

<b>SUBJECT:</b> ACCOUNTABILITY	<b>SECTION:</b> 306.05
<b>REVISED:</b> AUGUST 14, 2009; JUNE 3, 2008	<b>PAGE(S):</b> 10

## PURPOSE

---

This procedure identifies a system of incident site firefighter accountability. The purpose is to account for all firefighters, at any given time, within a small geographic area, within the "hazard zone" of an incident. Use of the system will provide enhanced personnel safety for the individual firefighters and will provide the Incident Command Organization staff an improved means to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.

## REFERENCE

---

1. *The Hamilton County Fire Chiefs' Association Model SOG: Accountability System Policy – Effective December 19, 2007.*

## POLICY

---

This procedure shall apply to all emergency operations and training exercises where the accountability of all firefighters and emergency scene personnel is essential.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

---

Accountability involves a personal commitment to work within the safety system of an incident.

- A) Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident.
- B) Command will always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attack planning, and must consider and react to any barriers that effects accountability.
- C) Division/Group Supervisors will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crews assigned to them. This will require the Division/Group Supervisor to be in his/her assigned area and maintaining close supervision of crews assigned to them.
- D) All crews will work within the Incident Command System - NO FREE LANCING.

- E) Crews arriving on the scene should remain intact for all intents and purposes. A minimum crew size will be considered two or more members and a radio will be required.
- F) All crews entering a hazard zone must be supervised by a designated supervisor or other ranking individual.
- G) All crews will enter a hazard area together, stay together and come out together. Reduced visibility and increased risk will require very tight togetherness. Upon exiting the hazard zone, the designated supervisor shall immediately account for his/her assigned personnel and report accordingly.
- H) If a radio fails while in the hazard zone, the crew will exit unless there is another working radio with the crew.

## **PASSPORTS**

---

To enhance accountability and to improve tracking of firefighters in the "hazard zone", the "PASSPORT" system will be used. Passports involve a plastic card with the crew members name affixed that is turned into an Accountability Officer. The Accountability Officer may be a pump operator, a Division/Group Supervisor, or a designated Accountability Officer, depending on the nature, type and complexity of the incident.

## **PASSPORT EQUIPMENT**

---

The Passport system equipment involves multiple (3) color-coded 2.75" X 3.75" plastic cards with the department's abbreviated name (REAF), apparatus number, and company's capabilities etched on it. The Passport should have enough Velcro "loops" for the personnel assigned to apply their nametags (minimum of four).

Color-coding for the Passport:

1. Engines: RED
  2. Ladder/Aerial Devices: BLACK
  3. EMS Units: BLUE
  4. Rescue/Support Units: GREEN
  5. Support Agencies: ORANGE
- A) The Passport will be found on the operator's door. A "hooks" Velcro strip will allow the Passport to be affixed on the dash/door and easily removed.
- B) Each firefighter will be issued four individual, 2.5" X 0.5" plastic color-coded name tags. These "hooks" Velcro tags will be affixed to "loops" Velcro strips secured under the rim to the rear of the helmet.

Color-coding for name tags:

1. Officers: WHITE
2. Firefighters: YELLOW
3. EMS Only Personnel: BLUE

C) All apparatus will be equipped with an 8" X 1 0" status board. This board will be used to affix Passports, and will always be located on the inside door of the Operators position.

D) The Company Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the Passports always reflect only currently assigned personnel. When entering a hazard zone with a partial crew (i.e., operator remains at the engine), the company officer must remove name tags of those members not entering the hazard zone from the Passport. The name tags of those members not entering the hazard zone may be returned to the member, or placed in the officer's coat pocket. The operator should include his/her name tag on the Passport board on the drivers' door (upside down).

## **COMPANY IDENTIFICATION DESIGNATION - HELMETS**

---

Firefighter helmets will be equipped with leather fronts permanently attached to the helmet. The fronts will identify the personnel's respective station.

## **TACTICAL BENCHMARKS**

---

Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The Personnel Accountability Report ("PAR") involves a roll call of personnel assigned. For the Company Officer, a "PAR" is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are visually accounted for. For the Division/Group Supervisor, a "PAR" is an accounting for all crew members of all companies assigned to his/her division/group. Reports of PAR's should be conducted face-to face within the company or with the division/group whenever possible.

Example: "E283 to East Group, I have a "PAR"."

A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) will be required for the following situations:

A) Any report/suspicion of missing or trapped firefighters (Command initiates a "PAR" of all crews on the scene);

B) Whenever a MAYDAY is announced;

C) Any change from an offensive to defensive mode (Command initiates a "PAR" of all crews on the scene);

D) Any sudden hazardous event at the incident - flash over, backdraft, collapse, etc. (Command initiates a "PAR" of all crews on the scene);

- E) By all crews reporting an "all clear" (Company officers of crews responsible for search and rescue will ensure they have a "PAR" for their crews at the time they report an "all clear");
- F) At a 20 minute elapsed time after arrival at the scene;
- G) At a report of fire under control;
- H) Anytime the Incident Commander believes such is necessary.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICERS**

---

Accountability Officers may be operators, Division/Group Officers, or personnel specifically assigned to Division/Groups to serve as Accountability Officers for the Division/Group officer.

The first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident will serve as the initial accountability location, and will be announced by Command to all responding units. The operator of that apparatus will serve as the initial Accountability Officer. All crews entering the incident will deliver their PASSPORTS to the accountability location closest to their "point of entry" prior to entering the hazard zone. As Division/Groups are implemented, Division/Group Officers will manage PASSPORTS only if he/she is not entering the hazard zone (i.e., defensive operations). PASSPORTS will remain on the first apparatus (accountability location). As Command designates, personnel may be assigned accountability responsibilities for given Division/Groups. These personnel will report to their assigned Division/Group Officer to manage accountability for that Division/Group (i.e., second floor Division/Group). Accountability Officers will report directly to Command.

At incidents with a critical need for Accountability Officers to assist Division/Group Supervisors, Command may choose to split up a company and distribute the crew members to different divisions/groups to act as Accountability Officers.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY DIVISION/GROUP**

---

As the incident escalates to the level that Accountability Officers are assigned, Command should implement an Accountability Division/Group to coordinate Accountability Officers.

The Accountability Division/Group Officer will be assigned to Command and will operate on the assigned radio channel. The Accountability Division/Group Officer should be located in the Command Post.

The Accountability Division/Group Officer's responsibilities include:

- A) Develop and implement a plan designed to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.
- B) Ensure that accountability Officers are implemented in each Division/Group as necessary.
- C) Provide progress reports to Command.
- D) Initiate "PAR'S" upon benchmarks or as needed.

## **ARRIVAL FOR DUTY**

---

Arriving On-Duty personnel will be responsible for immediately updating the company PASSPORT as they arrive for duty, including at shift change, arrival for trades, fill-ins or for paramedic call-ins. All personnel will place their turn-out gear on the apparatus in the appropriate manner and update the PASSPORT at that time.

Arriving personnel will remove the name tag from the PASSPORT of the crew member they are replacing. The removed name tag should be returned to the helmet of the member being replaced.

Company Officers are responsible for ensuring that the PASSPORTS and helmet I.D.'s always remain current. PASSPORTS must reflect only those members presently assigned to the company and only those crew members about to enter the hazard zone.

The On-Duty member assigned as the operator of ALS83 that shift will place his/her name tag on the PASSPORT for E83 at the beginning of the shift. In the event that M83 is detailed away from E83, the operator of ALS83 will place his name tag on the PASSPORT for the medic unit, and the Officer of E83 will remove that name from the PASSPORT of the engine.

Off-duty paramedics responding to all-calls and operating ALS83 will place their name tags on the PASSPORT for the medic unit, and deliver that PASSPORT to the first arriving engine company upon arrival at the scene.

Members responding to runs off-duty will give their personal name tag to the officer to be placed on the Passports.

All Passports and personal name tag equipment will be considered safety equipment and will be inspected annually, and will be repaired or replaced as soon as possible.

## **RULES OF THUMB**

---

PASSPORT implementation should consider the following basic rules of thumb:

- A) PASSPORTS never enter the hazard zone.
- B) PASSPORTS must be maintained at the point of entry to the hazard zone.
- C) PASSPORTS must reflect only those personnel presently in the hazard zone.
- D) Crews must turn in their PASSPORTS upon entering and must retrieve their PASSPORTS upon exit from the hazard zone

## **PASSPORT IMPLEMENTATION – THE INCIDENT**

---

Implementation of the PASSPORT system will occur at any incident requiring the use of S.C.B.A., any large scale incident, an incident covering a large geographical area, or as command deems necessary.

The objective of the PASSPORT system is to always have crew members PASSPORTS near the point of entry and that they are accurate, reflecting only those members entering the hazard zone. For those situations where it is not clear-cut as to when or where to turn in the PASSPORT, crews should consider the above cited objective for their decision.

For single company incidents, the PASSPORT should be placed on the operator's door of the apparatus upon arrival at the scene. The operator will assume accountability Division/Group responsibilities.

For multiple company assignments, the PASSPORT system will function as follows:

- A) The first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial accountability location for all later arriving companies to that side of the incident, and will be announced by Command.
- B) The PASSPORT of the first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident shall be placed on the operator's door.
- C) The operator becomes the initial Accountability Officer until PASSPORTS are collected later in the incident by the Division/Group or Accountability Officer who assumes Accountability responsibilities.

D) The Company Officer of later arriving units should be responsible for making sure that the PASSPORTS of his/her crew are taken to the initial apparatus (accountability location).

E) The operator of the first apparatus (accountability location) will assemble the PASSPORTS from these additional companies, and mount them on the status board at the accountability location.

F) As the incident escalates, and Division/Group Officers and/or Accountability Officers are assigned, all PASSPORTS will be delivered to these officers prior to entry into the hazard zone.

G) When the Division/Group Officer is operating within the hazard zone, PASSPORTS must remain outside the zone with a designated Accountability Officer (i.e., initial operator or staff officer). A Division/Group Officer operating within the hazard zone will not have PASSPORT Accountability responsibilities.

H) Command must maintain an awareness of which companies are serving as Accountability locations, and provide this information to companies being assigned to each geographic side of the incident (Division/Group).

## **POINT OF ENTRY CONTROL**

---

PASSPORTS will remain with the designated Accountability Officer near the "point of entry" to the hazard zone. Upon entry, crews will turn in their PASSPORT. Upon exit, the crew must retrieve their PASSPORTS. The Accountability status board will contain only the PASSPORTS of those crews in the hazard zone.

Crews exiting at a different location than the original point of entry must immediately notify their original Division/Group Officer and/or Accountability Officer of their changed status. The PASSPORT must then be retrieved. The Accountability Officer will remove the initial PASSPORT from the status board and hold same until retrieval by the company in question.

Where physical distance/barriers prevent easy retrieval of the PASSPORT, and where the crew is being assigned to another Division/Group, a "make-up" PASSPORT must be assembled. Crew members will provide the new Division/Group Officer another name tag. Where another "make-up" PASSPORT is not available, the individual name tags will be placed on the accountability status board. The original Division/Group Officer and/or Accountability Officer must be made aware of the change.

When crews from companies on the scene are split into smaller teams, the use of the "A" or "B" PASSPORTS for that company will be initiated and remain in effect as long

as the crew is split. If the crew is again combined for another assignment, the original company PASSPORT will be used.

## **MULTI-STORY/HIGHRISE**

---

Multi-story or high rise incidents present only a minor modification in the standard approach to PASSPORT accountability.

- A) The first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident remains the accountability location.
- B) All arriving apparatus will take their PASSPORTS to the appropriate Accountability location as they are assigned.
- C) Once a lobby Division/Group is established, all crews reporting to the building will deliver their PASSPORTS to the lobby Division/Group.
- D) The lobby Division/Group will be responsible for collecting the PASSPORTS of the initial companies as soon as possible, and may use incoming crews reporting to the building to pick them up.
- E) The Accountability Division/Group Officer will collect the PASSPORTS of all crews assigned to fire combat positions. Command will assign Accountability Officers at each point of entry to stairwells, etc.
- F) PASSPORTS for crews assigned to the lobby Division/Group or any support Division/Groups within the building (non-hazard zone crews) will be maintained by the Division/Group Officer.

## **TERMINATING THE PASSPORT SYSTEM**

---

PASSPORT accountability will be maintained throughout a report of "fire under control," at which time a "PAR" for all crew members must be obtained. Command will determine at that time, based on the situation and risk, as to whether to continue with the PASSPORT system. If visibility is still impaired or a significant hazardous condition still exists, Command may choose to extend the PASSPORT system further.

Upon termination and release from the incident, Company Officers and crew members will ensure that the PASSPORT is returned to their apparatus and that the PASSPORT is up-to-date.

## **RAPID ASSISTANCE TEAMS**

---

Command will assign "Rapid Assistance Teams" (RAT's) to each side of the incident or point of entry when an incident escalates and/or crews are operating at a special hazard (i.e., confined space rescue) . These crews will serve as stand-by rescue teams during all hazardous operations.

## **LOST OR MISSING FIRE FIGHTER**

---

An absent member of any crew will automatically be assumed lost or trapped in the hazard zone until otherwise determined safe. Company Officers must immediately report any absent members to Division/Group Officers or Command. For any reports of missing firefighters, Command must initiate an immediate roll call "PAR" of all companies assigned to duty in the hazard zone. Command must also send the Rapid Assistance Team (RAT) to the last reported working area of the lost firefighter to begin a search. Simultaneously with these actions, Command must adjust on-scene strategies to a priority search and rescue effort.

## **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTABILITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

---

Accountability will only work with a strong personal commitment to the safety system. This commitment involves the following responsibilities:

**FIREFIGHTER** - Responsible for staying with his/her crew at all times and ensuring that his/her name tag is on the PASSPORT at all times.

**OPERATOR** - The operator of the first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial Accountability Officer. The operator must collect PASSPORTS from crews and apparatus assigned to his/her side of the incident (Division/Group) and manage accountability until relieved by a Division/Group Officer or Accountability officer.

**COMPANYOFFICER** - Responsible for keeping his/her crew intact at all times and that the PASSPORT is current and accurate. The PASSPORT must reflect only those personnel entering the hazard zone. The PASSPORT must be turned in at the point of entry and retrieved upon exit.

**DIVISION/GROUP OFFICER** - Responsible for accounting for all crews in his/her assigned Division/Group, maintaining an awareness of their exact location, and maintaining accurate PASSPORTS of those crews in the hazard zone.

In those situations where the Division/Group Officer must enter the hazard zone, PASSPORTS will continue to be managed by the Operator of the first apparatus to each side of the incident or a designated Accountability Officer for his/her Division/Group.

**ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER** - Responsible for teaming up with the assigned Division/Group Officer and to manage all accountability for that Division/Group. The Accountability Officer must collect all PASSPORTS from operators, apparatus or the Division/Group Officer. The Accountability Officer must maintain close coordination with other Accountability Officers.

**ACCOUNTABILITY DIVISION/GROUP OFFICER** - Responsible for managing Accountability Officers and system. Initiates "PAR's" at tactical benchmarks or as needed.

**COMMAND** - Responsible for tracking the location of all crews. Must advise later assigned crews of which apparatus is serving as the accountability location for PASSPORTS or that the Division/Group or Accountability Officer will be accepting PASSPORTS at the point of entry.

**SAFETY OFFICER** - Responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards, unsafe situations, and developing measures for ensuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer shall report directly to Command, and be a member of the Command Staff.