



General Operating Guideline # 201
Subject: Accountability of Personnel
Approved: January 19, 2017

Section 1: Purpose

Firefighter safety is top priority. This guideline outlines a Personnel Accountability System (PAS), which provides Incident Command (IC) with an effective means to maintain scene accountability for firefighters and support personnel.

Section 2: Scope

The personnel accountability guideline is applicable to Lunenburg Regional Fire and Emergency Service personnel.

Section 3: Definitions

Hazard Zone (HZ) is defined as any area that requires SCBA equipment or in which a firefighter or other assigned personnel is at risk of becoming lost, trapped or injured.

Accountability tags are easily recognizable identification tags containing the following information:

1. The fire department and firefighter's full name and current photograph.
2. A colored clip indicative of training qualification for attaching the tag to the fire fighter's gear, accountability rings or control boards.

Apparatus Tag (AT): The member will leave this tag on the apparatus upon boarding for any incident and then retrieve it when re-boarding the apparatus and clearing the scene.

Scene Tag (ST): The member will retain this tag until such time as he/she gives it to the accountability officer when assigned tasks within the Hazard Zones. The scene tag will be retrieved by the member upon safe exit of the hazard zone.

Color coding of the attachment device is indicative of the member's training level as follows:

1. A **RED** colored clip signifies a fire fighter has been trained to Level 1 Firefighter or otherwise permitted by their department to work within the Hazard Zone including interior fire attack.
2. A **SILVER** colored clip signifies a fire fighter has been trained or otherwise permitted by their fire department to work in a defensive attack with or without SCBA.
3. A **GREEN** colored clip signifies a fire fighter has been trained or otherwise permitted by their fire department to work in scene support areas other than the Hazard Zone i.e. rehab, communications, traffic control, pump operations.

Apparatus Accountability Ring (AAR) – A ring or similar device carrying identification of the apparatus and used to account for responders on and off their assigned apparatus.

Personnel Accountability Officer (PAO) – the person designated by the IC to control entry/exit of Hazard Zones.

Entry Control Board (ECB) - A control board used by the PAO to control the entry/exit of Hazard Zones containing the member's ID, time of entry, assigned location, expected duration of air supply, and anticipated time of exit

Scene Command Board (CB) – A control board utilized by the IC for managing scene assignments on complex incidents.

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Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) – Formal communication usually from the IC or PAO requesting accountability of fire ground personnel.

Emergency Evacuation Signal (EES) – Standard 3 horn blast sequence used to signal evacuation of a Hazard Zone.

MAY DAY- term used in an announcement over command channels, repeated 3 times, by anyone who becomes aware of or is involved in a life threatening situation e.g. lost or trapped firefighters.

EMERGENCY is the term used by anyone on the scene who needs to communicate an urgent message.

Level 1 Accountability: is used on small, single alarm response incidents or training exercises at which the IC is able to effectively manage the incident and personnel accountability i.e. non-structural fires, medical first response, MVAs etc.

Level 2 Accountability: is used on larger, multi alarm complex incidents or training exercises where conditions exist or may develop that pose significant risk to the responding crews i.e. large structural fires, large mutual aids responses etc.

Section 4: General Responsibility

1. The IC or designate shall initiate, direct, and control the accountability of assigned personnel at any incident or practice.
2. Incident commanders and sector officers shall not permit members to operate independently of their crews.
3. Task assignments shall be made through the sector officers. Officers shall maintain their crews intact and have constant awareness of their welfare, locations and activities
4. Individual responders shall keep their Officers informed of their activities and location. **Free-lancing is strictly prohibited.**
5. Members operating in a hazardous environment shall use the buddy system with a minimum crew of 2 members operating together in a Hazard Zone. For interior operations, crews must enter, work and exit together, through the same entrance whenever possible or through secondary egress where feasible.
6. No member shall ever be left alone. Members must maintain either sight, voice or direct contact with each other while operating in the Hazard Zone. All crews operating in Hazard Zones shall be equipped with full PPE and radios using an assigned frequency.

Section 5: General (Level 1 and Level 2) Accountability

1. A two (2) tag personnel accountability system is used.
2. The Accountability Level is determined by the IC and may change according to the complexity of the incident.
3. The Officer or designate assigned to the apparatus is responsible for personnel accountability on the apparatus.

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4. Personnel will be assigned tasks by their respective Officers.
5. The IC shall implement an accountability requirement and appoint a PAO as required on complex incidents involving multiple crews.
6. Responders arriving via non departmental vehicles shall report to their Officer before committing to any task. If required appropriate accountability tags will be provided before entry into the Hazards Zone.
7. For any assignments in the Hazard Zone, scene tags and an entry control board (ECB) must be used and all personnel must report to the PAO prior to entering the Hazard Zone.
8. All points of entry to Hazard Zone are controlled by the PAO, ensuring that only qualified firefighters (red and/or silver if the task is suitable) are so assigned.
9. Officers and crews must keep the IC and PAO informed of any changes in incident complexity, in their location, work assignment or team composition.

Section 6: On single alarm (single or multiple apparatus) incidents: Level 1 Accountability Procedures

1. On call response from station, personnel shall affix their apparatus tag (AT) to an appropriate ring or other device (AAR) on their assigned apparatus.
 - a. the AAR with member's tags will remain on each of the responding apparatus.
 - b. it is not required to use a scene tag for support activities outside of a Hazard Zone.
 - c. upon completion of operations the members will return to their apparatus and retrieve their apparatus tags.
 - d. The Officer in charge of each apparatus will report PAR for the apparatus before clearance from scene.
 - e. **for assignments in the Hazard Zone**, personnel must report to the accountability officer (PAO) and attach their scene tag to the entry control board (ECB). **Note:** As a PAO may not be established for the first responders on scene, these members will give their scene tag to the scene Officer in control. This Officer is responsible for personnel accountability until transferring the tags and responsibility to the assigned PAO once established.
 - f. upon completion of operations within the Hazard Zones, personnel:
 - i. will report to the PAO and retrieve their scene tags from the Entry Control Board (ECB)
 - ii. report back to their Officer and proceed to their next assignment or return to their apparatus and retrieve their apparatus tag
 - g. The Officer in charge of each apparatus will report PAR for the apparatus before clearance from scene.

Section 7: On complex multiple alarm incidents: Level 2 Accountability Procedures

1. On call response from station, personnel shall affix their apparatus tag (AT) to an appropriate ring or other device (AAR) on their assigned apparatus.

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2. For each apparatus arriving on scene, the Officer or designate in charge will advise the IC of arrival at scene or an incident sector e.g. water supply site, water relay position previously assigned. The IC will note the apparatus and crew on scene and assign the crew on the scene command board.
3. **For work assigned outside of Hazard Zones:**
 - a. it is not required to use a scene tag for support activities outside of a Hazard Zone.
 - b. the AAR with member's tags will remain on each of the responding apparatus.
 - c. upon completion of operations the members will return to their apparatus and retrieve their apparatus tags.
 - d. The Officer in charge of each apparatus will report PAR to the IC for the apparatus before clearance from scene.
 - e. Officers in charge of areas remote from the immediate scene and outside the hazard zones i.e. water supply sites, water shuttle, etc. will maintain accountability (Level 1) of their individual crews and provide PAR to the IC as may be requested and before clearance from the incident.
4. **For work assigned in the Hazard Zones:**
 - a. **for assignments in the Hazard Zone**, personnel must report to the accountability officer (PAO) and attach their scene tag to the entry control board (ECB). **Note:** As a PAO may not be established for the first responders on scene, these members will give their scene tag to the scene Officer in control. This Officer is responsible for personnel accountability until transferring the tags and responsibility to the assigned PAO once established.
 - b. **upon completion of operations within the hazard zones**, personnel will report to the PAO, retrieve their scene tags from the Entry Control Board (ECB), report back to their Officer and proceed to their next assignment or return to their assigned apparatus and retrieve their unit tag
 - c. **Upon completion of scene operations** personnel will return to their assigned apparatus and retrieve their apparatus tags.
 - d. the PAO will perform final accountability verification by ensuring that no tags remain on the ECB and report PAR to the IC.
 - e. the Officer in charge of each apparatus will report PAR for their apparatus and before clearance from scene.

Section 8: Rehabilitation Area Assignment and Release (Level 1 and 2)

1. When directed to REHAB, personnel working in the Hazard Zones will give their scene tag to the REHAB manager upon entry into the REHAB area.
2. Upon release from REHAB, personnel will retrieve their tag from the REHAB manager and report to their Officer or IC for reassignment or release from scene.

Section 9: Emergency Evacuation:

When it is unsafe to continue operations, the IC shall order a rapid and complete evacuation from the Hazard Zone. The order to evacuate shall be transmitted as **"Emergency! Evacuate zone immediately!"** Command shall order the air horn on of one or more apparatus at the scene to sound three long blasts. IC shall conduct a roll call following the order to evacuate.

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Section 10: Personnel Accountability Report (PAR)

The IC or Sector officer may call for a personnel accountability report (PAR) at any time to verify personnel accountability during scene operations.

A PAR is mandatory when:

1. an unexpected catastrophic event occurs, e.g. a flash over, back draft or structural collapse.
2. there is any MAYDAY call or order to evacuate
3. there is any report of a trapped or missing firefighter
4. the operations are under control and the scene is being cleared

Officers must verify accountability for their assigned personnel and immediately report any absent member to the IC.

On notification that a crew does not have PAR, any absent member will be assumed lost or trapped. An attempt to communicate (radio or other means) with the missing member will be done immediately.

If there is still no PAR, the IC will immediately send a rescue team to the last reported working area of the lost fire fighter and begin search and rescue.

The rescue is top priority at the incident and sufficient resources shall immediately be assigned to conduct the rescue effort. If a member(s) have been positively been accounted for the rescue effort will be suspended.