

The systematic approach

What is the systematic approach?

Definition of systematic:

1. Of, characterised by, based on, or constituting a system.
2. Carried on using step-by-step procedures.
3. Purposefully regular; methodical. See Synonyms at orderly.
4. Of or relating to classification or taxonomy.

Does this fit into the rescue scene? Absolutely, in every aspect. The six / ten phases of a rescue are based on a systematic approach.

Every action at a rescue scene needs to be carried out in a systematic way to allow for an effective and efficient rescue phase of operations.

For example:

When removing a door do we cut the hinges followed by the check/retainer strap and then cut the wires? Would this be a systematic approach to a door removal? It would be fair to say NO.

Or do we manage the wires, check/retainer strap at the same time and then manage the door hinges in the right order? would this be a systematic approach? YES it is.

Do we cut a vehicle apart before we stabilise it? In most cases no, so a systematic approach here would be to stabilise the vehicle, manage the glass and peel and expose prior to any cutting.

The systematic approach enables us to achieve straight forward to advanced techniques in a logical way, it is also the foundation for a well organised and effective rescue team.

For a systematic approach to be successful, we need to understand the phases of an extrication, we also need to look at what we are faced with and formulate a plan based on what we need to achieve. Once we have established what needs to be carried out to release the casualty/patient, we need weigh up the tasks (that need to be carried out " v " tasks that offer little benefit that also use up valuable time). Such as over complicated stability, unnecessary space creation evolutions or managing glass that doesn't need to be managed.

It's very easy to get tunneled vision and drawn into the chaos that you are faced with, before we know it, tasks have been carried out in the wrong sequence, this in itself can cause confusion and mistakes to happen, tasks can end up being duplicated or in some situations can cause adverse physical changes to the vehicles structural integrity that could have a negative impact on the casualty/patient, such as the wrong posts being cut or cuts being made leaving the roof unstable.

A crew well versed in the "systematic approach" to vehicle crash rescue, a thorough knowledge of the processes involved and the sequence that events take place, will lead to a rescue scene primarily focused on the casualties predicament and well being.

A well trained crew with a lot of simultaneous activity going on, it is paramount that the OIC keeps a firm hand on the rescue scene and take a firm lead on the rescue activity, on busy rescue scenes it is very easy for the systematic approach to be lost during the unfolding scene especially with multiple casualties/patients. We must train with this in mind and involve a cross platform training relationship with other rescue agencies, such as medical teams.

At any rescue scene think of this:

- What are you faced with?
- What do you need to do to free the casualty based on their injuries/time frame?
- What needs to be carried out to achieve your aims? Do you have the resources?
- What you do must be relevant to the required outcome, what do you want to accomplish
- Your plan of evolutions must benefit the outcome, not create extra work with little benefit to the casualty?
- Orchestrate the rescue with a systematic approach to tasks
- Stay focused and plan ahead
- Do not let the circumstances run away from you
- Maintain control
- Guide the rescue accordingly
- Many heads are better than one do not isolate yourself

rtc rescue