

Actsafes Fact Sheet #10

FIRST AID & EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION



In the June 2011 newsletter, Actsafes published an article which contained incorrect information about industrial ambulances. Please find below revised information and more details about first aid levels of care and transportation for injured workers.

At each new site, WorkSafeBC requires a first aid assessment to determine the level of first aid certification and equipment needed. The first aid assessment is one aspect of a production's risk assessment; it is performed to identify risks and ensure the employer is offering an appropriate level of care at each location.

In assessing potential risks, consideration should be given to the location(s) and the type of work being done at those locations. Procedures should be in place for dealing with injuries or emergencies.

In an urban location, the procedure for a serious injury may be "call 911". In this case, while the production company's OFA Level 3 is providing first aid and waiting for the paramedics to arrive, the 911 dispatcher would route the call to the BC Ambulance Service. Those paramedics will be employed by the BC Ambulance Service working under the jurisdiction of the Emergency and Health Services Act of British Columbia.

Remote locations or planned stunts require more detailed procedures, which may include having an emergency transport vehicle (ETV) or industrial ambulance available. In this case, the production company's ETV or industrial ambulance could be a subcontracted service, and the production company becomes the employer, or prime contractor. The industrial ambulance could be staffed by the production company's Occupational First Aid Attendant or it could be staffed by paramedics with either an OFA Level 3 certificate or a Paramedic in Industry certificate and medical direction. In either case, these workers would fall under the jurisdiction of the BC Workers Compensation Act until the injured worker is transferred to a hospital.

To conduct a first aid assessment, just follow the WorkSafeBC First Aid Assessment tables that outline minimum first aid levels. Determine what you need to have in place for your location(s) and either meet or (preferably) exceed those levels (*see links at end of article). When doing the assessment, you'll note that WorkSafeBC makes reference to two types of vehicles under column 4 - Transportation:

- ETV - Emergency Transport Vehicle
- Industrial Ambulance

There are specific requirements for each type of transportation, but ETV vehicle requirements are somewhat less stringent than those for Industrial Ambulances. WorkSafeBC publishes general guidelines and equipment requirements for emergency vehicles. To review the description and recommended layout, visit: <http://www2.worksafebc.com/Publications/OHSRegulation/GuidelinePart3.asp#SectionNumber:EmergencyVehicles>.

In our June newsletter we stated that approved ambulance services require a letter from WorkSafeBC confirming their status. This is incorrect. Industrial Ambulances do not require a letter from WorkSafeBC.

Since the film industry often uses remote locations where surface transportation isn't available, air transportation may be the primary or only means of transporting a worker for medical treat-

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ment. For additional information about air transportation check WorkSafeBC regulation 3.17.1 Air transportation:

<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Publications/OHSRegulation/Part3.asp#SectionNumber:3.17.1>

Medical care on site and during transport

The provision of medical care on a worksite and / or transportation of injured workers is a complicated topic which may fall under one of several different Acts, depending on the situation. These Acts include the Workers Compensation Act, the Emergency and Health Services Act of British Columbia, and BC's Motor Vehicle Act.

In the simplest terms, by their respective Acts, OFA Level 3s are trained and authorized to "treat and release" while paramedics are trained and authorized to "treat and transport".

While there is a significant difference between what an OFA Level 3 and a paramedic is authorized to do, on a worksite the following applies:

Paramedics may act as OFA Level 3s at worksites, provided they possess an OFA 3 certificate; alternatively, they may act as the OFA Level 3 with a valid license, issued by the Emergency Medical Assistants Licensing Board of BC, and possession of a "Paramedic in Industry" certificate issued by a WorkSafeBC authorized first aid training agency. The Paramedic in Industry (PII) must accept responsibility for ensuring they are knowledgeable about the roles and responsibilities of an OFA Level 3 as well as the assessment, treatment and transport expectations of BC employers. On the worksite and while transporting injured workers, a PII can only provide care within the scope of an OFA Level 3.

For a PII to practice above the skill level of an OFA Level 3, the PII's employer (for example, an industrial ambulance service) must have a written agreement with a Physician licensed in BC, to act as a Medical Director. An agreement with a Medical Director will, among other things, specify the additional activities that the PII may conduct when caring for injured workers.

What are the steps an employer needs to take to ensure they have appropriate medical care in place?

1. Conduct a risk assessment
2. Complete a WorkSafeBC first aid assessment
3. Develop procedures for dealing with injuries or emergencies.

Should your risk assessment indicate that first aid service may be required at a level greater than an OFA Level 3, these are the some of the questions you may need to ask:

- Does the service provider staff their vehicle with a paramedic who possesses a valid license, issued by the Emergency Medical Assistants Licensing Board of BC, and a "Paramedic in Industry" certificate or an OFA Level 3 certificate issued by a WorkSafeBC authorized first aid training agency?
- Does the service provider meet or exceed the WorkSafeBC guidelines and equipment requirements for emergency vehicles?
- Does the service provider have a written agreement with a Medical Director?
- Are the services you require covered under the service provider's agreement with the Medical Director?

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For the attendant to operate as both an OFA Level 3 and a paramedic, the answer to all these questions must be 'yes'.

Summary of rights and licenses: The right of a private ambulance service to operate falls under the Motor Vehicle Act, Emergency and Health Services Act, Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement Act, Insurance Corporation of British Columbia and WorkSafeBC. Private ambulance services are required to be registered with ICBC. Drivers of ambulances require class 4 commercial drivers licences. No permits are required for private ambulance services.

For more information or clarification on this subject, contact WorkSafeBC's Certification Services at 604.276.3090 or Certification@WorkSafeBC.com

Links

WorkSafeBC First Aid Assessment Tables - Schedule 3-A Minimum levels of First Aid:
<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Publications/OHSRegulation/Part3.asp#Schedule3A>

If you are unfamiliar with the First Aid Assessment WorkSafeBC has an online First Aid Assessment Tool:
<http://www2.worksafebc.com/calculator/firstaid/default.htm>

Other First Aid Assessment Tools:
<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/FirstAid/AssessmentTools.asp>

Information regarding certificates accepted in B.C. workplaces:
<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/FirstAid/Certificates-BC.asp>

