



Position Statement:

08-06, Practice Standard – Recommended Operational Security Measures

With the heightened state of threat for terrorist incidents, greater operational security and situational awareness needs to be adopted by EMS members and organizations. Consistent with our assessment of this threat, International Association of EMS Chiefs (IAEMSC) has adopted the following position with respect to EMS organizations sharing threat information with their members and the protection of the physical assets that identify EMS members and the vehicles required to deliver EMS services.

EMS organizations should seriously contemplate adopting the following initial steps for their operational security assessment:

EMT's and Paramedics:

- Members should be provided with a security briefing regarding present or emerging threats to their safety or the integrity of the EMS mission. The briefings can take many forms such as meetings, information sheets or supervisory briefings conducted at the commencement of a tour of duty.
- Members should be provided the opportunity by their respective EMS organizations to develop a greater sense of operational security and situational awareness. While the threats EMS faces are not new, they continually change requiring greater acuity and understanding.

Uniforms and Identification Articles:

- Safeguard agency patches and ID cards to insure defense against unauthorized access.
- Adoption of counterfeit resistant identification credentials that incorporate a photo of the authorized member.
- Alert uniform store vendors of the need to establish and verify the identity of an individual seeking to purchase your uniform articles. This should be accomplished by verifying agency Identification Credentials. More comprehensive processes such as a contact number with your agency to verify identity against the database of authorized active members should be considered.

Vehicles:

- Accountability of all vehicles—marked and unmarked—this includes tracking vehicles that are in-service, off service – reserve status, off-service--repair status and those that are going for salvage.
- EMS vehicles when unattended should NOT be left running or the keys left in the ignition.
- Tracking of vehicle access must include:
 - Insure that off service vehicles at EMS stations are secured in such a manner that significantly increases the difficulty of unauthorized access and use. Routine and random vehicle audits are encouraged.
 - Routine and random audits of vehicle and station key access logs. Inventory of keys should be conducted to account for all keys. Take requisite security corrective measures should keys be discovered unaccounted for.
 - Insure that EMS vehicles that are off premise for service are accounted for especially when not in direct possession of the EMS organizations. This includes, in addition to government based repair facilities, contracted vendor services that require the vehicle to be shipped off site such as radio repair firms, mechanical and bio-medical repair and warranty service. EMS organizations are strongly encouraged to discuss security measures with repair facilities and vendors to confirm that they understand the requirements to secure the vehicle and your compliance expectations. Such requirements might be:
 - Securing the vehicle overnight inside when facility is closed.
 - Not leaving the keys in the vehicle.
 - Not allowing the vehicle to be taken off vendor premise for any reason other than directly related to the repair and return of the unit to the owning organization.
 - Reporting to the EMS organization and Law Enforcement officials any unusual interest in the vehicle while in their possession.
- Decommissioned vehicles slated for resale, but not to another bona fide emergency response organization, or vehicles scheduled for salvage, should be stripped of agency identifying markings by complete removal or destruction by grinding. Uninstalling of emergency warning devices and other EMS markings is strongly encouraged.

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