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Committee: **Eastside:** Chief Mark Ober & Lt. Kevin Scheuerman
Midwest: Chief Steve Lawson
Northeast: Chief Ralph Hammonds
South: District Chief Tom Lakamp
Valley: Chief Todd Owens
West: Chief Rob Hursong

ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM POLICY

Purpose

This accountability system, which enhances the health and safety of all personnel, integrates incident command and accountability systems to streamline the overall management of safety at a scene. This process is conducted by “accounting” for the unit assignment, location, and task of each firefighter, beginning with the first arriving company/officer.

Policy

It shall be the responsibility of all members operating at an emergency incident to actively participate in the personnel accountability system. The personnel accountability system shall be used at all incidents as this is considered a minimum guideline.

Accountability involves a personal commitment of everyone to work within the safety system of an incident. Accountability must be an ongoing process maintained throughout the duration of the incident.

This shall be applied to all emergency operations, including training exercises, where accountability for all emergency scene personnel is essential. At the time of appointment; all personnel will be issued no less than four name tags with the: individual’s name (first initial, middle initial, last name), rank, Fire/EMS capabilities, and the department’s Hamilton County ID name.

Equipment

Passport - A plastic card etched with the respective department’s name and vehicle identification, and covered with Velcro “loops” to accommodate easy attachment of name tags. The underside of the passport has Velcro “hooks” for attachment to any of its three designated positions; this includes the driver’s door, status board, or vehicle dash area near the OIC. **See Appendix 1**

Two passports will be active on each apparatus and placed in position *prior* to the emergency incident. The first (primary) passport will contain the nametags of all the crew members **except the driver's**, and it will be placed in the designated area near the OIC. The second (secondary) passport will contain all crewmembers (**including the driver's**) and will be placed on the driver's door. The drivers label may be placed upside down only if not in the hazard zone. Those units' assigned Rapid Assistance Team (RAT) responsibilities may place their passport on an oversized, orange "RAT" background passport before delivering to the designated accountability location. **See Appendix 1**

Accountability Board or Status Board – A rigid, compact rectangular board equipped with Velcro and dry-erase capabilities, utilized by the Accountability Officer for passport arrangement. **See Appendix 2**

Name tags – Custom name tag (placed on the passport), representing each individual member on the responding company.

Responsibilities for Accountability

Command

The Incident Commander is ultimately responsible for the safety and accountability of all on-scene personnel. It is critical that accountability is managed by Command **proactively** rather than **reactively**.

Company Officer

The company officer sets the stage for effective accountability by assuring system use and accuracy. On the emergency scene, the company officer is responsible for maintaining contact with crew and supervising their assignment, location and safe operation.

Personnel

All personnel are responsible for their own nametags when not at an incident. It is the responsibility of all personnel to apply their name tags to the apparatus passport *prior* to scene arrival; Ideally, this should be done at the beginning of a shift. Individuals responding off-duty, call-in, etc. should report to command with nametags. On the emergency scene, all personnel shall operate with a mindset to promote accountability and their safety.

Accountability Officer

The first apparatus to the incident serves as the initial accountability location, with the operator of that apparatus serving as the initial Accountability Officer. In the event this operator is busy the next in operator or officer shall begin accountability. All crews entering the incident shall deliver their primary passport to the accountability location. Once additional staffing arrives, the role of accountability officer may be reassigned by the Incident Commander.

At larger scale incidents, accountability may be assigned to the first apparatus to each geographic side of the incident. The operator of that respective apparatus will serve as the initial Accountability Officer for his/her designated side. All crews entering the hazard zone will deliver

their primary passport to the accountability location closest to their "point of entry." The role of accountability officer(s) may be reassigned by the Incident Commander. This may include assigned accountability responsibilities for given groups or divisions. Accountability Officers will report directly to Command, or to a central position designated by Command.

Scene management for accountability

As crews are assigned to the hazard zone, their **primary** passport should be delivered to the Accountability Officer or Command. Their **secondary** passport should remain on their apparatus driver's door, in the event a catastrophic event occurs where a back-up plan is utilized. Apparatus passports with their respective individual personnel tag identifiers never enter the hazard zone.

CREWS ENTER, WORK AND LEAVE TOGETHER.

An important fact to remember is that a crew size must be two (2) or more.

Tactical Benchmarks

Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) involves a roll call of designation assigned, especially when the response is building and accountability has just been initiated. For the company officer, a "PAR" is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are visually accounted for. For the group, division, or branch officer, a PAR is an accounting for all crew members of *all companies assigned* to his/her group, division, or branch. A PAR should be conducted face-to-face within the company, group, division or branch whenever possible.

An example of a personnel accountability report follows: "**Command to Quint 53, do you have a PAR?**" "**Quint 53 has a PAR, on the roof near the Alpha-Bravo corner.**" Inherent in such a reply is the understanding that all individuals assigned to Quint 53 are safe and visually accounted for by the officer/senior member of the crew, and their location is confirmed.

A PAR should be requested from all resources operating in the hazard zone. Priority should first be given to those units working in the highest hazard areas. Due to the nature of their assignment, designated Rapid Assistance Team(s) (RAT) are considered to be operating in the hazard zone.

A Personnel Accountability Report is required for the following situations:

- **Missing or trapped firefighters.**
- **Mayday declaration.**
- **Any change from an offensive to defensive mode.**
- **Any sudden hazardous event at the incident - flash over, backdraft, collapse, etc.**
- **At a 20 minute elapsed time after arrival at the scene.**

Other System Components

Accountability Boards

The operator or incident commander may use status boards, for each apparatus initially. This board will assist in organizing scene accountability and command information. Accountability boards should be used to organize passports for all personnel operating in the hazard zone.

Status Boards

The Incident commander or other designated officers may use status boards for organizing staging and command information. This type of board should be independent from the accountability board.

Helmet Company Identifiers

Helmet identification should accurately reflect the company and the individuals assigned too.

Self Contained Breathing Apparatus Company Identifiers

SCBA identification if provided should accurately reflect the company and the individuals assigned too.

Equipment Specifications

Nametags are manufactured labels with Velcro “hooks” on the back. Officers will have white backgrounds, firefighters will have yellow backgrounds and EMS will have blue backgrounds. As part of this complete system, each issued helmet will have the Velcro “loops” secured under the rim to the rear of the helmet.

Name tag dimensions shall be 2 ½” L x ½” W.



Passport dimensions shall be a minimum of 3 ¾” L x 2 ¾” W, and etched with the department name and apparatus number (ANDF QUINT 101) as shown below. Velcro “loops” shall be affixed to the passport to accommodate a minimum of five name tags.

The recommended location for the primary passport is in the cab of the apparatus for easy officer accessibility. In the event you split crews for separate tasks, an A and B primary passport will be utilized, adding the need for a third passport on the apparatus.

Engines and Trucks (Ladders, Platforms and Quints) will have additional information on the passport in the lower portion.

The Engine will have the tank size followed by the pump capacity, i.e. 500/1500 GPM.

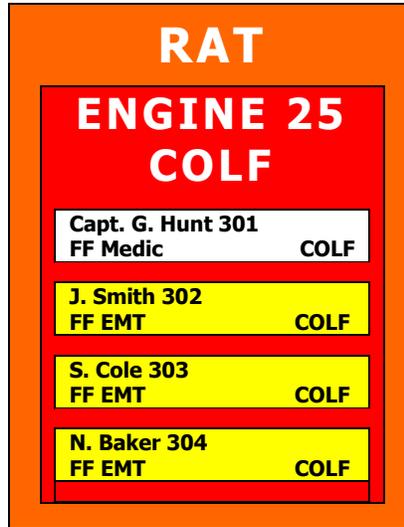
Ladders, Platforms and Quints will have the Aerial length and the pump capacity, i.e. 75’/1250 GPM.

The colors will be as follows:

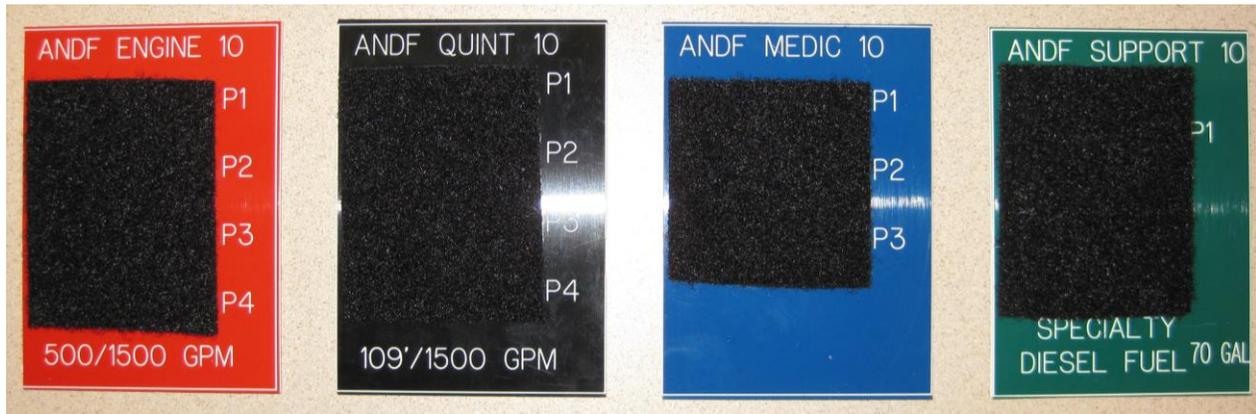
1. Engine - Red
2. Ladder, Platform or Quint - Black
3. ALS, BLS, Squad or Medic - Blue
4. Rescue, Support - Green
5. Support Agencies – Orange

APPENDIX 1 – Passport Examples

RAT passport dimensions shall be a minimum of 4¾” L x 3¾” W, and etched with the RAT name. Velcro “loops” shall be affixed to the passport to accommodate the minimum size of a passport.



Passport dimensions shall be a minimum of 3¾” L x 2¾” W, and etched with the department name and apparatus number (ANDF QUINT 101) as shown below. They could have radio designations or seat locations as options.



APPENDIX 2 – Accountability Status Boards

Accountability Boards are those designed to assist in tracking personnel in the hazard zone only.



Status Boards are those designed for tracking individuals that are not involved in the hazard zone but may be utilized for backfill, IMAT, Staging and Support Agencies.

STATUS BOARD						WFR
Location	Location	Location	Location	Location	Location	
Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	Assignment	

APPENDIX 3 – Self Contained Breathing Apparatus Company Identifiers

The use of an SCBA identifier to enhance the safety of the fire fighters is recommended.



APPENDIX 4 –Helmet & Face piece Identifications

Helmets must display accurate company identification at all times. For multiple company/station departments, store removable helmet fronts or patches on vehicle containing that vehicle's company ID. The ID should be placed on FF's helmet at beginning of shift, and removed and replaced on vehicle at end of FF's shift, using Velcro, similar to the passport system.



Helmets colors and face piece nametags have not been formally identified and research may be conducted in the future to determine if there is an opportunity to develop a standard such as this suggestion.

Helmet color

Firefighter: Black

Lieutenant and Captain: Red

Chief: White

Additional skills ID

Paramedic: Blue chevron or stripe

Rescue Technician: Yellow chevron or stripe

Haz-Mat Technician: Green chevron or stripe

Personal ID: Face piece Nametag

For departments supplying FF's with individual SCBA face pieces, place FF's last name on lower portion of face piece, using adhesive label.



APPENDIX 5 –SCBA Monitoring Systems- Best Practices

In the event that an SCBA monitoring system is available on the emergency scene the following best practices are recommended to be implemented:

SCBA Air Monitoring System – With this computer, the Accountability Officer will have the ability to monitor SCBA air levels, PASS device activations, and will have the ability to contact members PASS devices for emergencies, including orders to “evacuate or retreat” at the request of the Incident Commander.

SCBA Air-Monitoring Computer – As soon as possible, the Accountability Officer or designee shall set up the laptop computer in the command vehicle and monitor all Firefighters that enter the building using the SCBA monitoring software.

SCBA Air Monitoring System - Implementation

The SCBA Air Monitoring system shall be initiated and utilized at all incidents where firefighters are utilizing SCBA in Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) environments. The system will be placed in service as soon as possible after the arrival of the Incident Commander.

Critical Events - Events that occur with the SCBA when firefighters are "on air" that require the Accountability Officer to notify the Incident Commander, and may result in action by the Incident Commander to correct or be aware of.

- **Thermal Alarm Activation (If Equipped):** This is a definite emergency situation that will require immediate and quick action by the Incident Commander. The thermal alarm on the SCBA has activated, which means that the interior temperature in the vicinity of the firefighter(s) has rapidly increased to a life threatening condition. The Incident Commander shall be notified by the Accountability Officer that this has occurred and the Incident Commander shall contact the company to confirm their safety.
- **PASS Alarm:** This could be either motion or manually activated. If it is a manual alarm, there is an audible sound. As most motion alarms are not emergencies, it is important that individual(s) be allowed adequate time to become aware of their alarm and clear their alarm before intervention by the Incident Commander. If it is a manual alarm, this is usually a deliberate act, and that individual or team (crew) should be contacted immediately to determine if intervention is necessary.
- **Lost Radio Link:** This will require contact by the Incident Commander to ensure radio communications are intact and the company does not require any intervention.