

TRB EMS Subcommittee ANB10(5)

# EMS Transport Safety Summit 2012

## Safety Systems, Strategies and Solutions

Safety Culture/Culture of Change  
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Culture – “the way we do things around here”  
**Organizational culture is defined by its mission, vision and values**

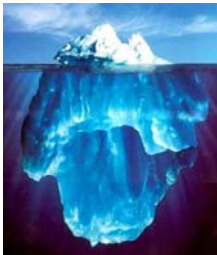
**Organizational Safety Culture:** we want a culture that inspires employees and managers to work together to achieve organizational goals and expectations in a cohesive, safe and progressive manner.

Key elements of organizational safety culture:

- I. Informed Culture
- II. Just Culture
- III. Flexible Culture
- IV. Learning Culture



### I. Informed Culture – Trust and Open Communications



#### INFORMATION ICEBURG

- 4% Problems known to top management
- 9% Problems known to middle management
- 74% Problems known to supervisors
- 100% Problems known to workers

Yoshida and Shuichi (1989) The Information Iceberg



## Informed Culture is dependent on reporting hazards

**“The obligation to report or disclose, discuss and learn seems to be the critical hinge around which we believe a just culture should work.”**

Sidney Dekker, PhD  
Lund University  
Sweden

2007



## Reporting Medical Errors

**“Health care providers report only what they cannot hide.”**

Dr. Lucian Leape  
Professor, Harvard School of Public Health  
Testimony before Congress on  
Health Care Quality Improvement



## Medical Error

Greatest risk for demise in U.S.  
NOT  
Roadway deaths



4-5 deaths due to Medical Error  
for each roadway death

Marx 2009



**II. JUST CULTURE** *“Just Culture is a value-supported system of shared accountability where organizations are accountable for the systems they have designed and responding to the behaviors of their staff in fair and just manners.”*

Acknowledges our human fallibility

Focuses on System Design and Behavioral Choices, not errors and adverse outcomes

Defines fair and just responses to behavioral choices

Defines our Duties



## So what is a “Just Culture”

Recognition that:

We are fallible, yet

We do have control of the systems in which we work

We do control our behavioral choices

We must be cognizant of the risk around us

We must participate in a learning culture

We must make choices that align with our values

We can improve



## III. Flexible Culture – adapt to change



Culture is never stagnant and therefore needs constant attention to changes and a way to measure response to change.

*Be alert to generational differences  
i.e. Safety Culture Surveys*



## IV. Learning Culture

*Willingness and competence to draw the right conclusions from its safety information systems and the will to implement reforms when the need is indicated*

Select key organizational metrics (Data) to track and trend

Learn from data about safety, quality and organizational improvement



## Cultural Assessment

**Has your culture evolved to support your values and expectations?**

**Have you developed a learning culture to optimize performance?**

**Are your employees aware of the role of their behavioral choices within the system?**



**National EMS  
Culture of Safety Project**

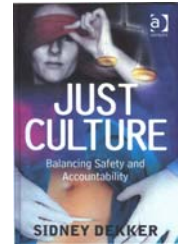
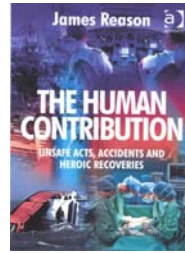
**Sept 2010 – Sept 2013**

## EMS Culture of Safety

This project is being produced under a cooperative agreement between the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), with support from the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) EMS for Children (EMSC) Program, and the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP).

Recognizing that patient safety in the EMS setting has been poorly studied, with little data and limited trials of interventions designed to make EMS safer, this study is in its second draft.

Public comment is encouraged and should be submitted prior to February 24, 2012. Instructions for submitting comments can be found at [www.EMSCultureofSafety.org](http://www.EMSCultureofSafety.org).



In Summer 2012 – ASHGATE will publish a CAMTS reference entitled: “**Safety and Quality in Medical Transport Systems: Creating an Effective Culture**”

