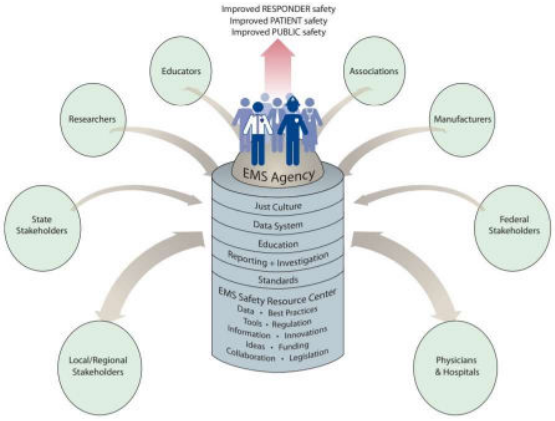


Thank you, Justin!

So far, we have seen what the EMS Culture of Safety is and why we need it. In this lesson, we will talk about how it can be implemented. At a high level, the Strategy envisions an EMS culture in which safety considerations permeate the full spectrum of activities of EMS leaders and practitioners everywhere and every day. Let's get into the details.

National EMS Culture Of Safety

- NEMSAC gave recommendations to NHTSA
- Three years later and after many iterations, National EMS Culture of Safety was created
- Six principles
  - Just Culture
  - Coordinated Support and Resources
  - EMS Safety Data System
  - EMS Education Initiatives
  - EMS Safety Standards
  - Requirements for Reporting and Investigation



Copyright © MissionCIT, LLC 2020 All rights reserved | EMS CARE™ Chapter 50 | EMS Culture of Safety

2

Understanding the need for safety through organizational policies, the National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council or the NEMSAC gave a set of recommendations to the NHTSA to create a strategy for building the EMS culture of safety.

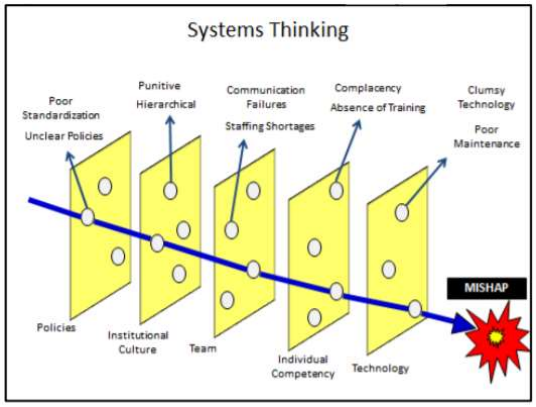
Finally, a strategy was created over three years after many rounds of iteration by considering stakeholder opinions within and outside the EMS organizations. It included public review and comment as well. After taking all the different opinions and concerns, a six-point strategy was formulated, and the six points are:

- Just Culture
- Coordinated Support and Resources
- EMS Safety Data System
- EMS Education Initiatives
- EMS Safety Standards
- Requirements for Reporting and Investigation

Let’s take a detailed look at each of these points.

Just Culture

- Encourages individuals to report mistakes
- Allows a structured assessment
- Focuses on the risks involved
- Addresses the systemic factors
- No blaming or punishment
- Holds individuals and system accountable for errors
- Works to avoid similar errors



Reason's Swiss Cheese Model of a System

Copyright © MissionCIT, LLC 2020-2021 All Rights Reserved | EMS CARE™ Chapter 50 | EMS Culture of Safety

3

Just Culture is a school of thought that is widely adopted across many fields. Just and Fair Culture learns and improves by openly identifying and examining its weaknesses; it is transparent in that those within it are as willing to expose weaknesses as they are to expose areas of excellence. In a Just Culture, employees feel safe and protected when voicing safety concerns and have the freedom to discuss their actions, or the actions of others in the environment concerning an actual or potential adverse event. Human error is not viewed as the cause of an adverse event, but rather a symptom of

deeper trouble in an imperfect system.

Some of the salient features of this culture are:

- Encourages individuals to report mistakes, so the same can be addressed and mitigated
- Allows a structured assessment of the problem or the mistake
- Focuses on the risks involved and not on the negative outcome
- Addresses the systemic factors that lead to errors
- No blaming or punishing involved

Just Culture describes three duties, all of which should be already familiar to anyone working in EMS:

- The duty to act.
- The duty to follow a procedural rule.
- The duty to avoid causing unjustifiable risk.

In James Reason's model, the Swiss cheese represents barriers or protections against error in the system. The holes in the cheese represent latent or hidden failures. When the holes line up, an error occurs. It is this imperfect system with its failures that leads to error.

Overall, this culture holds both systems and individuals accountable for errors and works towards avoiding similar errors in the future by collaborating with all the stakeholders, without blaming or punishing the involved individuals. Such a holistic approach can go a long way in improving the performance and productivity of EMS workers.

Coordinated Support And Resources

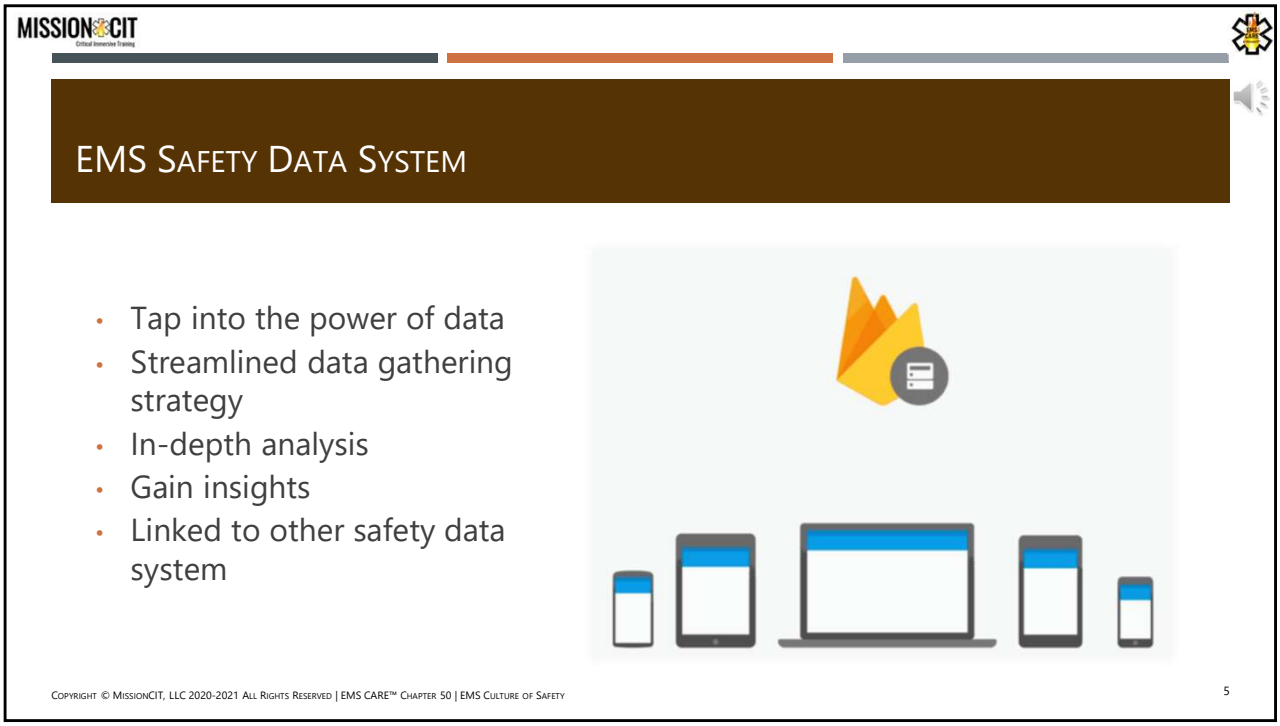
- Impossible to implement safety without support and resources
- Provisioning resources and necessary support
- Monitor progress
- Share centralized information to the entire EMS community
- Advisory guide to provide inputs and suggestions



Copyright © MissionCIT, LLC 2020-2021 All Rights Reserved | EMS CARE™ Chapter 50 | EMS Culture of Safety

It is impossible to implement EMS safety without appropriate support and resources. That is why the second element is to provide support and coordination, monitor the progress, and share centralized information and related resources to the entire EMS community.

It will be a more advisory guide that will provide consistent inputs for improved performance.



Advancements in technology have made it easier to tap into the power of data to get the necessary insights. Much like any other sector, technology can be efficient for EMS too.

A streamlined data gathering strategy followed by the use of technology for in-depth analysis can give you insights into the nature of EMS injuries, adverse patient-related events, efficiency and productivity of EMS workers in certain situations, and more.

Such an EMS safety data system can be linked with other data systems to encompass essential information about EMS safety and facilitate sharing across organizations.



Wonder where all that information collected in thousands of EMS patient care reports every day ends up? People across the country analyze it – from your local EMS service and regional planners to state health officials and medical researchers. And the more accurate those data are, the more they can be used to improve patient care, help fight public health emergencies and make EMS safer for providers and patients. This 2-minute video shares the various ways EMS data is used at the local, state, and national levels to improve care and develop evidence-based guidelines.



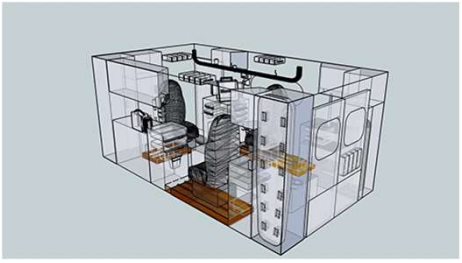
EMS education that includes both initial and ongoing education is a critical component for EMS safety since it allows EMTs to stay on top of the latest advancements in their fields. In turn, they can apply better strategies in their fieldwork that would greatly enhance the safety of themselves and others around.

It can also allow the implementation of new equipment and tools and see the results of the same firsthand. Regular updates that increase the awareness of certain situations will also help.

EMS Safety Standards

- Continuous evaluation and update
- Both operational and cultural standpoint
- Evidence-based





Ambulance Design

Copyright © MissionCIT, LLC 2020-2021 All Rights Reserved | EMS CARE™ Chapter 50 | EMS Culture of Safety

8

Continuous evaluation and update of the EMS safety standards are essential to boost the overall safety. High priority should be given to standards that encompass not just the operational standpoint, but also the cultural one. Also, these safety standards should be evidence-based using literature, data, and consensus.

Requirements for Reporting and Investigation

- Reporting of events and thorough investigation
- Determining the necessary data and their types
- Understanding what is available
- Sharing hands-on experience
- Identifying best practices



Copyright © MissionCIT, LLC 2020-2021 All Rights Reserved | EMS CARE™ Chapter 50 | EMS Culture of Safety

9

To implement the EMS Culture of Safety, reporting of events, and a thorough investigation of the same are essential components. The steps for implementing reporting and investigation include determining the necessary data and their types, understanding what is available at present, sharing hands-on experiences, and identifying the best practices.