

**Valley Safety Officers Meeting
February 20, 2008**

Attendees:

Dwayne Bader, Scottsdale
Craig Caraker, Luke
Tom Darga, Phoenix
Josh Ehrman, Gilbert
Phillip Georghiou, Surprise
David Givens, Luke
Jim Lairmore, Maricopa
Rob McLeod, Chandler
Jeff Mitchell, Mesa

David Nunez, Phoenix
John Pantoja, Maricopa
Brian Parks, Phoenix
Ryan Powell, Maricopa
Kore Redden, Rural Metro
Jeffrey Snyder, Sun City
David Vera, Phoenix
Hugh Zembruski, Sun City West

RIC Bag Compatibility:

Due to the various SCBAs carried around the valley, it is important to know your equipment and know your limitations. For example: you cannot buddy breathe between a Scott and a MSA. You can, however, trans-fill between a Scott to a MSA and quick fill *if* it has the EBS system.

Here is the breakdown of who carries what:

SCOTT (NxG2)

Apache Junction
Buckeye
Mesa
Scottsdale

SCOTT (4.5)

Avondale
Daisy Mountain
Peoria
Phoenix
Salt River
Tolleson

MSA (Fire Hawk)

El Mirage
Chandler
Gila River
Gilbert
Glendale
Goodyear
Guadalupe
Sun City
Sun Lakes
Surprise
Tempe

Drager

Buckeye Valley

Problems we've had with Scott Nx GEN:

- The "heads up" wiring has torn through the rubber coating on the low-pressure line.
- The o-ring in the relief valve area has been sticking, causing air to leak out.
- There has also been leaking from the VAC release valve.

Ladder Staffing:

At the January ROCC meeting, discussion took place regarding the consistency of having Ladder-certified members on the trucks (driver operator as well as ladder operations/functions). Increasing staffing to 5 members on ladders was also mentioned as a “wish list” item.

ACTION: Discuss within your own department and then come back and share at the next VSO meeting.

Review of NFPA 1561 – Evacuation Signal:

A recommendation was made for the Valley Safety Officers to review NFPA 1561 and the possibility of incorporating it across the valley. This guideline suggests using a signal of three, short blasts on an air horn within a 10-second silence between to evacuate personnel from a scene. This would be *in addition* to emergency radio traffic.

This is a common practice used by the Air Force and it is taught in their academy. They have used it around aircraft successfully for years.

One concern for Mesa is they currently sound three short blasts to charge a hydrant.

Chandler, along with Phoenix, has looked into an SCBA program where Command can press a button, which activates a separate PASS alarm notifying those on the fire ground to evacuate. Neither agency has purchased this system.

Some of the pros to this would be:

- When interior, at times it can be difficult hearing emergency traffic, due to a wet radio or the noise level.
- It will cost nothing.
- It is an extra measure for firefighter safety.
- Easy to implement.

The cons would be:

- Will interior crews hear it?
- The blasts could cover up radio transmission.

There would be a training component to implementing this such as how many times will the three blasts sound and if on a large commercial fire, which units will sound it?

Another option discussed was to have separate tones for emergency traffic: one indicating going defensive, one for evacuation and one for down firefighter.

ACTION: Captain Mitchell will contact agencies currently using this safety feature and share at the next meeting.

Review of NFPA 1584 - Rehab

Discussion took place regarding how rehab is set up across the valley.

Mesa sets up a Rehab Sector with vital monitoring and if a member exceeds work time or they have changed out a certain number of air bottles or their vital signs are outside of the perimeters, they administer medical treatment on scene.

Volume II states to assign a Sector Officer to rehab, however, sometimes more resources are needed in order to do this.

Jeff Mitchell shared an article on a study Orange County Fire conducted on how dehydration and innate physical demands of firefighting affect performance. Members swallowed a capsule, which monitored their heart rate and core temperature while working through a mock apartment fire. 90% of the tested members were dehydrated before the drill even began. Considering how many firefighters die from heart attacks, we need to look at the possibility of electrolytes causing irregular arrhythmias from being dehydrated or overexerted.

Chief McLeod commented that a doctor in Canada completed a military study on forearm immersion, which could also be considered as another option for rehab.

Something to keep in mind is you generate more heat when you shiver so you do not want to cool members off too quickly and then send them back out into our warm, summer temperatures. Gradual reduction in temperature is best.

Another study conducted by the University of Illinois revealed that increase in core temperature also increases your fibrinogen and platelets so while on the fireground, activities may cause bruising which then starts the clotting process.

Pride and culture are other factors; there are some who do not want to be the *first* to remove their turnouts or sit down in rehab. And are members hydrating enough before they respond to an incident?

Safety Officers as well as Incident Commanders need to insure that Rehab is being set up. Blue rehab tape can be ordered from Arizona Glove, Western Glove or Copperstate Supply.

ACTION: Chief Parks, Chief Vera and Captain Mitchell will review the Rehab Section of Volume II. Any additional members wanting to join this working group, contact Jeff Mitchell @ (480) 644-3993, Jeff.Mitchell@cityofmesa.org or Trish Sanders @ (480) 644-3388, Patricia.Sanders@cityofmesa.org.

Review of Phoenix Near Miss:

Chief Parks shared a video describing a Near Miss when a crew responded to an overdose. The patient was compliant, nervous but cordial with no indication of agitation or irritability. When the patient asked a crewmember to retrieve the suicide note he had placed at the kitchen table, the patient entered a bedroom, knelt down and shot himself in the head. The bullet came within two feet of two crewmembers.

Situational awareness is key for ALL calls.

Chief Parks also distributed copies of another near miss where a firefighter fell through a roof. The group will discuss this at the next VSO meeting.

Roundtable:

Gilbert does not have a 40-hour Safety Officer—they are utilizing operations members for that role.

Sun City West is training on MRSA. They have had two incidents with MRSA.

Surprise has Battalion Safety Officers (FITs) for each shift. They handle injuries and exposures after hours; Captain Georghiou covers Mon. – Fri., 40 hours. They will also assist with training.

Mesa is looking at an online 40-hour ISO class. The goal is to have this in place by May. Jeff Mitchell is also working on Battalion Safety Officer Quarterly Training.

Scottsdale is working toward sending 2-3 officers to each ISO training. Currently they do not have a 40-hour safety position.

Maricopa Fire is just starting up their health and safety programs and thanked everyone who has shared information to assist them.

Phoenix is working on red light photo issues (code 3 and code 2). They are trying to determine the trigger points at intersections. Always take the opportunity to enforce the driving policy.

Chief McLeod shared that Peoria is hosting a 40-hour ISO class May 5 – 9. This is run through the college so members attending will receive three credit hours. The national exam will be given a few weeks after this class. The 2nd Edition Dotson book will be used for these classes.

Chief McLeod also mentioned that Tucson would be holding a one-day safety seminar on March 14. The keynote speaker is the Lead Investigator of the Charleston 9 sofa superstore incident. There will also be a MRSA component and nutritional concepts for firefighters. Chief Nied is working on a two-day ISO class for 3/11 for 3/12 with a national exam to follow. The location to be determined (but in Tucson).

Chief Parks attended the National Firefighter Near Miss Reporting System Symposium in San Diego. This program is three years old now so they are strategic planning for the future. Next month he will attend the Annual FDSOA Board Meeting in Maryland. Phoenix has made some reassignments and Chief Parks is now assigned to Personnel.

Chief Caraker from Gold Water Range shared that they are a contracted department, which covers the area between Gila Bend and Ajo. They work very closely with Border Patrol. If anyone would like a tour of this unique area, contact Craig at craig.caraker@luke.af.mil.

If you have items for the April agenda, contact Trish at Patricia.Sanders@cityofmesa.org or Jeff at Jeff.Mitchell@cityofmesa.org.