

**COLUMBUS DEPARTMENT OF FIRE
AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
OPERATING GUIDELINES
VOLUME II**

SUBJECT: Personnel Accountability System
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1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 Establish a procedure to effectively account for personnel at the scene of an emergency incident.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To provide the Incident Commander the flexibility to implement levels of accountability warranted by a specific incident.
- 2.2 To define the responsibilities of company officers as to the position and function of all members under their command to operate as a unit.
- 2.3 To define the responsibilities and provide direction to all members as prescribed within this guideline.
- 2.4 To provide accountability guidelines when operating at emergency incidents involving multi jurisdictional agencies

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Accountability Officer:** An officer designated by the Incident Commander to monitor and manage the Personnel Accountability System.
- 3.2 **Accountability Benchmarks:** Situations that could or should initiate the Personnel Accountability System.
- 3.3 **Accountability Control Chart:** A chart utilized by the Accountability Control Officer to allow him/her to organize and log Collector Rings and PAT's on an emergency scene.
- 3.4 **Collector Ring:** Metal Ring to which unit and PATs are attached.
- 3.5 **"Entry Control":** Radio designation for Points of Entry Control Officers.
- 3.6 **Entry Control Chart:** Charts used for documentation of personnel at Entry Control Points.
- 3.7 **Incident Action Plan:** A written or verbal plan stating the overall objectives, strategy and specific tactics for a specified period of time.
- 3.8 **Incident Commander:** Person who assumes overall command and control of personnel and equipment at an incident.
- 3.9 **NIMS:** National Incident Management System.
- 3.10 **PAR:** Personnel Accountability Report, initiated by the Incident Commander when Accountability Benchmarks are reached.
- 3.11 **PAT:** Personal Accountability Tag (Issued to all Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services personnel denoting pertinent information).
- 3.12 **PIN:** Personnel identification number issued to all Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services personnel (This number shall be memorized by each firefighter).
- 3.13 **Personnel Accountability Chart:** Chart used in logging personnel in and out of Hazard Zones. See Appendix C.

- 3.14 **Point of Entry:** A controlled point at which entry is made at hazard zones.

4.0 SCOPE

- 4.1 This procedure shall apply to all Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services personnel.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Personnel Accountability Tags (PAT's)

- A. All members of the Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services will be issued two (2) PATs.

1. The White or Black (PAT) containing full name, personnel identification number, and any pertinent medical information will be affixed to the upper right snap fastener on each firefighter turnout coat. This PAT will be used when the Incident Commander implements Points of Entry Control. The PAT's will be turned in to the designated Entry Control Officer at Points of Entry into any hazard zones as designated by the Incident Commander.
2. The Yellow or Silver (PAT) will contain the name and Personnel Identification Number. Each firefighter shall keep their Yellow or Silver (PAT) attached to the "D" Ring on their helmet with the snap provided when not on duty. When on duty it shall be attached to the Unit Collector Ring.

B. Collector Ring and Holder

1. Each apparatus will be equipped with a Collector Ring Holder mounted in the cab of the truck to which Collector Rings can be attached.
2. Each unit will be assigned a Collector Ring with unit identification tag and shall be maintained in the cab of each unit and remain removable.

6.0 PROCEDURE

6.1 Level I Accountability:

- A. Immediately following station relief or immediately after 0800 hours roll call each member shall place their Yellow or Silver PAT onto the Collector Ring on their assigned apparatus for the shift. Members being relieved shall have removed their Yellow or Silver PAT's and placed them onto the "D" Ring of their helmet.
- B. The Company Commander shall note in the Station Journal that all PAT's for the personnel assigned to the apparatus for the shift are on the Unit Collector Ring.

6.2 Level II Accountability:

- A. Any time during the course of an emergency the Incident Commander has the option to direct units to account for personnel operating at the emergency by means of PATS and Collector Rings.
- B. The Incident Commander will direct all Collector Rings to be brought to the Command Post.

- C. The Company Commander or his/her designee will secure the unit collector ring and take it to the Command Post.
- D. Administrative staff personnel that respond to an emergency incident where the Incident Commander has directed Level II accountability or greater shall report to the command post to have their Yellow or Silver PAT collected and logged in on the Accountability Chart.
- E. The designated Accountability Control Officer will organize and log Collector Rings and PAT's utilizing an Accountability Control Chart (**See Appendix B**) and the command assignment board.

6.3 Level III Accountability:

- A. When the Incident Commander determines that the incident requires extremely stringent accountability, he will implement Point of Entry, (i.e., Hazardous Materials Zones, large commercial structures).
- B. To implement Points of Entry Control, the Incident Commander will designate officer(s) to monitor all points of entry into the hazard zones, structures, confined space, etc. These officers will coordinate closely with the Safety Officer. The designated radio call sign will be "Entry Control".
- C. "Entry Control" will ensure that each entering member's White or Black PAT is collected and the time of entry and assignment are recorded on the Entry Control Chart. **See Appendix A.**
- D. When members exit a control point their time out shall be logged on the Entry Control Chart and their PAT will be returned to be placed back onto their turn out coat. Members that exit via a remote control point shall inform Entry Control of their exit.

6.4 Level IV Accountability:

- A. Any time during an incident the Incident Commander has the option/responsibility to initiate a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR). Accountability Report Benchmarks would include but not be limited to:
 - 1. Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter.
 - 2. A change from offensive to defensive mode during the incident.
 - 3. Any sudden hazardous event; flashover, back draft, collapse, eminent BLEVE, expansion of the hazard/hot zones, etc.
 - 4. Rescue Teams reporting an all clear.
 - 5. At the report that the fire is under control.
- B. The Incident Commander can initiate a PAR by means of:
 - 1. A radio command to all on scene units to respond PAR to command.
 - 2. A face-to-face command via the Safety or designated Accountability Officer.
 - 3. Initiating a **"CODE RED" all personnel shall exit the building when signaled by a 30 second blast of apparatus air horns.**
 - 4. Initiating a **"Mayday"** a universal signal for someone in distress.
- C. Upon Commands Initiation of PAR:
 - 1. All personnel/crews will immediately report to their assigned apparatus.

2. Company's whose engine has reversed lines to distant hydrants will report to a unit of close proximity to their working group.
3. Company Officers - by means of Collector Rings and PATs will account for all their personnel and report a PAR to Command (i.e., "Command, from Engine 6, I have a PAR" [all members present]).

7.0 GENERAL PROCEDURES

- 7.1 All units will remain together, work as a team and will operate under the direction of the Incident Command or Group Officers - no free-lancing.
- 7.2 All officers shall be aware of the position and function of all members under their command.
- 7.3 An absent member of any unit will automatically be assumed lost or trapped in the hazard zone until otherwise determined safe.
- 7.4 Upon termination and release from the emergency, Company Commanders and members will ensure that all PATs and Collector Rings are returned to their apparatus.
- 7.5 Accountability will only work with a strong personal commitment to the Safety Systems by all personnel involved at the incident.
- 7.6 Personnel who may become trapped, disoriented or otherwise unable to respond to Incident Command's call for a PAR should immediately activate their P.A.S. Device (Personal Alarm System).
- 7.7. Personnel will remove their Yellow or Silver PAT from the collector ring on their assigned apparatus when they leave the Fire/EMS station for any reason.
- 7.8. Personnel traveling to a temporary duty station are responsible for removing their Yellow PAT from the collector ring on their assigned apparatus, taking it with them to their temporary assignment, and placing it on the collector ring of the apparatus at their temporary assignment.

8.0 NIMS ACCOUNTABILITY

- 8.1. Effective accountability at all jurisdictional levels and within individual functional areas during incident operations is essential.
- 8.2. All responders regardless of agency affiliation, must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the Incident Commander.
- 8.3. Response operations must be directed and coordinated as outlined in the Incident Action Plan.
- 8.4. Each individual involved in incident operations will be assigned to only one supervisor.
- 8.5. Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.
- 8.6. Supervisors must record and report resource status changes as they occur.

Appendix A

ENTRY CONTROL CHART

ENTRY OFFICER'S NAME: _____

INCIDENT ADDRESS: _____

NAME	PIN	TIME IN	CYLINDER PSI	TIME OUT	CYLINDER PSI

ACCOUNTABILITY CONTROL CHART

ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER’S NAME: _____

INCIDENT ADDRESS: _____

DATE	UNIT	COLLECTOR RINGS ACCOUNTED FOR	PERSONNEL ACCOUNTED FOR	OFFICER

PERSONNEL SCENE ACCOUNTABILITY CHART

ACCOUNTABILITY _____ **OFFICER'S** _____ **NAME:** _____

INCIDENT ADDRESS: _____

NAME	Unit Assignment	Task	Assigned Location	OFFICER