

SOP-SAFETY

Personnel Accountability System

Date: December 18, 2006

Purpose

The purpose of the Personnel Accountability System is to establish a system to account for **ALL** firefighters and other emergency workers operating at the scene of an emergency incident. Use of this system will provide an enhanced personal safety for the individual firefighter as well as a means to track and account for **ALL** personnel at any given time during the course of an incident for the command staff.

Scope

This S.O.P. shall apply to all personnel operating within the “hazard zone”. The “hazard zone” will be defined as any area that requires the use of an SCBA or in which an emergency worker is at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. This will include, but not be limited to, the interior of a structure reported on fire, areas in close proximity to a structure during exterior operations, specialized rescue operations, forest, brush fires, etc.

Policy

It shall be the policy of the Fire Departments to maintain accountability for each member while engaged in an emergency operation. All personnel have an individual responsibility to adhere to this SOP. Overall responsibility for enforcement of this SOP rests with the Company Officer and/or Incident Commander. Authority for deviation from this SOP rests solely with the Incident Commander who bears full responsibility for the results of any deviations.

Equipment

Personnel Identification Badge – As part of their PPE, each member will be issued a personnel identification badge to be used within the accountability system. Each badge will consist of a tag with a clip, name, department name, and radio number on it.

Procedure

When not involved in an incident, the PIB is to remain clipped to your helmet. *****At no time should there be a PIB attached to a helmet when on the scene of an incident.*****

If you are called in or arrive to the scene of an incident, it is essential that you check in with the Incident Commander/Accountability Officer so that you can be logged in to the incident. This makes sure you are accounted for, assigned to the proper place, and properly logged in. If you do not get logged in correctly, the system may reflect apparatus and personnel incorrectly, which will hinder a **PAR**.

Implementation

The Personnel Accountability System will be placed into operation on all “**Working**” incidents including Structure fires, Wildland fires, Hazmat, Technical Rescue, Swift Water Rescue, and Mass Casualty.

Per the Incident Management System, the officer in charge of the first arriving Apparatus/unit at an incident scene shall assess the situation and determine a course of action. Based on that decision, the Officer in Charge of that apparatus/unit shall either assume command, or pass command to the next arriving company. Incident Command shall be initiated if two or more apparatus will be operating within the incident or the number of personnel exceed the immediate span of control (5 to 7) of one Officer in Charge. Whether or not command is assumed or passed, it is the responsibility of the officer in charge to immediately implement the Personnel Accountability System. These procedures are as follows:

A. Officer in Charge

- The OIC of the first arriving company will remove the accountability board from the apparatus and place it in proximity of the pump panel of the first arriving Engine/Truck. This will be the **primary accountability unit**
- The OIC of other arriving apparatus will ensure that his/her crews are logged into the primary accountability unit by **PIB** before beginning.
- If later arriving companies are unable to log into the primary accountability unit, the OIC will initiate a **Sector** (i.e. SECTOR Int. Attack) and relay this information via radio to command.
- At the end of the incident, the OIC of each apparatus will ensure that all personnel are logged out of the **primary accountability unit**.

B. Chief/Incident Commander

- The arriving Chief/Incident Commander will assume control of the primary accountability board after assuming command. The IC can maintain control of the primary accountability board or assign an Accountability Officer to monitor the accountability system. The IC shall announce via radio if the primary accountability location has changed.
- The Accountability officer should locate in an area that allows for safe and effective accountability of personnel.

C. Sectors

- If the incident escalates to dividing into sectors, an accountability unit will be activated in each sector.
- Sector commanders will keep accountability of all personnel operating in the assigned sector. Personnel assigned to a sector will report to the sector commander and log in using **PIB**. If the sector commander does not have a accountability board, he/she will collect the **PIB** from each

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- firefighter assigned to the sector until a **accountability board** can be acquired and the firefighters logged in.
- Sector commanders shall keep command informed of the companies/personnel assigned to the sector.
 - Sector commanders may assign a control officer to assist in maintaining an accurate account of the personnel that are performing emergency operations within a sector.
 - The IC will assign an accountability officer at the command post to monitor the incident accountability.
 - Sector accountability will be maintained until the IC terminates the sector. At this time the sector commander will ensure that all personnel are logged out and transferred to the primary accountability unit

Termination

The accountability system shall continue to be utilized on the incident scene until such a time as Incident Command has diminished the operation to one (1) crew.

Responsibilities

Firefighter

- Responsible for logging his or her self in at the beginning incident, and logging out at the end of the incident.

Company Officer/Crew Leader

- Responsible for making sure crew is logged in at the beginning of the incident, and logged out at the end of the incident.
- Responsible for accounting for and keeping the crew together as a unit in carrying out the assigned task, unless ordered to do otherwise by the IC or Sector Commander.

Sector Officer

- Responsible for accounting for all crews in their assigned sector.
- Responsible for maintaining an awareness of their crew(s) location(s), and maintaining accurate accountability of those crews assigned.

Officer in Charge

It shall be the responsibility of the OIC of each company to monitor the location of each person under their command at all times. To accomplish this, the OIC will adhere to the following guidelines.

- The OIC should never allow a member to work alone during an interior fire attack. A minimum of two crewmembers working as a team must be adhered to.
- The OIC should occupy a position that will allow for the crew to be observed or voice contact maintained during both interior and exterior

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operations. When operating in atmospheres that are heavily charged with smoke, a position of close working order shall be maintained and a periodic personnel check made.

- The OIC must know how many crewmembers are under their command prior to beginning an assigned task. All crews will report to the control officer prior to entering safety risk areas and when exiting these areas.
- When crews are scheduled for physical rehabilitation, the officers will report to the rehabilitation sector with their crew and log in
- Whenever a distress situation (personnel trapped, injured or distress calls) is detected, the Sector Commander or Incident Commander will be notified as soon as possible, either by face-to-face communications or by radio.

Incident Safety Officer

- The incident safety officer will provide the Incident Commander with regular status reports concerning the conditions of the structure or area where personnel are operating
- Safety Officers will coordinate rehabilitation procedures with each sector commander.

Personnel Accountability Report

The Incident Commander/Officer in Charge may initiate Personnel Accountability Report (**PAR**) to each sector to account for personnel at any time that it is considered necessary. The Incident Commander will determine the level and magnitude of any **PAR** procedure, i.e. the affected sector(s), branch, task group or area etc. Whenever it is necessary to initiate a **PAR**, the Incident Commander will communicate via radio, the appropriate orders or directives to the Sector(s) involved. Some situations in which a **PAR** shall be initiated include, but are not limited to the following:

- Report of a member or crew missing or trapped (Firefighter MAYDAY)
- When a unit/crew cannot be contacted in the Hazard Zone after three consecutive attempts at radio contact
- Sudden hazardous change on the incident scene such as vapor release, collapse, etc
- Incident conditions deteriorate to a point that evacuations is ordered
- A change from offensive to a defensive

Company Officers, sector officers, and task commanders should report a **PAR** at the completion of an assigned task (i.e. Rescue 1 to command primary search is “all clear” Rescue 1 has PAR)

Sector Commanders will be responsible for conducting the **PAR** in their respected sectors and report the results to the Incident Commander or Accountability Officer.

Personnel Evacuations

Personnel accountability requires the ability to evacuate any given situation any time the time the Incident commander deems situation to be an excessive risk to personnel involved within area of operation. (i.e. Structures, Wildland,). The order to evacuate is to be communicated by radio and by three consecutive blasts by a trucks air horn. The duration of each blast shall be three seconds followed each time by a three second pause between each blast. Upon completion of evacuation all sectors shall conduct a PAR and report results to Incident Commander or Accountability Officer.

Compliance

A mechanism to quickly account for personnel must be available to the Incident Commander at any point during an 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 time.