



April 14, 2020

**Activity Number:**  
SFK

**Location:**  
Massachusetts  
Firefighting Academy,  
One State Rd, Stow, MA

**Time:**  
0900-1300

This forum is eligible for credit toward Fire Chief Credential.

## SENIOR FIRE OFFICER FORUM

### FLAWED SITUATIONAL AWARENESS: THE STEALTH KILLER OF FIRST RESPONDERS

*Presented By: Dr. Richard Gasaway, Retired Chief, Roseville, Minnesota*

This program shares the powerful findings of Dr. Gasaway's extensive research on issues related to first responder decision making and flawed situational awareness. In his review of hundreds of near-miss reports, case studies, line-of-duty death reports and videos he continually found himself being frustrated because there were so many clues, indicators and signs that the incident was going to end in disaster.

Yet, for some reason, personnel operating at the incident scene – from company officers to incident commanders – could not see it coming. Or if they did see it coming, they did nothing to alter their course.

In his research to understand why first responders were (seemingly) blind and deaf to what was happening right in front of them, Dr. Gasaway uncovered and investigated over one hundred barriers that can destroy situational awareness and flawed decision making.

This program focuses on some of the most pervasive situational awareness barriers first responders will face while operating in stress-filled, dynamically-changing environments.

Barriers to be explored and discussed will include:

- o Pre-arrival lens
- o Mission myopia
- o Staffing issues
- o Normalization of deviance
- o Complacency
- o Overconfidence
- o Miscommunications
- o Peer and supervisor pressure
- o Overload
- o Task fixation
- o Task saturation
- o Confabulation
- o Mind drift
- o Cognitive biases
- o Human factors
- o The curse of knowledge
- o Technology
- o Command location
- o Command support
- o Fear-driven decisions
- o Culture
- o ... and more

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#### **Registration**

Register at [DFS Learning Management System](#)





Richard B. Gasaway, PhD, CSP is widely considered a trusted authority on human factors, situational awareness and the high-risk decision making processes used in high-stress, high consequence work environments.

He served 33 years on the front lines as a firefighter, EMT-Paramedic, company officer, training officer, fire chief and emergency incident commander. His doctoral research included the study of cognitive neuroscience to understand how human factors flaw situational awareness and impact high-risk decision making.

Dr. Gasaway has authored six books and his training programs have been delivered to more than 85,000 students worldwide.

More than 500 public safety agencies have relied on Dr. Gasaway to help improve their emergency scene safety and high-risk decision making, including the New York City Fire Department's Incident Management Team and first responders in England, the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

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