
Unit 2: Overview of the Safety Officer's Role

STUDENT GUIDE

Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Safety Officer in assuming the position and creating an attitude of safety during an incident
- List the materials that a Safety Officer would include in a Safety Officer's Kit
- Discuss the Safety Officer's responsibility for completing ICS Form 214, Activity Log

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, exercises, and discussion.

Content from this unit will be tested through a Final Exam. Through this unit, students will gain a general understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Safety Officer. Students will be able to identify the materials and information necessary to begin functioning as the Safety Officer during an incident, and understand the incident-wide role of the Safety Officer in creating a "Safety First" outlook among all incident personnel. This unit focuses on the Safety Officer's roles and responsibilities in preparing for deployment and his or her immediate responsibilities upon arrival at an incident.

Time Plan

A suggested time plan for this unit is shown below. More or less time may be required based on the experience level of the group.

Topic	Time
Lesson	1 hour
Total Time	1 hour

Topic

Unit Title Slide



Key Points

Topic Unit Objectives

Unit Terminal Objective

Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Safety Officer in assuming the position and creating an attitude of safety at an incident.



Key Points

Unit Terminal Objective

Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Safety Officer in assuming the position and creating an attitude of safety during an incident.

Unit Enabling Objectives

- List the materials that a Safety Officer would include in a Safety Officer's Kit
- Discuss the Safety Officer's responsibility for completing ICS Form 214, Activity Log

TopicUnit Overview



Unit Overview

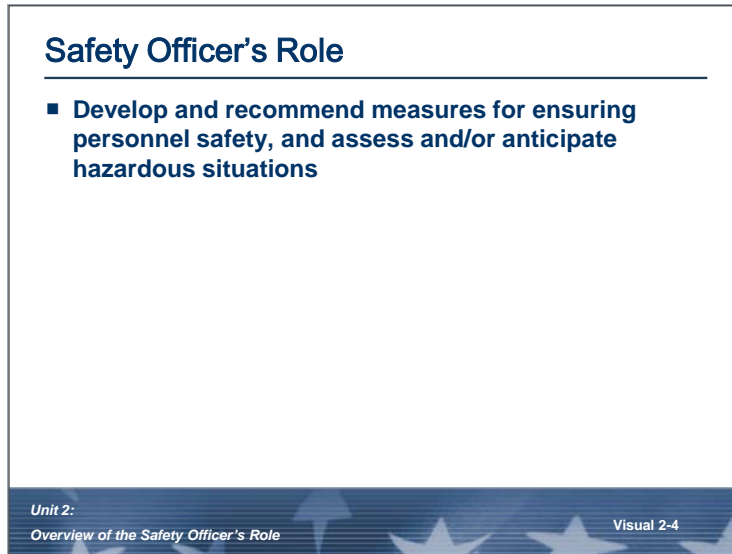
- **Safety Officer's Role**
- **General Responsibilities**
- **Safety Officer's Kit**
- **Planning Process**

Unit 2:
Overview of the Safety Officer's Role Visual 2-3

Key Points

This unit explains the Safety Officer's roles and responsibilities, including planning and preparation for an incident assignment, arrival and check-in at an incident, and his or her duties upon arrival.

Topic Safety Officer's Role

**Key Points**

The Safety Officer ensures personnel safety by identifying and anticipating, correcting, and communicating about unsafe situations.

The Safety Officer needs to create an attitude of safety during the incident—from support personnel and incident personnel all the way to Command and General Staff.

All incident personnel must think before they act and must be aware of what is happening around them. The Safety Officer points out and attempts to mitigate the potential for accidents; however, everyone at the incident is his or her own Safety Officer.

Topic Safety First, Death Last!



Key Points

The role of the Safety Officer is to create an attitude of “Safety First” across all personnel in all locations and during all phases of the incident.

The image on the slide is from an actual IMT response.

Topic Assistant Safety Officers

Assistant Safety Officers

- The Safety Officer may have assistants as needed
- An Assistant Safety Officer (ASO) may have responsibilities specific to one location or activity, or address span-of-control issues

Unit 2:
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Key Points

Managing staff is an important role of the incident Safety Officer.

The Safety Officer may have as many Assistant Safety Officers as needed. Assistants may be assigned to functional areas or locations, to manage other Safety Officers, to provide technical expertise, or for any other need. Unit 8 covers Assistant Safety Officers in greater detail.

Topic General Responsibilities

General Responsibilities

- **The Safety Officer must ensure the safety, welfare, and accountability of incident personnel**
- **The Safety Officer has four core responsibilities**
 - **Recognize potentially hazardous situations**
 - **Inform personnel of hazards**
 - **Ensure that special precautions are taken when extraordinary hazards exist**
 - **Ensure that adequate rest is provided to all personnel**

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Visual 2-7

Key Points

The Safety Officer must ensure the safety, welfare, and accountability of incident personnel.

There are four core responsibilities of the Safety Officer:

- **Recognize potentially hazardous situations:** The Safety Officer needs to be able to quickly identify hazardous situations. This is the subject of units 3, 4, 5, 9, and 10.
- **Inform personnel of hazards:** Everything that the Safety Officer discovers needs to be communicated up and down the chain of command—to Command and General Staff, Assistants, and incident personnel. This is the subject of units 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.
- **Ensure that special precautions are taken when extraordinary hazards exist.** This is the subject of units 4, 7, 10, and 11.
- **Ensure that adequate rest is provided to all personnel:** Without proper rest, or when individuals work too hard and are under too much stress, injuries, loss of temper, exhaustion, and illness occur. With the mentality of first responders, they won't stop working unless they are made to. This is covered in Unit 10.

Topic General Responsibilities (cont.)**General Responsibilities (cont.)**

- Establish and maintain positive interpersonal and interagency working relationships
- All personnel deserve equal respect



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Visual 2-8

Key Points

Establish and maintain positive interpersonal and interagency working relationships.

All personnel deserve equal respect and opportunities. The Safety Officer is responsible for anyone working during the incident or at the incident site. The primary focus will be responders, but this includes everyone.

An example of where interpersonal relationships and respect might break down is with food service personnel. It is easy for responders to take out their frustrations on support personnel. All personnel deserve respect, and this is the responsibility of the Safety Officer.

Topic General Responsibilities (cont.)

General Responsibilities (cont.)

Gather information necessary to assess incident assignment:

- General
- Mobilization
- Incident Activities
- Demobilization

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Visual 2-9

Key Points

Gathering information is a main function of the Safety Officer and should begin as soon as deployment orders are issued.

Safety Officer's Kit

- What items would you include in your Safety Officer's Kit?

- Handout 2-1: Safety Officer's Kit Contents

Key Points

TopicArriving at the Incident

Arriving at the Incident

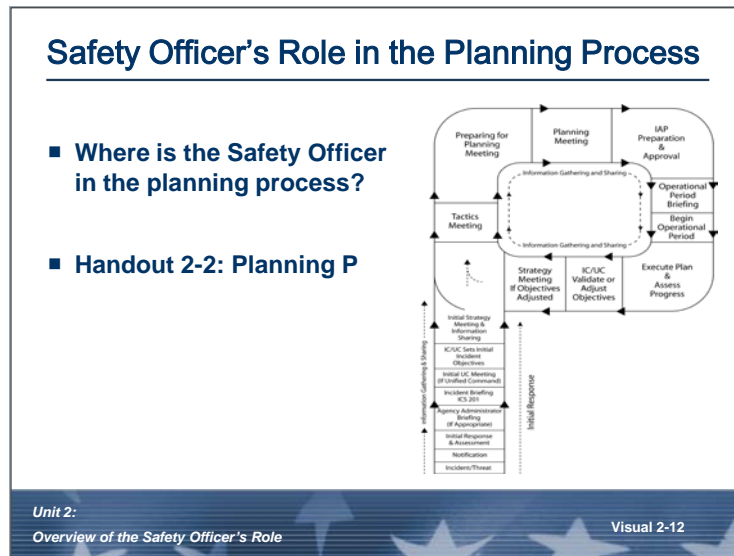
- Arrive at incident properly equipped, then check in

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Visual 2-11

Key Points

Topic Safety Officer's Role in the Planning Process



Key Points

The stem of the Planning P is the initial response phase. The Safety Officer may not be there, but he or she needs to know the decisions that were made about objectives, strategies, and team organization.

The Safety Officer has his or her first main role at the Tactics Meeting, which is attended by the Operations Section Chief and persons who can derail the Initial Operational Plan: the Safety Officer, who can say what safety mitigations will be required, and the Resource Unit or Planning Section, who can say whether those resources are available.

The Planning Meeting is not a formal meeting but rather a block of time where the Operations Section develops ICS Form 215, Operational Planning Worksheet. The Safety Officer works with the Operations Section Chief in this process to discover what is being planned and to begin to prepare ICS Form 215A, Incident Safety Analysis.

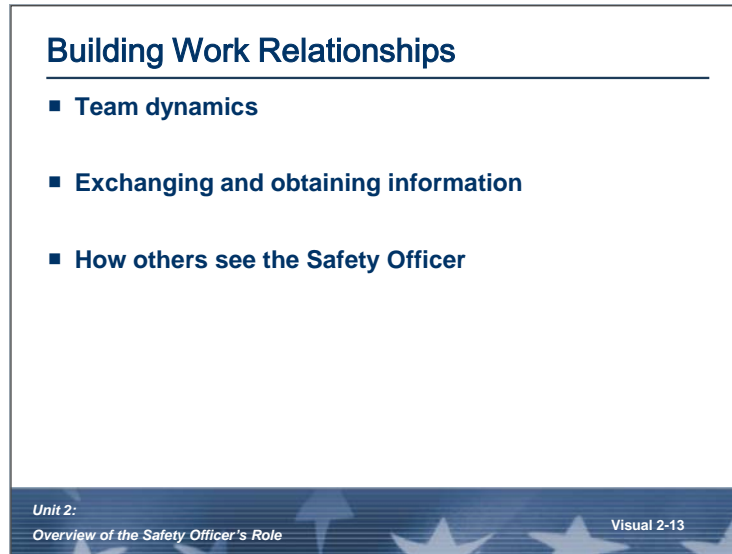
The Planning Meeting produces completed ICS Forms 215 and 215A that all members of the team can support. This is the Safety Officer's big role, where he or she displays and explains the mitigations that are necessary for the proposed operations.

At the Operational Period Briefing, the Safety Officer reminds incident personnel about critical issues. Specific briefings for different operational groups usually follow.

As tactical operations begin and are evaluated, the Safety Officer monitors them for compliance with safety mitigations and any changes in the situation that renders operations unsafe, making adjustments as necessary.

The Safety Officer participates in planning to help the Operations Section keep persons safe, not to derail the Operational Plan.

Topic Building Working Relationships

**Key Points**

The Safety Officer has an important role in the building of work relationships among personnel at the incident.

Team Dynamics

For a Type-III IMT where the players are known beforehand, it is important to get to know how the other members of the team like to work, interact, and share information, so that all personnel can function efficiently as a team under highly stressful conditions. This is work that can be done before the incident so that the Safety Officer can dive right in upon assignment.

Information Sharing

The Safety Officer needs to share information with everyone at the incident, so having relationships with people and knowing how to communicate with them is important.

In addition, the Safety Officer needs to ensure that all personnel trust the Safety Officer and buy into his or her role so that they will volunteer information about unsafe situations.

The Safety Officer as a Partner

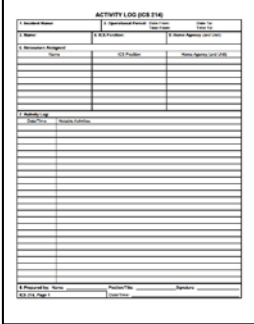
The Safety Officer needs the cooperation of all incident personnel. It is important to be seen as a partner so that his or her observations (or investigations and mitigations) are seen as helpful, not burdensome.

The Safety Officer needs to convey the attitude of “Safety First” and get others to correct themselves when working in unsafe conditions, so it is important to be seen as a partner, not a nuisance.

Topic Complete ICS Form 214—Activity Log for Each Operational Period

Complete ICS Form 214 – Activity Log for Each Operational Period

- Include the three A's
- Record and remember significant events in the incident



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Visual 2-14

Key Points

Topic Using the Activity Log

Using the Activity Log



Unit 2:
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Visual 2-15

Key Points

The Activity Log can also be used during the incident to keep track of information:

The Activity Log can help track incident trends that need to be addressed in briefings or Safety Messages.

The Activity Log can be used to keep track of all information that comes in from different Units or Assistant Safety Officers at the incident so that the briefing to Assistant Safety Officers is complete.

The Safety Officer can also use the Activity Log to help develop ICS Form 215A, ensuring that he or she remembers what problems were encountered previously that will need to be mitigated in future operations.

Objectives Review

1. *What materials should be included in the Safety Officer's Kit?*
2. *Why is ICS Form 214 – Activity Log so important? What does the Safety Officer use it for?*

Key Points
