



## ***Put Yourself in Our Boots*** **Safety Video & PSAs Project Summary**

### ***Snapshot***

Think your workplace is safe? Put yourself in the boots of emergency services personnel – police, firefighters and paramedics – who may have to attend your unfamiliar premise during an emergency. Your workplace is their workplace . . . *is it safe?*

### ***Background***

On September 29, 2000, Const. John Petropoulos of the Calgary Police Service attended a break-and-enter alarm at a warehouse. While investigating the mezzanine level, John stepped through a false ceiling, fell nine feet and succumbed to brain injuries. There was no safety railing in place to warn him – or anyone else – of the danger. The alarm turned out to be false. He was 32 years old.

“Responders accept that their job is hazardous,” states a 2004 study by RAND for the Institute for Civil Justice & Infrastructure, Safety & Environment in the United States. “But this acceptance does not diminish the **importance of taking steps to protect them from the hazards inherent in their activities.**”<sup>1</sup> In Canada and the U.S., there are approximately **2.3 million<sup>2</sup> emergency responders** working in high-risk occupations. According to the RAND study, “The emergency response community represents a significant population of workers exposed to a particularly intense and variable hazard environment in the course of their work... **the fatality rate for both police and career firefighters is approximately three times as great as the average for all occupations**”<sup>3</sup>.

ESP are trained to respond in stressful circumstances, however they cannot effectively do their job if there are additional preventable hazards due to unsafe workspaces. Hazards encountered in workplaces pose serious risks of injury or death. The loss of life has far reaching impacts – to family and friends for the loss of a loved one and to society from a public safety and financial perspective.

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of the *Put Yourself in Our Boots* project is to raise public awareness around issues of workplace safety, influence a shift in thinking towards safety as a non-negotiable requirement in our work worlds, and create a culture that places safety first and foremost in our minds and our actions. There are thousands of unnecessary risks being imposed on ESP daily due to hazards they encounter in work areas. We all have a responsibility to ensure the safety and health of people in our work areas, whether they are our friends, co-workers, or ESP attending to an emergency.

### ***Project Overview***

This project includes the production of a 7-minute safety video, entitled *Put Yourself In Our Boots*. It will inform leaders in business and industry about the importance of ensuring their workplaces are safe for emergency responders. The video will demonstrate the contrast between how a workplace appears during regular hours and how it may appear during an emergency. It will put the viewer in the boots of emergency services personnel and provide solutions to ensure a workplace is safe for *everyone*.

<sup>1</sup> Houser, Ari N., Brian A. Jackson, James T. Bartis, D.J. Peterson. *Emergency Responder Injuries and Fatalities: An Analysis of Surveillance Data*  
RAND: Institute for Civil Justice & Infrastructure, Safety, & Environment. USA, 2004. p.1

<sup>2</sup> Number compiled through statistics from various organization websites, Statistics Canada & RAND

<sup>3</sup> Ibid: p. xv

Three 30-second Public Service Announcements (PSAs) intended for television and online broadcast will also be produced, reflecting the different perspectives of police, fire and EMS personnel.

### ***The Video & PSAs***

Using the story of Const. John Petropoulos, viewers will hear first-person accounts of what happened the night John fell and the impact unsafe workplaces have on emergency services. The viewer will also be taken through a series of building and industrial yard scenarios that could be dangerous to ESP. By using personal stories and anecdotes from ESP, dramatic recreations and statistics, while offering tangible, cost-effective solutions to improve workplace safety, this will be impactful, engaging and informative.

The concept for the three 30-second PSAs is to use a similar look across the three versions, which will present three visually dramatic scenarios of an emergency responder in action encountering an unsafe workplace. The footage for the PSAs will be filmed at the same time as the safety video footage. These PSAs are intended to hit a larger audience and direct them to the JPMF website for additional information with regards to the safety video and workplace safety. It is also a means to influence a shift in how people perceive safety at and outside their workplaces, taking into account emergency services personnel.

The safety video and PSAs will be made available on DVD and a downloadable version will be available online. Other resources, such as an informational workbook and existing PSAs will accompany the video.

### ***Target Audience & Market/Use***

This video will educate not just those responsible for ensuring a safe workplace - but all employees. When everyone is aware of their role in creating a safe worksite and the human and financial costs associated with workplace injuries and fatalities, there is a better chance of promoting change in individual perceptions and practices.

The video will be used by building inspectors, safety inspectors, construction workers, safety coordinators, managers, building owners, employees and those involved in workplace health and safety. It will be a resource for use in safety meetings, public presentations, community events, as well as relevant high school and post-secondary classes. Safety training and recruit classes for ESP will also use the video to inform first responders about hazards they may encounter on calls at workplaces.

### ***Total Projected Expense: \$95,000***

- Project Coordination: \$20,000 (2 years)
- Pre-production, Production, Post-production, Workbook and Admin Costs: \$58,000
- Marketing and Distribution: \$17,000

### ***Confirmed Funding***

- ✓ Work Safe Alberta: \$15,000
- ✓ R. Nicholls Distributors: \$2,000
- ✓ Calgary Police Association: \$5,000
- ✓ Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research CICF grant: \$12,000
- ✓ CUPE Local 3421 Calgary Paramedics: \$1,000
- ✓ Community Initiatives Program, Alberta Lottery Fund: \$39,000
- ✓ Calgary Police Service: \$5,000
- ✓ EMS Foundation: \$5,000
- ✓ Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research ATSF grant: \$5,000
- ✓ Alberta College of Paramedics: \$5,000

### ***Total Confirmed Funding as of July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009: \$94,000***

### ***Contact Information***

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