Such action may be taken with the understanding that the Safety Officer works for the IC and is accountable to the IC for actions taken. **COMMAND MUST BE IMMEDIATELY ADVISED OF ANY DIRECT INTERVENTION BY THE SAFETY OFFICER UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.**

A change of strategy and/or tactics by Command or Division officers may be required as a result of the Safety officer's actions. Division officers must be notified of hazards, required safety corrections, or updated on the strategic plan, tactics, and objectives. **EMERGENCY TRAFFIC SHOULD BE USED FOR ANY CRITICAL EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS / ALERTS REQUIRED AT THE INCIDENT SCENE!**

### **Second approach - non-life-threatening conditions:**

The second approach is for non-life-threatening situations and involves a more "one on one" correction of safety problems with individual firefighters, company officers, and/or division officers (i.e., require SCBA, correct ladder position) and often does not affect incident strategy. This approach is the most frequent type of interaction. Where corrective action does not affect the IC's strategy; Command may not need to be notified. Corrected items should, however, be noted for discussion at a critique of the incident.

### **Third approach - on going incident planning:**

The third approach occurs in the on-going incident planning process. Upon the implementation of the Safety Officer, Command must provide the Safety Officer an overview of the incident action plan and specific details of the safety plan. The Safety Officer, upon his/her arrival, will confirm that a safety plan is in effect, review it, and provide recommendations as needed. In some cases, Command may request that the Safety Officer develop a proposed safety plan and recommendations for Command.

Command must be kept aware of any adjustments that affect overall site operations, or the strategic plan, via frequent and timely progress reports.

## **QUALIFICATIONS:**

Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

The ISO shall have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage incident scene safety and maintain knowledge of safety and health hazards involved in emergency operations.

1. Knowledge of NFPA, PEOSHA, and similar agencies standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Programs, and other laws, codes, and standards regulating firefighter safety and health.
2. Knowledge of health and safety hazards related to emergency and nonemergency operations.
3. State of New Jersey Certified Firefighter 1
4. Incident Management System Level 1 Certification.
5. Successful completion of the National Fire Academy Incident Safety Officer course.