



# Emergency Response

OSHA is in the early stages of developing a potential standard on Emergency Response, to replace the existing 29 CFR 1910.156 Fire Brigade standard. OSHA plans to convene a Small Business Advocacy Review (SBAR) Panel in Fall 2021 and is looking for small businesses and small local government entities to serve as small entity representatives (SERs).

## Who might be covered by a new Emergency Response standard?

A new OSHA standard might cover emergency responders (compensated and volunteers), such as, but not limited to:

- Fire brigade/workplace emergency response team members;
- Firefighters;
- Emergency medical service providers; and
- Technical rescuers.

A new OSHA standard might also cover skilled support workers who provide assistance to emergency service organizations at emergency incident scenes.

## Why is OSHA considering a new standard?

Emergency response workers face considerable occupational health and safety hazards in dynamic and often unpredictable work environments. Current OSHA emergency response and preparedness standards are outdated and incomplete.

Some of the hazards emergency responders face include:

- Vehicle collisions;
- Falls due to structural or building collapses;
- Injuries caused by falling objects and debris;
- Burns and other fire-related injuries;
- Exposure to extreme temperatures;
- Excessive noise exposure;
- Exposure to toxic chemicals;
- Oxygen depletion; and
- Over-exertion due to lifting heavy objects, wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and repetitive motion.

Long-term exposure to the various hazards found at emergency incidents include:

- Exposure to bloodborne diseases;

- Cardiovascular diseases;
- Cancer due to exposure to toxic substances; and
- Stress and depression resulting from exposure to traumatic events.

## What might a new standard include?

Some topics for SERs to consider in helping OSHA draft a potential standard include:

- Scope: who should be covered by the standard;
- Responder Medical/Fitness Requirements;
- Responder Training and Qualifications;
- Facility, Equipment (including PPE), and Vehicle Preparedness;
- Pre-Incident Planning;
- Standard Operating Procedures for Incidents;
- Incident Management System Development;
- Emergency Incident Operations; and
- Skilled Support - Employer General Requirements, PPE, and Training

## What will a Small Entity Representative do?

OSHA will send each SER a packet of documents to review. SERs will then participate in a small-group teleconference to discuss with the SBAR panel their concerns related to the information provided and how a new regulation might potentially affect their entity. The panel will report on what SERs have to say to OSHA's Assistant Secretary.

## How can I serve as a Small Entity Representative?

Small businesses and small local government entities that would like to participate in the SBAR Panel as SERs should contact Bruce Lundegren at the Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, [Bruce.Lundegren@SBA.gov](mailto:Bruce.Lundegren@SBA.gov), (202) 205-6144; or Jessica Stone at OSHA, [Stone.Jessica@dol.gov](mailto:Stone.Jessica@dol.gov), (202) 693-1847 or visit [osha.gov/emergency-response/sbrefa](https://www.osha.gov/emergency-response/sbrefa) for more information.