

# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

STAYING ALERT AND AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS



# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

## *What is it?*

The ability to perceive, understand and appropriately respond or successfully address potential risks, hazards or events that is happening or that might happen. (Adapted-BlackBerry.com)

In a high-risk environment, the awareness of one's surroundings enables effective decision making. Appropriate timely response is crucial in any/every emergency situation.

# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Situational awareness primarily requires an engagement of sight and hearing. Paying keen attention to details will heighten anticipation which in turn enhance proactivity.

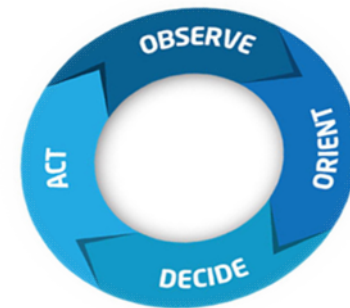
Familiarize yourself with your service areas, policies, other resources and common occurrences in your respective jurisdictions. This will help to quickly identify an incident out of the ordinary and help to answer the question, "what am I suppose to do next?"



# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Always ask yourself the following questions:

- What am I seeing?
- What am I hearing?
- What is the most appropriate course of action?
- What should I do next?



# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

To accurately assess your environment, it is vitally important that you control your focus and attention.

Pay attention to background noise and the tone of the caller.

- There are times when what is being said is only half of the story. Example: A caller requests medical assistance but sounds hesitant, you hear dishes breaking in the background. Is the caller withholding information?

Would you just send EMS, ask about what you heard or send law enforcement as well?

*Stay in the moment*

# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

It is possible to miss a transmission, pertinent information given by a caller, or a request from a coworker when juggling too many things at once. Delegate tasks whenever possible to a competent coworker in order to stay alert, and stay abreast of an unfolding incident.

*Stay in the moment*

- *Avoid excessive multi-tasking when/if possible.*
- *Never assume your coworker already did “it”.*

# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Use your imagination to plan for different situations. Play the “what if” game.

➤ Who should I notify if/when?

- A caller advised her mother is diagnosed bipolar and is chasing her dad with a knife?
- A caller's vehicle is filling up with water, the caller does not know how to swim or their exact location.
- An elderly patient is home alone and choking.





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- Where does the coverage area start/stop for law enforcement/fire or medical rescue?
  - Are both sides of the roadway in the same city?
  - Do I create/enter a call for service?
  - Do I transfer the call to another agency? If so, to whom should the call be transferred?
  - Is there a mutual aid or mutual response agreement for the affected coverage area?





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➤ What resources are needed to handle a particular call for service?

○ Air rescue/ Hazmat team/ Canine/ Poison control etc.

○ Is a single unit sufficient or is a back-up unit needed?



Do you know what resources are available in your county and where those resources are located?

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➤ What is the correct course of action when?

- Multiple calls are received for the same incident.
- A caller is unable to provide a valid location.
- A call is received from a frequent caller who reports the same unfounded incident constantly.
- An unknown/suspicious male wanders in the parking lot of the PSAP.
- Mayday or Officer down signal is received.



# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

- Are you aware of the common sights and sounds of your PSAP?
- Are you aware of the incidents working in surrounding jurisdictions that may affect your service areas?
- Do you proactively make upward notifications (Supervisor, Sergeant, Battalion Chief etc.?)

STAY  
IN THE KNOW



**THANK YOU**



*Let us not look back in anger, nor forward in fear, but  
around in awareness.*

**-James Thurber**

**FL APCO TRAINING COMMITTEE**