

POLAND

ACCOUNTABILITY PROCEDURES PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM PROCEDURES

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

This procedure is a Personnel Accountability System (PAS) for emergency incidents. The purpose is to enhance incident scene safety by providing a mechanism to account for personnel, at any given time, working at an emergency incident.

All personnel are responsible for working within the command and safety systems at an incident. All personnel are responsible for watching out for their own safety and the safety of others.

Command is responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attack planning, and must consider and react to any barriers to effective accountability. Command must maintain an accurate awareness of who is at the incident, where they are working, and what they are doing.

Administration is responsible for providing the materials needed to carry out the PAS and promptly provide replacements for lost or damaged equipment. Administration, with input from all sections of the organization will periodically update the PAS to match departmental changes.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Accountability: The ability and responsibility of the Command Staff to identify the assignment, location, and status of all resources committed to an emergency scene.

Accountability Checkpoint: A point at which crews drop off their Personnel Accountability Tags (PATs) before beginning an assignment.

Accountability Officer: A person assigned by the IC to assist with accountability.

Back-Up Personnel Accountability Tag (Back-Up): A second PAT issued to each member. A back-up is used when a member's main PAT is lost. Back-ups are also used for high-rise incidents.

Blank PAT: A PAT consisting of a laminated blank, white card which is used as a temporary PTC for mutual-aid personnel, outside agency representatives, and members who have lost their PATs. When a blank PAT is used, a minimum of the person's name and organization should be written on the PAT with a grease pencil.

Command: The incident commander operating under the organization's Incident Management System.

Crew: A work team consisting of two or more personnel with a communication link to a command officer.

Crew Leader: A company officer or other person put in charge of a crew. "Crew Leader" often means the same as company officer.

Fast Team (F.A.S.T. or R.I.T.): A Team specifically assigned to stand by, prepared to assist/rescue operating personnel who become trapped or endangered. One FAST TEAM or R.I.T. should be established for each accountability checkpoint.

Hazard Area (HA): Any area that requires SCBA or in which a member is at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment in which he or she is working. Personnel in the HA would include those working inside a structure that is on fire or reported to be on fire, in the collapse zone of a structure, at grass or wild land fires, in hazardous materials incident hot or warn zones, inside or in the immediate area of confined spaces, near to or inside of trenches, etc.

Level 1 Accountability: The accountability procedure used in the initial stages of an incident. Crews/personnel arriving in apparatus are permitted to leave their PATs on the apparatus mounted rings providing that the apparatus is parked within 50 ft. of the incident. If the situation is not or will not be deemed under control within approximately 10-15 minutes, Level 2 Accountability will be initiated.

Level 2 Accountability: The accountability procedure used on longer duration or more complex incidents. When Level 2 Accountability is used, supervisory personnel must track the assignment, approximate location, time entering, and expected time out of each crew/person under their supervision.

Make-Up Kit: A kit containing the materials that command needs to make temporary PATs for mutual aid personnel, personnel from outside agencies, and personnel or crews whose PATs have been lost or damaged.

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR): A roll call of all personnel at an incident. Company officers (crew leaders) acknowledge the number of personnel present in their crews, and persons in charge of accountability checkpoints verify that the number persons reported in, matches the numbers of PATs they possess. PARs should be conducted face-to-face whenever possible.

Personnel Accountability Tag (PAT): An approximately 1" x 3" plastic tag (w/clip) containing the member's name and unit number. The PAT is the primary hardware component of the PAS.

Status Board: A piece of equipment used by command staff to track personnel when Level 2 Accountability is used.

3.0 EQUIPMENT

3.1 All personnel will use the standard PAS equipment.

1. Standard personal equipment will include:
 - 2 PATs
2. Company/Apparatus equipment will include:
 - One apparatus-mounted ring for use as an account ability checkpoint.
 - One ring mounted at each seat/group of seats.
 - One portable status board.
 - Grease pencils.
 - Blank PATs.
3. Command vehicle equipment will include:
 - Portable status boards.
 - One Command status board.
 - One Make-up Kit.
 - Grease Pencils.

3.2 All personnel are responsible for maintaining their assigned equipment in a clean, legible (if applicable) condition or have it replaced.

3.3 PATs shall be stored with each member's personal protective equipment.

3.4 BACK-UPS shall be stored in a pocket of each member's personal protective equipment to as to minimize damage and prevent loss.

4.0 INITIATING THE SYSTEM

4.1 General Concept:

The PAS is an assignment-based tracking system. This means that as a crew is assigned to an area of function, they must leave their PATs at an accountability checkpoint. Upon completion of a task or swapping of crews, the crew that is existing must retrieved their PATs from the accountability checkpoint.

4.2 Rules of Thumb for PATs:

- § PATs never enter the hazard area of an incident.
- § PATs are managed by assignment.
- § PATs are turned in upon receiving an assignment.
- § PATs are retrieved upon completion of or leaving an assignment.

4.3 Crew Concept/Buddy System:

Among the most important concepts of any IMS or accountability system is the concept of the crew. All personnel working in a hazardous area must work as part of a crew using the buddy system. The members must maintain the ability to communicate with each other through sight, touch, or hearing. Therefore, if a crew needs a pike pole, the entire crew must exit the hazard area, to get the pike pole-unless they can maintain the ability to communicate as stated above. The same applies with SCBA cylinders, other tools, etc.

4.4 **Initial Stages: Level 1 Accountability**

A successful PAS must not impede or hinder the initial response efforts of the first arriving units. If a system cannot fulfill this requirement, the compassion and desire to perform of most emergency responders will not allow the system to work.

During this state in the incident, it is assumed that the IC can keep track of the few people that are on scene. Even though personnel may be allowed to leave their PATs on an apparatus, they are still responsible to get an assignment from the incident commander and work within the IMS. The PAS is a tracking system and NOT a second incident management system that allows a free-for-all during the first 10-15 minutes of the incident.

The “initial stage” should not last any longer than the duration of 1 air cylinder, or approximately 10-15 minutes. There are two reasons the IC should shift from Level 1 to Level 2 Accountability.

1. The IC determines that the situation cannot be deemed “under control” during approximately 10-15 minutes.
2. The IC determines that implementing Level 2 Accountability would assist him/her with incident management.

When the IC shifts from Level 1 to Level 2 Accountability, he/she will have all of the PATs of personnel currently on the scene picked up from apparatus and arrange them on a status board. Personnel arriving after this point in time will then report to the IC or the Staging Area Manager (whichever is appropriate) to turn in their PATs and receive an assignment. A switch from Level 1 to Level 2 Accountability must be communicated to all personnel.

Sustained Operations: Level II Accountability

Once Level 2 Accountability has been established, all crews (personnel) will be tracked with regard to assignment, approximate location, time entering, and the expected time out following the parameters of an incident management system, personnel will always have an assignment - Fire Attack, Command, Ventilation, Rehab, Staging, etc. When a crew is

assigned (or reassigned), they should pick up their PATs from their former supervisor and take it to their new supervisor. The crew leader/officer is responsible for the crew's PATs once the crew has been established.

4.7 **Circles of Accountability**

A concept called circles of accountability is used for supervisory personnel. On an incident where Branches, Sections, etc. are staffed, the IC will only hold the PATs of the supervisory personnel that he/she directly supervises. The same applies for the next level of supervisors under the IC, and so on - except for supervisor entering the hazard area must give the PAT and the PATs of their crew(s) to their immediate supervisor to avoid having the PATs entering the hazard area.

The supervisors who enter the hazard crew must give their PAT and PATs of their crew(s) to their immediate supervisor to avoid having PATs entering the hazard area.

4.8 **Apparatus Operators**

During certain incidents, (structural fire fighting for example), the PATs of apparatus operators should remain with their apparatus. If an apparatus operator/driver leaves his/her apparatus to work as part of a crew, then the operator's PAT should be with the crew's PATs.

4.9 **The Safety Officer**

Accountability maintenance is not the Safety Officer's job. The responsibility of accountability maintenance is shared by the IC and the supervisors of all functions/areas of the incident. At a larger incident, the IC may decide to appoint an assistant, or Accountability Officer.

4.10 **Apparatus Hardware**

Each apparatus should be equipped with a ring at each seat for use by the person riding in that seat, and an external ring in a convenient and standard location that is use by other companies/personnel when the apparatus is used as an initial accountability checkpoint. Examples of an external location would be a pump panel, driver's compartment door, etc.

4.11 **Status Boards**

Level 2 Accountability will require the use of status boards to keep track of personnel. Status boards used for the PAS should be integrated with command status boards. In addition, PAS status boards should be customized to fit the needs of the organization. There are 2 basic status board sizes. The first is a small size that the IC may use for less complex incidents, or by supervisors at more complex incidents. The second size is a

larger size which is used by the IC or Operations Section Chief at large/complex incidents. Status boards should have a place for the use to organize PAS's take notes, and record vital accountability information such as crew location, function, time-in, and expected time-out.

5.0 PROCEDURE

- 5.1 Initiation of the PAS begins with arrival on the scene. *The incident commander will communicate a decision not to initiate the PAS, otherwise, initiation of the PAS is automatic.* If the initial incident commander does not implement the PAS, this person or this person's replacement may initiate the system at any later time during the incident.
- 5.2 All personnel entering the HA must work in a crew. Crews go in together, stay together, and come out together at all times for all reasons. If the communication link to Command fails, the crew must exit. All crews must work for Command or a Sector, Group, Division, etc. **“Freelancing” by individuals or crews will not be permitted.**
- 5.3 Level 1 Accountability - Initial Operations: To provide for rapid action during the initial stages of an incident, the following procedure is recommended:
 - A. *When personnel are assigned to a specific apparatus seat:* The PATs should be placed on the appropriate apparatus ring, which is mounted on each seat of the apparatus. When the company arrives on scene, personnel leave their PATs in place, providing their apparatus is parked within 50 feet of the incident. If they do not park within 50 feet of the incident, the crew should bring their PATs to any apparatus which is supplying a fire stream. Any apparatus supplying a fire stream is considered a temporary accountability checkpoint. Each apparatus should be equipped with a ring at each seat for use by the company members, and an external ring in a convenient and standard location that is used by other companies/personnel when the apparatus is used as an initial accountability checkpoint.
 - B. *Members arriving in personal vehicles or staff vehicles:* Check in with the IC or Staging for assignment and leave their PAT with the IC or Staging.
 - C. *Members who respond to a station to pick up an apparatus or who are assigned to more than one apparatus during a duty tour:* Members should place their PATs on the ring at their seat on the apparatus when boarding. When the crew arrives on scene, they leave their PATs in place, providing their apparatus is parked within 50 feet of the incident. If they do not park within 50 feet of the incident, the crew should bring their PATs to any apparatus which is supplying a fire stream. Any apparatus supplying a fire stream is considered a temporary accountability checkpoint. Each apparatus should be equipped with a ring at each seat for use by the company members, and an external ring in a convenient and

standard location that is used by other companies/personnel when the apparatus is used as an initial accountability checkpoint.

- 5.4 Level 2 Accountability - Prolonged Operations: As Branches, Divisions, Groups, Sectors, etc. are set up, the officers in charge of each of these functions will serve as the accountability checkpoint person and will be responsible for the accountability of the crews that are working for them. Additional accountability officers may be assigned and used by the IC as needed.
- 5.4.1 Once assigned, crew leaders are accountable for their crews' PATs. Each crew leader carries the PATs with them on a scene, and they are passed off to the officer in charge of each area or function of the incident as the crew enters. When the crew leaves the area or function, it retrieves its PATs and carries them to the next assignment. If a crew exits from a different point than it went in, it must immediately notify its accountability checkpoint and then retrieve its PATs as soon as possible.
- 5.5 People in charge of accountability checkpoints must stay in close proximity (but outside of the HA) to the crews that they are supervising. **PATs and the people possessing them may not enter the HA.** People in charge of accountability checkpoints shall use a status board to monitor the following for each crew:
 - A. Names of the members;
 - B. Approximate location;
 - C. Task (crews will be identified by their task or function);
 - D. Time of entry;
 - E. Expected time out.
- 5.5.1 **High Rise Operations:** For incidents involving high-rise buildings, each crew will leave their BACK-Ups with the Lobby Control. The crew shall then give their PATs to the person in charge of the Division, Group, Sector, etc. for whom they are working.
- 5.6 **PAS Termination:** The PAS will be maintained until all companies/personnel have left the scene.

6.0 PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTS (PARs)

An essential part of any accountability system is a series of Personnel Accountability Reports (PARs). A PAR is the IC's way of making sure that everyone is accounted for. PARs are accomplished by the IC contacting each person that he or she supervises. In turn, each supervisor checks with their crew leaders who account for their personnel. The presence or absence of all members is then communicated to the IC. This procedure is similar for any number of levels within the IMS.

PAR Required Benchmarks: When to conduct a PAR (Par Passport)

- A. Any report of a missing or trapped member;
- B. Any change from offensive to defensive operations;
- C. Any sudden hazardous event at the incident (e.g., collapse, flashover, backdraft, etc.);
- D. At 30 minute intervals throughout the incident (announced by dispatch);
- E. Before leaving the scene;
- F. Any other times that the IC requires.

7.0 MUTUAL AID AND OUTSIDE AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

7.1 Outside Agencies/Mutual Aid

The PAS should be used for any members of outside agencies (gas company, electric company, public works, contractors) who must enter the hazard area to do their work. These members should be assigned to a member of the operation who is familiar with the PAS system. This member is responsible to assist the outside agency representative as needed and watch out for his/her safety. All outside agency representatives that work in the hazard area should be issued a temporary PAS. The representative should be briefed on the PAS system before his/her work begins.

- 7.2 **Make-up kits** should be used to provide PATs for mutual aid personnel and representatives from outside agencies that enter the HA. These people shall be given instruction on the use of the PAT before entering a HA. Members of outside agencies or mutual-aid crews who are not familiar with, or do not normally use, an accountability system shall be issued temporary PATs and assigned to a member of the operation.

8.0 EVACUATION SIGNAL

In the case of an imminent safety hazard, an emergency, or a switch from an interior to an exterior attack, an evacuation signal is used to notify all crews working in the hazard area to evacuate. The signal shall be multiple, long continuous blasts from all apparatus or air horns, with contemporaneous announcements regarding evacuation being made over department radios. In addition, the SEMS evacuation signal should be sent to all SCBA's.

FIRE OPERATIONS (TWO IN - TWO OUT) FOR INTERIOR STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTING

Definitions

Immediate Danger to Life and Health (IDLH) Atmosphere

An IDLH atmosphere for interior structure fires is defined as “an advanced fire that has spread inside of the building where high temperatures, heat and dense smoke” are present.

High Rise

A high rise building is any building with three (3) floors or more.

Policy

1. At least four members shall be assembled before initiating interior firefighting operations at working structural fires (except as noted Exceptions). The four members assembled for initial fire fighting operations can include any combination of members arriving separately at the incident.
2. Members operating in the IDLH atmosphere area at emergency incidents shall operate in teams of two or more. Personnel are required to wear Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and shall at no time enter an IDLH atmosphere alone. Team members operating in an IDLH atmosphere shall be in communications with each other through visual or audible means. Team members must be in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of emergency.
3. During the initial stages of an incident, two (2) of the required four-person minimum on the scene must remain outside the IDLH atmosphere as standby persons.
4. One (1) of the standby persons must provide constant awareness and maintain communications with the members of the interior team. This member is to be equipped with a portable radio. The other standby person is permitted to perform other duties outside of the IDLH atmosphere, such as Apparatus Operator or Incident Commander. The duties of this standby person must not interfere with his/her ability to perform the duties of a standby person and assist in the event of an emergency.
5. The standby persons must have full protective equipment including SCBA necessary to enter an IDLH atmosphere readily accessible in the event that the team members operating in the IDLH area need rescue.
6. If a standby person(s) is required to enter the structure to rescue a team member(s), the standby person(s) must notify the dispatcher before entering the structure. The dispatcher shall confirm that the responding OIC is aware of the actions of the actions being taken.

7. Members who arrive on the scene of a “working structural fire” prior to the assembling of four persons may initiate exterior actions in preparation for an interior attack.

Procedure

1. Non High Rise Fires

If the initial response to a scene of a “working structural fire” is with less than four persons, the personnel must wait until four persons are assembled on the scene before initiating interior fire operations in an IDLH atmosphere (except as noted in Exceptions). Two personnel must remain outside the IDLH atmosphere as the standby persons until another suppression unit arrives. Standby personnel must remain in pre-standby mode until relieved by RIT.

2. High Rise Fires

If the initial response to a scene of a “working structural fire” in a high rise building is with less than four persons, the personnel must wait until four persons are assembled on the scene before initiating interior fire operations in an IDLH atmosphere (except as noted in Exceptions). If the Officer in Charge determines that entry into the IDLH atmosphere is warranted before another unit arrives on the scene, two personnel must remain outside the IDLH atmosphere (floor below or in the enclosed stairwell) as the standby persons until another suppression unit arrives. Standby personnel must remain in pre-standby mode until relieved by RIT.

Exceptions

1. If, upon arrival at the scene, members find a situation where immediate action may prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted with less than four persons on the scene when conducted in accordance with normal size-up indicators and fireground evaluation factors.
2. If, upon arrival at the scene, members find a situation where immediate action may prevent the loss of life or serious injury, and four members are not yet on the scene, the members should carefully evaluate the level of risk that they would be exposed to by taking such actions.
3. If the risk evaluation determines that the situation warrants immediate intervention to prevent loss of life and four person have not yet arrived on the fireground, the members must notify the dispatcher of their actions. Such action is intended to apply only to those circumstances when the member=s training and experience indicate that the nature and extent of the fire call for such action to prevent the potential loss of life or serious injury. The dispatcher shall confirm that the responding chief officer is aware of the actions being taken by the first arriving unit.

4. If the decision is made to enter an IDLH atmosphere before four persons are assembled on the scene, the member making that decision must provide a statement, describing the condition(s) that warranted such action.