



WARE FIRE DEPARTMENT Standard Operating Guideline

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SOG Title: Personnel Accountability		
Approved by:	Re-evaluation Date: August 2010	Number of Pages: 4

Purpose:

This guideline is intended to enhance personnel safety for the individual firefighter and to increase the overall level of safety for all members of the Ware Fire Department when operating at an emergency scene. Further, this guideline is intended to:

- To provide the Incident Commander/staff an improved means to track, account for and support all personnel working in a hot zone
- To assure compliance with the national standard, NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*, and other pertinent standards when operating in and around hazardous environments.
- To define the tools and uses of the Ware Fire Department Personnel Accountability System.

Definitions:

Accountability Tag: Plastic or cloth strips with attached Velcro that are labeled with the fire-rescue member's name.

Accountability Board: A flat-surfaced board, developed internally within the Ware Fire Department, with Velcro strips attached, intended for use by the Incident Commander or Accountability Officer with the Accountability Tags to track/monitor/account for on-scene personnel working at an incident.

Apparatus Accountability Door: The driver's door of any and all Ware Fire Department emergency apparatus (equipped with Velcro strips for the attachment of accountability tags by all responding Ware Fire Department responding personnel).

PAR: Personnel Accountability Report

Personnel Pool: An area designated for members to report ready for assignment. The personnel pool will most often be behind the first due apparatus.

“Hot Zone”: Any area that requires an SCBA, charged hose line and special protective clothing, or in which a fire fighter is at risk of becoming lost, trapped or injured by the environment or structure. This may include interior and exterior fire ground operations, confined space, trench rescue, hazardous materials incidents, etc.

Scope:

Accountability is a critical element in maintaining the safety of all firefighters working on the fire ground. Each and every person involved in a training exercise or an incident whether at the strategic, tactical or task level of an incident must make a strong personal commitment to follow all policies and procedures regarding accountability.

Enforcement:

The **Incident Commander** shall always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and incident action planning, and must consider and react to any barriers to effective accountability. This function can be delegated to an Accountability Officer.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- The **Officer or Senior Firefighter assuming initial command** at any incident shall implement the Personnel Accountability System by assuring:
 1. His/her own accountability tag is placed onto the driver's door of the first-responding engine or apparatus.
 2. All other first responding crew members shall place their tags onto the same first-responding engine or apparatus driver's door.
- **All responding personnel** are personally responsible for assuring that their accountability tag is placed onto the driver's door of a responding engine or apparatus.
- **No fire-rescue person** shall enter the hot zone unless his or her accountability tag has been placed onto the driver's door of a responding engine or apparatus.
- Members who have forgotten their tags **MAY NOT ENTER OR BE ASSIGNED TO** the hot zone. Temporary Tags may be utilized if the Incident Command deems necessary.
- As an incident becomes more complex, the accountability of personnel may be assigned to an **Accountability Officer**; however, this delegation does not relieve the Incident Commander of the responsibility for the accountability of all personnel.
- The Incident Commander will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are at an incident and may do so using the **Accountability Board** or other means available.
- **IC** must know who is in charge of each sector/operation, crews assigned to each sector/operation, where each crew or sector is located and what each is assigned to do.
- **IC** must obtain PAR reports from sector officers and crews. PAR reports shall be obtained every twenty minutes. This will be conducted in coordination with the time marks conducted by dispatch.
- **Sector Officers and Company Officers** will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crews/teams assigned to them. This tracking and awareness will require the Officer to be in their assigned area while maintaining close supervision of the crews assigned to them.

- **Company and Sector Officers** must ensure that accountability tags (for themselves and each of their crew members) are delivered to the Accountability location prior to entering the hot zone.
- **Company Officers** address the **task level** of accountability and must know where each firefighter assigned to their crew is located and what each firefighter is doing.
- **Company Officers** must obtain PARs for their crews, which is a confirmation that all members assigned to his/her crew are accounted for and have adequate exit air supply.
- The IC, Accountability or Sector Officer must be made aware of any changes to the location or status of assigned crews.
- **All crews/teams will work for the IC, Sector Officer or Company Officer. NO free-lancing.**
- ***All crews will go in together, stay together and come out together.*** Reduced visibility and increased risks will require very tight crew integrity.
- **Every crew** entering the hot zone will have one member, preferably their supervisor and/or Company Officer, equipped with a radio.
- If a **radio fails** while in a hot zone the crew will exit unless there is another working radio with the crew.

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR)

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) involves a roll call of personnel assigned. For the Company Officer, PAR is a confirmation that members assigned to their crew are visually accounted for. For the Sector Officer, PAR is accounting for all crewmembers of all companies assigned to their sector. Reports of PAR should be conducted face-to-face within the company or sector whenever possible.

A PAR is REQUIRED for the following situations:

- Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter
- Any change from offensive to defensive
- Any sudden hazardous event at the incident – flash over, back draft, collapse, May Day, etc.
- As companies report all clear
- As companies report under control
- At every 20 minutes of elapsed time
- Anytime IC feels it is necessary
- At the end of every incident
- Before personnel are release from an emergency scene

Reports of Lost or Missing Personnel:

- An absent member of any crew will automatically be assumed to be lost or trapped in the hazard zone until otherwise determined safe.
- Company Officers must immediately report any absent members to the Sector/Operations Officer or Incident Commander.
- The IC must initiate an immediate PAR of all companies assigned to duty in the hot zone.
- The IC must send the RIT to the last reported working area of the lost personnel to begin a search.
- Incident priorities shall switch to search and rescue of our members.

Emergency Evacuation:

- When an emergency evacuation is directed by the Incident Commander **THREE (3) LONG AIR HORN BLASTS OF ALL ON-SCENE APPARATUS WILL BE SOUNDED.**
- The IC will notify Emergency Communications who will sound a general announcement and generate a tone alert on radio channel 16.
- Once the emergency evacuation has been sounded, all members shall report to the personnel pool (generally designated behind the first-responding engine). Company Officers shall conduct PAR when members arrive at the personnel pool.

Post-Incident Roll-Call

- Accountability tags will remain attached either to the apparatus driver's door and/or to the accountability Board until IC deems the incident "under control" and the hot zone to be eliminated.
- The Accountability Officer or IC will assure gathering of all accountability tags and return of the tags to the fire station alarm room for entry of responding members' names into the NFIRS report.
- The Company Officer/Group Officer shall assure completion of the call department roll-call attendance sheets. Completion of these sheets and NFIRS reports from physically present accountability tags shall constitute post-incident "roll-call".
- Members who fail to turn-in their accountability tags will NOT receive credit for the call in the call rosters.
- ****Accountability tags will be returned to members ONLY AFTER any and all apparatus is returned to service and so designated by the on-duty shift commander.**
- Under the special circumstances that a fire/rescue person is relieved of duty by the I.C. (only) the accountability tag will be returned to the fire/rescue person and the I.C. will assure the fire/rescue person receives credit for the call.