



March 16, 2021

Re: Report All Safety Issues

Being Paramedics or Dispatchers in this Province, we take on huge responsibilities as we head out to every type of emergency imaginable. We are exposed to many different types of stresses and hazards daily. With added pressures from the current COVID pandemic and with the effects of the current opioid addiction crisis and the rising death toll, many of us struggle to cope. Often stoically and in silence we try to make it through our shifts. On top of this we deal with issues like fatigue, violence and an ever-changing work environment like it is a normal part or regular challenges of being a dispatcher or paramedic. Many of these factors that impact us are beyond our control.

Its critically important that we understand our Health and Safety is paramount to all the issues. From psychological injuries where stress feels overwhelming, fatigue that makes it difficult to take that next call or threats of violence against us, both verbal and physical, for just trying to help. Our moral and ethical compass takes a beating, and our resiliency is tested daily. Maybe even now more than ever?

This is why it is so important that we identify these safety concerns and report them through the appropriate processes. Bringing these issues to light, no matter how frequent they occur, allows your APBC safety team to be able to look at prevention opportunities and possible corrective actions. We are able to advocate for solutions on many levels with the specific information. Reporting incidents of safety is critically important to the health and wellbeing of all members in this province. Now, more than ever we see the pressures that Paramedics and Dispatchers are under, the importance of reporting is key to change and to protect our health and safety. There really is no reason to suffer in silence.

In social media and through other forms of public communications we often hear reports of these struggles and issues. While we do our best to act on these, it is often extremely difficult to investigate these with WSBC or the Employer without specific reports to inform the investigations and inquiries. Please remember that every Employer must ensure the health and safety of all workers working for them. Part of our responsibility as Employees is to report any incidents, injuries, contact/ exposures to an infectious agent or any incident with the potential for causing serious injury. In areas such as violence, even a threatening statement, remember these are a reportable offence to WSBC. Through reporting comes change.

Our operational process is to report to the Provincial Workplace Health Call Centre, PWHCC at 1-866-922-9464 or <http://www.whcallcentre.ca/>. This is staffed Monday to Friday from 7am to 5pm and callers outside of these hours, or those who reach voicemail during business hours, are asked to leave a message including: full name, area of work (agency and/or department), a phone number

and best time for a return call. Messages should be responded to within 24 hours or the following business day.

You also have the right and responsibility to report all unsafe situations to your safety team at (prov.safety@apbc.ca), your Employer, to your safety committee, and the WSBC reporting line WorkSafeBC by telephone: 1-888-WORKERS (1-888-967-5377), or by completing a WorkSafeBC [Application for Compensation and Report Injury or Occupational Disease \(Form 6\)](#) and submit it directly to WorkSafeBC.

Also remember that you always have the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work (**WSBC G3.12 Refusal of unsafe work; 3.13 Not subject to prohibited action**). It's an Employees' responsibility and right not to carry out any work that could cause injury to themselves or another Employee, and the Employer cannot impose disciplinary action against an Employee for that refusal. In doing this you must follow the procedure outlined with WSBC and our Employer.

We care and we want to do our best to find solutions that address current situations and look for long term actions that prevent injuries down the road. Reporting does initiate change. Health and Safety are paramount, and we need your help to make sure you aren't going it alone or suffering in silence.

Sincerely,



Corey Froese
Provincial Safety Director
Ambulance Paramedics of BC



Robert Parkinson
Mental Health and Wellness Director
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CF/sb/MoveUp

