Safety Officer

Risk Management Plan

References:

NFPA 1521, 5.1.1 2009 edition

NFPA 1500

Introduction:

The fire and emergency services are high risk professionals. Emergency responders routinely enter hazardous conditions and situations to protect citizens, eliminate hazards, and restore the incident location to a safe environment. During the conduct of these operations, responders suffer higher casualty rates than most other occupations. Often overlooked are the risks that are not related to emergency response, such as those that are encountered in the station or while performing routing duties. The safety officer can provide a positive role model for safe behavior to members of the company. The safety officer has the responsibility to investigate and analysis causes of accidents, injuries, and health exposures of the company. Additionally, once analyzed, corrective action must be taken to remove the factors the lead to these events.

Directions:

The student will look at their departments and develop a plan that identifies, mitigates and monitors health and safety risks.

The plan must look at risks associated with the following areas:

a. Administration
b. Facilities
c. Training
d. Vehicle Operation
    i. Emergency
    ii. Non-emergency
e. Protective Clothing

f. Operations at Emergency Incidents
g. Operations at non-emergency incidents
h. Other related incidents
i.

The plan must include at least the following components:

a. Risk Identification – actual and potential
b. Risk Evaluation – likelihood of occurrence of a given hazard and severity of consequences
c. Establishment of priorities for action – the degree of a hazard based upon the frequency and risk occurrence.
d. Risk Control Techniques – solutions for elimination or mitigation of potential hazards; implementation of best solution
e. Risk Management Monitoring – evaluation of effectiveness od risk control techniques.

The risk Management plan should consider all fire department operations, the duties and responsibilities of members (uniform and civilian), and policies and procedures. The plan should include goals and objectives to ensure that the risks associated with the daily operations of the fire department are identified and effectively managed

The entire risk management decision making process can be summarized as follows;

a. Identify or recognize
b. Evaluate
c. Establish priorities for action
d. Act and Control
e. Monitor and re-evaluate

Additional information can be obtained in NFPA 1250, Recommended Practice in Emergency Services Organization Risk Management

confronted with buildings placarded with specific hazards.

Annex D Risk Management Plan Factors

This annex is not a part of the requirements of this NFPA document but is included for informational purposes only.

D.1

Essentially, a risk management plan serves as documentation that risks have been identified and evaluated and that a reasonable control plan has been implemented and followed.

Some factors to consider for each step of the process are listed in D.1.1 through D.1.6.

D.1.1 Risk Identification. For every aspect of the operation of the fire department, list potential problems. The following are examples of sources of information that could be useful in the process:

(1) A list of the risks to which members are or can be exposed

(2) Records of previous accidents, illnesses, and injuries, both locally and nationally

(3) Facility and apparatus surveys, inspections, and so forth

D.1.2 Risk Evaluation. Evaluate each item listed in the risk identification process using the following two questions:

(1) What is the potential frequency of occurrence?

(2) What is the potential severity and expense of its occurrence?

This will help to set priorities in the control plan.

Some sources of information that could be useful are the following:

(1) Safety audits and inspection reports

(2) Prior accident, illness, and injury statistics

(3) Application of national data to the local circumstances

(4) Professional judgment in evaluating risks unique to the jurisdiction

D.1.3 Establishment of Priorities for Action. Determining the frequency and severity of occurrence of risks will serve as a method for establishing priorities. Any risk that has a low probability of occurrence but will have serious consequences (high risk) deserves immediate action and would be considered a high-priority item. Non-serious incidents with a low likelihood of occurrence are a lower priority and can be placed near the bottom of the "action required" list.

D.1.4 Risk Control. Once risks are identified and evaluated, a control for each should be implemented and documented. The two primary methods of controlling risk, in order of preference, are as follows:

(1) Wherever possible, totally eliminate/avoid the risk or the activity that presents the risk. For example, if the risk is falling on the ice, then do not allow members to go outside when icy conditions are present.

(2) Where it is not possible or practical to avoid or eliminate the risk, steps should be taken to control it. In the example in D.1.4(1), some methods of control would be sand/salt procedures, the wearing of proper footwear, and so forth.

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D.1.5 Other Methods of Control. Other methods of control to consider are the following:

(1) Safety program development, implementation, and enforcement

(2) Standard operating procedures development, dissemination, and enforcement

(3) Training

(4) Inspections

D.1.6 Risk Management Monitoring and Follow-Up. As with any program, it is important to evaluate whether the plan is working. Periodic evaluations should be made, and, if the program elements are not working satisfactorily, then modifications should be made.

D.2

Figure D.2 shows a sample risk management plan. For additional information the user should refer to NFPA 1250, *Recommended Practice in Emergency Service Organization Risk Management.*

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[ANYTOWN] FIRE DEPARTMENT RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Purpose

The *[Anytown]* Fire Department has developed and implemented a risk management plan. The goals and objectives of the plan are as follows:

(1) To limit the exposure of the fire department to situations and occurrences that could have harmful or undesirable consequences on the department or its members

(2) To provide the safest possible work environment for the members of the fire department, while recognizing the risks inherent to the fire department's mission

Scope

The risk management plan is intended to comply with the requirements of NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program.*

Methodology

The risk management plan uses a variety of strategies and approaches to address different objectives. The specific objectives are identified from the following sources of information:

(1) Records and reports on the frequency and severity of accidents and injuries in the *[Anytown]* Fire Department

(2) Reports received from the *[Anytown]* Fire Department's insurance carriers

(3) Specific occurrences that identify the need for risk management

(4) National trends and reports that are applicable to *[Anytown]*

(5) Knowledge of the inherent risks that are encountered by fire departments and specific situations that are identified in *[Anytown]*

(6) Any additional areas identified by fire department staff and personnel

Responsibilities

The fire chief has responsibility for the implementation and operation of the department's risk management plan. The department's health and safety officer has the responsibility to develop, manage, and annually revise the risk management plan. The health and safety officer also has the responsibility to modify the risk management plan when warranted by changing exposures, occurrences, and activities.

All members of the *[Anytown]* Fire Department have responsibility for ensuring their own health and safety based upon the requirements of the risk management plan and the department's safety and health program.

Plan Organization

The risk management plan includes the following:

(1) Identification of the risks members of the fire department could actually or potentially encounter, both emergency and non-emergency

(a) Emergency risks include those presented at emergency incidents, both fire and non-fire (e.g., hazardous materials), Emergency Medical Services incidents, and emergency response.

(b) Non-emergency risks include those encountered while performing functions such as training, physical fitness, non-emergency vehicle operation, and station activities (e.g., vehicle maintenance, station maintenance, daily office functions).

(2) Evaluation of the identified risks based upon the frequency and severity factors

(3) Development and implementation of an action plan for controlling each of the risks, in order of priority

(4) Provisions for monitoring the effectiveness of the controls implemented

(5) A periodic review of the plan with modifications made as needed

The plan requires a monitoring process which may be done by the health and safety committee or the health and safety officers.

Risk Management Plan Monitoring

(1) The *[Anytown]* Fire Department's risk management program will be monitored annually, in January, by the health and safety officer.

(2) Recommendations and revisions will be made based on the following criteria:

(a) Annual accident and injury data for the preceding year

(b) Significant incidents that have occurred during the past year

(c) Information and suggestions from department staff and personnel

(3) Every 3 years, the risk management program will be evaluated by an independent source. Recommendations will be sent to the fire chief, the health and safety officer, and the occupational safety and health committee.

FIGURE D.2 Sample Risk Management Plan.

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