

4.11 Personal Accountability System



City of Oak Point Department of Public Safety Fire Department

TITLE: Personal Accountability System

SECTION/TOPIC: General Operations

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These SOPs/SOGs are based on FEMA guidelines FA-197

1.0 PURPOSE

Purpose:

To establish a system that accounts for all firefighters and other emergency workers operating within the hazard zone of an incident at any given time. Use of the system will provide enhanced safety for individual emergency workers and will provide the command staff an improved means to track and account for all personnel.

2.0 SCOPE

This SOP/SOG pertains to all personnel in this organization.

3.0 POLICY/GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

General Principles

Command Responsibilities

- Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident
- Command will always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attack planning.
- Command must consider and react to any barriers to effective accountability.

Sector Officer Responsibilities

- Sector officer will always maintain an accurate accountability and awareness of the location of crew in the hazard zones.
- Sector Officers will remain in their assigned sector area and will maintain close supervision of assigned crews.

Crew Responsibilities

- All crews will be accountable to command or to a sector. There will be no free -lance operations
- Crews arriving on the scene of any emergency should remain intact unless individual crew members are given specific orders by Command to attach themselves to other crews or sector.
- A minimum crew size will be considered to be two (2) personnel.
- An officer or other designated supervisor will supervise each crew entering a hazard zone.
- Each crew entering a hazard zone will have an operating portable radio set on the assigned Denton County Fire Dispatch OPS 13. If the radio fails while in the hazard zone the crew will exit unless there is another working radio with the crew, or available in that work area with another crew.

Responder Boards

- A RESPONDER BOARD consists of a 3"x 5" plastic card with the company's I.D. tags attached to it. The Responder Board will contain the names of all personnel on the apparatus. Each fire department engine, medic, and brush will carry a Responder board.
- The Responder Board will always be located on the dash of the apparatus on the passenger side. A Velcro strip will allow the Responder Board to be affixed on the dash and easily removed.
- Each firefighter will be issued two (2) individual personnel accountability tags (PATS or par tags), 1 name tag will be affixed to the responder board, and 1 name tag will be kept on the bunker coat.
- Company officers will be responsible for insuring that the Responder Board always reflects only currently assigned personnel.
- When entering a hazard zone with a partial crew (i.e. apparatus operator remains at the engine), the company officer must remove name tag of those members not entering the hazard zone.
- The name tag of crew members not entering the hazard zone may be returned to the member, or placed in a bunker coat pocket,

- Responder Boards must reflect only those names of the firefighters presently assigned to the company and only those crew members about to enter the hazard zone.

Responder Boards Rules

- Responder Boards never enter the hazard zone.
- Responder Boards must be maintained at the point of entry to the hazard zone.
- Responder Boards must reflect only personnel presently in the hazard zone.
- Crews must turn in their Responder Boards upon entering, and must retrieve their Responder Boards from the appropriate accountability officer upon leaving the hazard zone.
- Responder Boards will be used at sectors outside the hazard zone, such as Rehab.

Tactical Benchmarks

- Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The personal accountability report (or "PAR") involves a roll call of personnel assigned to an incident.
- For the company officer, a "PAR" is a confirmation that all crew members are visually accounted for.
 - Example: "Engine 521 to command. I have a "PAR." (All crew members are accounted for.)
- For the sector officers, a "PAR" is an accounting for all crew members of all companies in their sector.
 - Example: "East sector to Aubrey Command. I have a "PAR." (All crews within the sector are accounted for.)
- Personnel accountability should be conducted on a face-to-face basis within the sector whenever possible.
- A personnel accountability report will be required for the following situations.
- When a report of a missing or trapped firefighter is received (Command initiates a PAR for all crews on the scene.)

- An absent member of any crew will automatically be assumed lost or trapped in the hazard zone until otherwise determined to be safe. Company officers will immediately report any absent members to the Sector Officer or Command.
- For any reports of missing firefighters, Command must request the next greater assignment or alarm (i.e. first alarm goes to second alarm or additional mutual aid is requested.)
- Command will initiate an immediate roll call (PAR) of all companies assigned to duty in the hazard zone.
- Command will send a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) to the last reported working area of the lost firefighter to begin search.
- Command will adjust on-scene strategies to a priority search and rescue efforts.
- When the mode of attack changes from offensive to defensive (Command initiates a PAR for all crews on the scene.
- Any time a sudden hazards event occurs during the incident flashover, backdraft, collapse, etc. (a PAR is initiated by command.)
- Company officers of crews responsible for search and rescue will insure they have a PAR for their crews at the time they report an "all clear".
- Every 20 min. of ongoing operations, a par will be initiated

Accountability Officers

- Accountability Officers may be apparatus operators, sector officers, or personnel specifically assigned to sector to serve as Accountability Officers
- The first engine to each geographic side of an incident will serve as the initial accountability location. The apparatus operator will serve as the initial accountability officer.
- Command must maintain an awareness of which engine companies are serving as accountability locations, and provide this information to companies being assigned to each sector of the incident.
- All crews entering the incident will deliver their Responder Board to the accountability location closest to their "point of entry" into the hazard zone (large incidents)
- As sectors are implemented, sector officers will manage Responder Boards only if they are not entering the hazard zone (i.e. defensive operations.)

- As additional personnel or staff officers arrive on the scene, they will be assigned accountability responsibilities for given sectors.
- As an incident escalates and staff officers fill accountability positions for each sector, Command will assign the accountability officer a radio channel. Depending on the situation, accountability officers will report to either Command or Logistics.
- At incidents with a critical need for accountability officers to assist sector officers, Command may choose to split up a company and distribute the crew members to different sectors to act as accountability officers.

Accountability Sectors

- As the incident escalates to the level that accountability officers are assigned, Command should implement an Accountability sector to coordinate accountability officers.
- The Accountability Sector Officer may be assigned to Logistics and may be assigned a separate radio channel. The Accountability Sector Officer should be located in the Command Post.
- The Accountability Sector Officer's responsibilities include:
 - Developing and implementing a plan designed to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.
 - Insuring that accountability officers are assigned in each sector as necessary.
 - Requesting and managing sector resources as needed.
 - Providing progress reports to Command.
 - Initiating PAR'S upon benchmarks or as needed.