



Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS

Standard Operating Procedure

DOCUMENT DETAILS

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Subject: Personnel Accountability	Section: Fire/Rescue Operations
Authorized: Deputy Chief Paul Supko	Revision Date: N/A

Applicability: ☒ Volunteer ☒ Career

I. PURPOSE

Accountability procedures enhance firefighter safety while operating on emergency incidents by providing the Incident Commander (IC) with a system to track the number of personnel operating inside of the IDLH and their respective area of operation. While it is critical to account for every member on the incident scene, the incident accountability system's primary purpose is to account for all firefighters operating within an incident's hazard zone. This system will provide enhanced personal safety for the individual firefighter by providing the IC an improved means for tracking and accounting for the location of all personnel working in the hazard zone.

II. DEFINITIONS

Personnel Accountability Tag (PAT): An identification card that has a snap ring hook and includes the name, ID number, and specialty team membership.

Apparatus Collector Ring: A large ring with a unit identification tag attached. Size: 5"x3".
Colors: Engines – blue, Trucks – red, Medics – yellow, Squads – green, Brush Units – black, Chief/Duty vehicles – white, Special Units & Utility Trucks – burnt orange.

Accountability Control Board: A device used to record unit/crew/personnel assignments during any Level II accountability situation as directed by the Incident Commander.

Level I Accountability: The minimum level of accountability used during fire and rescue incidents.

Level II Accountability: Used when it has been determined that the incident requires more stringent accountability. When implemented, "Point of Entry Control" will be established. Examples would include high-rise fires, confined space or trench rescues, hazardous materials incidents, etc.

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR): A physical check of personnel working on an incident, performed by their supervisor, and reported to the Incident Commander via the organizational framework in place at the time the PAR is taken.

III. POLICY

Department of Fire & EMS Personnel in Carroll County shall abide by the established practices of personnel accountability and safety while operating on incidents.

A. Personnel Accountability

1. The personnel accountability system shall be implemented on all emergency incidents where personnel operate in an IDLH, potential IDLH, or hazardous area when using SCBA, or at the Incident Commander's (IC) discretion.
2. The hazard zone includes but is not limited to the following:
 - a. A structure reported to be on fire or in proximity to the structure during exterior operations.
 - b. Reported interior gas leak.
 - c. A confined space, trench, or collapse.
 - d. Units operating on the water, ice or railway.
3. It is the responsibility of the first due Command Officer to track units assigned to the incident throughout the call, beginning at dispatch until the emergency has been mitigated.
4. IC will track all units operating within an IDLH environment.
5. Use of the Accountability System does not replace a company officer's primary responsibility of supervising their crew or maintaining crew integrity.
 - a. The company officer is responsible for crew safety by maintaining communications with Branch/Group/Division supervisors or IC.
6. When a member is assigned to a portable radio associated by virtue of their "riding position," that member must wear the radio whenever entering an IDLH environment.
 - a. No members will enter an IDLH without a portable radio.
 - b. Officers will not wear their assigned portable when riding an apparatus. The Officer will wear the unit officer portable.
7. Other than highly unusual situations, crews will always enter and exit together.

8. Personnel shall not separate from their crew for independent action or attach to another crew without their company officer's permission.
9. Once assigned to operate in a specific geographical area or a B/D/G, and outside of an unforeseen emergency, crews are prohibited from moving from that location without the IC's permission.
10. All personnel shall maintain contact with their company officer by at least one of the following:
 - a. Voice
 - b. Touch
 - c. Sight
 - d. Portable radio
11. Members arriving in an officer's car, SUV, medic unit or personal vehicle will not enter the hazard area without the incident commander and interior crew leader being aware.
 - a. Members arriving in an officer's car, SUV or personal vehicle and unable to safely join their crew will stage at the command post for an assignment.
 - b. Personnel arriving by SUV or personal vehicle will not operate independently and should attach to a unit operating on scene.
 - i. Ex. Utility 8 arrives on scene with 2 personnel. U8 is assigned to supplement Engine 81's crew.
 - c. The member's company officer shall give specific instructions as to the crew's location within the hazard zone.
 - d. The member shall proceed directly to the location identified by their company officer.
 - e. The member shall perform no task within the hazard zone before joining up with their crew.
12. Crews may not leave or relocate from their assigned working location without the approval of the Incident Commander.

B. Program Administration

1. The Department shall be responsible for the countywide PAT program.
2. Should a volunteer company decide to purchase and issue their own PAT's, that company shall comply fully with this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
3. The Department shall be responsible for purchasing a suitable software program, a printer compatible with said software, and all supplies for the PAT program. The Department will supply tags and snap rings with each tag.

C. Personnel Accountability Tags (PAT)

1. **Green Tag:** Personnel qualified and authorized to operate in an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) atmosphere.
2. **Red Tag:** Issued to all other non-interior firefighting personnel.
 - a. These persons shall be EMS only, exterior only, Fire Police, or personnel currently enrolled in training.
3. **Advanced Technical Rescue (ATR), Dive & Hazmat:** Any person who has been accepted to one of the specialty teams of the Department shall have an identifier added to their PAT to identify them as a member of that team regardless of tag color.
 - a. **ATR Team:** YELLOW band with “ATR” printed within the band.
 - b. **Water Rescue Team:** BLUE band with “WATER RESCUE” printed within the band.
 - c. **Hazmat Team:** ORANGE band with “Hazmat” printed within the band.
4. **Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM):** Members shall be issued identification cards to allow access to emergency scenes to meet the needs of personnel.
5. **Administrative Officers and team leaders** shall be issued identification cards as needed for official meetings, functions, etc.
6. Each specialty team member shall be issued an extra set of tags to be kept with them at all times. This is necessary so that if the member arrives to an incident in their personal vehicle, they can be accounted for.
 - a. Regardless of how many specialty teams a person may be a part of, only one additional set of tags will be needed and issued.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Implementation and Compliance

1. All operational personnel will be issued a PAT that will be kept with their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). They will be attached to an existing “D” ring on their turnout coat/PPE when not in use.
2. The PAT shall be considered an issued item of personal protective equipment and will be considered property of Carroll County Fire/EMS Department.

3. A PAT will be issued when a request is made by the company's official having the authority to request tags.
4. Each company will utilize "observer" tags for all ride-alongs to use when riding any apparatus.
5. An EXTERIOR PAT will be issued to all firefighter and EMS trainees prior to starting training.
 - a. This PAT will not allow a person to operate in any area that may be hazardous (other than training scenarios).
6. Regular inspection and maintenance of PAT's will be the responsibility of the Company Chief or supervising DFEMS Officer.
7. If a PAT is lost, misplaced, or damaged, replacement tags shall be requested in the same way an initial tag request is made.
8. Personnel who resign or are terminated from DFEMS or any company will surrender all PAT's issued to the chief of that company or supervising DFEMS Officer.
 - a. The PAT will be returned to the Assistant Chief of Training, Health, and Safety.
9. To ensure accuracy, the Company Chief or Supervising DFEMS Officers will ensure that career personnel maintain their PAT.

B. Utilization of the Personnel Accountability System

1. Level I Accountability

- a. The unit supervisor shall be responsible for all personnel riding on the apparatus and verifying that the proper PAT's are on the Apparatus Collector Ring. The Apparatus Collector Ring will remain on the unit unless otherwise directed by the Incident Commander (IC) or the Safety Officer.
- b. IC is responsible tracking units, and their staffing level, operating in the hazard zone via Entry Reports.

2. Level II Accountability

- a. When the IC or the Safety Officer determines that the incident requires more stringent accountability, he/she will implement “Point of Entry Control” utilizing the Accountability Control Board.
 - i. Personnel will be designated by IC to collect all Apparatus Collector Rings and bring them to the Command Post.
- b. To implement “Point of Entry Control,” the designated member(s) will monitor all points of entry into the structure, confined space, haz-mat hot zone, dive operation, trench collapse or any other areas deemed necessary.
 - i. Members assigned this function shall assume the radio designation “Entry Control.”
- c. “Entry Control” shall record:
 - i. Each member’s name
 - ii. The company number
 - iii. Time of entry
 - iv. Assignment
 - v. Beginning air pressure on any breathing apparatus
- d. As members exit a control point, the time of exit and the ending air pressure should be recorded. Members who must exit at a point remote from the control point shall inform “Entry Control” of their exit immediately.

IV. RESCISION

This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding Personnel Accountability or similar content previously issued for personnel of the Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS.

V. RELATED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES / DOCUMENTS

Policy 4.1.1 Incident Management System

Policy 4.1.3 Radio Reports

VI. ATTACHMENTS

None