

General Operational Guideline - #1
Incident Accountability Procedures

Adopted: June 24th, 2003 Due for Review: January, 2004

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PURPOSE:

- A. This procedure will enhance the safety of firefighters operating on emergency incidents by providing the Incident Commander with a system for tracking the number of personnel and the area of their operation on incidents. This information is vital in the event occurs that requires accounting for all personnel on the incident scene.
- B. The Personal Accountability System shall be implemented when the first unit arrives on the scene and continues until the Incident Commander determines it is no longer necessary. Accountability responsibilities shall expand with the Incident Management System (IMS). During the course of an incident the Incident Commander shall be able to account for all personnel at any given time.
- C. The Accountability System shall in no way reduce the company officer's primary responsibility to closely supervise crew members, provide for their safety, and maintain communication with command. The minimum crew operating in areas requiring self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) shall be two firefighters with a portable radio.

ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES:

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- A. All personnel arriving in POV's *must* report to Command or the staging area if designated for assignment to apparatus. No one may immediately assume they are to report to the fire apparatus they are normally assigned to. Assignments shall be based on the needs of the specific incident, including personnel and apparatus availability.
- B. A mechanism to quickly account for personnel must be available to the Incident Commander at any point during the incident. In order to ensure the effectiveness of this system and the subsequent safety of all personnel, accountability procedures shall be strictly followed at all times.
 - 1. The name tags shall be considered an issued item of protective equipment
 - 2. Fire and Rescue Department personnel shall always operate as a crew of two people when functioning in a hazardous environment. A minimum crew shall be considered two people and a portable radio.
 - a. No one shall operate alone in the hazard zone.
 - b. No crew shall operate without a portable radio.
 - c. Crews shall always go in and come out together.
 - d. Personnel operating as a crew shall be in contact with the crew "leader" by voice, touch or sight

ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES (cont'd):

- C. To effectively manage the activities and movement of personnel, the officer should advise Command when his/her personnel are moving between sectors.
 - a. Example: "Fire Attack to Command, Fire knocked down first floor, proceeding to the second floor to check for extension."

II. IMMEDIATE ACCOUNTABILITY CHECK:

- A. An immediate accountability check will be conducted for:
 - 1. Any report of missing or trapped firefighters
 - 2. If the evacuation signal is sounded
 - 3. Any change from offensive to defensive tactics
 - 4. Any sudden hazard event such as flashover, backdraft, or collapse.

III. ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER:

- A. Accountability officers may be driver/operators, company officers or personnel specifically assigned to serve as Accountability Officers for the Command. The Accountability Officer will assume title and should be responsive to the Incident Commander.
- B. Accountability Sector Duties and Responsibilities:
 - 1. Maintain the Command Post Accountability Chart and verify each Personnel Accountability Report (PAR).
 - 2. Coordinate with Command to initiate PAR's upon benchmarks, or as needed

IV. LEVEL I ACCOUNTABILITY:

- A. During response, each member shall attach his/her Personal Accountability TAG (PAT) to the responding unit collector ring.
- B. After arriving on the scene and when time permits, the driver/operator shall ensure that all personnel have attached their PAT's to the ring. The Company Officer or Senior Firefighter in charge will be responsible for all personnel riding on the apparatus.
- C. The driver shall collect all PAT's on the collector ring and place the ring in the cab of the apparatus.

V. LEVEL II ACCOUNTABILITY:

- A. When the Incident Commander indicates Level II Accountability, all collector rings shall be immediately removed from the apparatus, taken to the Incident Command Post, and arranged on the Accountability Board.
- B. Level II Accountability should be activated when conditions exist or may develop that pose a probable danger to operational personnel due to collapse, rapid expansion of fire, Haz-Mat Incidents or separation due to complex configuration of the building or incident sites.
- C. At any time during the course of the incident, the Incident Commander has the option of directing units to account for the number of personnel operating with that company by the means of PAT's and collector rings.

V. LEVEL II ACCOUNTABILITY (cont'd):

- D. It shall be the responsibility of each member to ensure that their PAT is removed from the collector ring at the completion of the incident or before leaving the incident scene. The company officer shall ensure compliance.
- E. Each driver shall ensure that the collector ring is returned to his/her unit at the completion of the incident or before leaving the incident scene.

VI: LEVEL III ACCOUNTABILITY:

- A. When the Incident Commander determines that the incident requires more stringent accountability, he/she will implement Point of Entry Control.
 - 1. To implement Point of Entry Control, the designated person/personnel will monitor all Points of Entry into the structure, confined space, or areas involved. These individuals will be referred to as "Entry Control".
 - 2. Entry Control will ensure that each member's name, air supply, and time of entry is recorded as they pass through the Point of Entry.
 - 3. Entry Control shall ensure that all members are relieved as necessary.
 - 4. As members exit a Control Point, the time of exit shall be recorded. Members who must exit at a point remote from the Control Point shall inform the Entry Control personnel of their exit from the building/involved area.
 - 5. When personnel are unaccounted for, Entry Control shall notify the Incident Commander and ensure search and rescue operations are initiated.

VII: SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTABILITY:

- A. Accountability depends on each member and will only succeed with a strong personal commitment to safety from each member.