

2017-212 Accountability System



Westbrook Fire & Rescue Department

Standard Operating Procedure

Section: Emergency Operations	TOPIC: Accountability System
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POLICY REFERENCES: NFPA 1561 Maine BLS/OSHA 1910.134 Department Policy 2015-035 Scene Benchmarks Department Policy 2015-023 Incident Assignment	APPROVED BY: <hr/> Andrew R. Turcotte Chief of Department

Purpose:

To provide a standard policy that establishes procedures for personnel accountability at all incidents. This policy will establish the actions that the Westbrook Fire & Rescue Department will utilize to provide enhanced personal safety for the individual members, and will provide Incident Command an improved means to track and account for all personnel working at any incident.

Scope:

All personnel of the Westbrook Fire & Rescue Department and all Public Safety Dispatch personnel shall be responsible for compliance with this guideline.

Policy:

Accountability is a critical element in the safety of all firefighters working on the emergency scene and is more than having an accurate roster. Accountability involves a personal commitment to work safety at all time. Accountability includes:

- Collecting and posting accurate passport tags.
- Maintaining crew integrity.
- Air Management and recognizing when to exit the hot zone.
- Carrying a portable radio.
- Updating the Incident Command of status changes and benchmarks

Incident Command and officer Responsibilities

- Command will maintain and accurate tracking of resources that are on scene at any incident.

- Command will include accountability as a major element in the attack planning/ strategy and must take in to account any barriers that may be in place to maintain accountability
- Officers will maintain an accurate tracking of their assigned crew and provide close supervision.
- There will be no free-lancing and all crews will work within the Incident Command System.
- Crews arriving on scene should remain intact whenever possible.
- All crews will remain together at all time. If one person goes out, everyone goes out. Any time there is an increased risk or reduced visibility, close communication and crew integrity must be a high priority.
- If the crew is unable to maintain radio communications with the incident commander, they will exit the hot zone and notify the IC of the issue.

Hardware

To improve our tracking and enhance accountability of those on the fire ground, the department has elected to use the “PASSPORT” system. PASSPORTS are plastic tags located inside the apparatus that hold individual members nametags. These PASSPORTS are given to the accountability officer upon arrival at the scene.

Nametags: Each firefighter will be issued at least two individual name tags that are to be affixed to Velcro strips on the underside of their helmet. Yellow tags are given to firefighters Red tags are for officers and white tags are for chiefs. Tags are to be affixed to the passport in the following order: senior officer, driver operator, firefighter.

Passports: Each apparatus has been issued an engraved PASSPORT. PASSPORTS are located on the dash by the officer’s seat in all the engines and in the gear compartment on the ambulances. It is the officer’s or senior firefighter’s responsibility to ensure that all members assigned to that apparatus for the shift, have attached their nametags. When crewmembers are entering a HOT zone and while leaving support members outside, the names of the support members will be placed on the PASSPORT upside down to signify that they are not in the hot zone.

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify their officer if they are in need of a new tag due to becoming damaged, misplaced, lost or a change in rank.

Tactical Boards: Each fire engine has received a white status board to track initial operations and will remain with the Incident Commander. This board will allow for the initial tracking of incoming apparatus and personnel.

Command Center- The Command Center is carried by the Operations Chief and is used for tracking resources, personnel assignment and accountability of all persons at the scene.

Levels of Accountability

The first arriving company will provide a sufficient size up report over the department's primary radio frequency. This report will include the type of occupancy, presence of fire or smoke, degree of involvement, mode of command (either stationary, Investigating, Fast Attack or Passing command when another unit is visible on scene).

Level I: This level will be initiated when it is anticipated that the incident duration will be for a short period, usually 15-30 minutes. During a level 1 incident, PASSPORT tags will be left in the responding apparatus.

Level II: This level is initiated when it is anticipated the incident will be more complex, involving multiple companies and longer in duration. The officer of the apparatus will bring their passport to the command post or other location determined by the IC.

Personnel Accountability Reports

Personnel accountability reports (PAR) involves a roll call of personnel working on the fire ground. For a company officer, a "PAR" is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are accounted for. If there is a division leader/officer, they are responsible for accounting for each company. PAR's may be conducted face to face to limit radio traffic.

Personnel accountability reports will be required for the following situations:

- Explosions
- Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter.
- Any change in strategy such as going from offensive to defensive operations.
- Any sudden change in fire or hazardous conditions (backdraft, flashover, collapse).
- Any time there is a MAYDAY incident.
- Every 20-30 minutes of fire ground operations.
- After the report of fire under control
- Any time command feels it necessary to conduct a PAR check.

Accountability Officer

The role of accountability may be an emergency responder trained in the function and is familiar with this policy. Generally speaking, the accountability role will be the third due officer or mutual aid chief. If the IC does not assign a designated accountability officer, he/she will assume the responsibility.

Accountability Officers Responsibilities

- Develop and implement a plan to track and account for all personnel working in the HOT zone.
- Provide progress and staffing levels to command as need.
- Initiates PAR checks upon completion of benchmarks or as needed.

Individual Employee Responsibility

Arriving crew members will be responsible for IMMEDIATELY reporting to manpower and supplying the manpower officer with their nametag. There will be no free-lancing and self-assigning to any company already on scene. This includes any call back of any full time and per diem personnel.

Implementation at Incidents

The PASSPORT system will be implemented at any incident that requires the use on an SCBA.

The objective of the PASSPORT system is always to have the apparatus PASSPORT with crewmember's nametags as close to the point of entry as possible. This will allow the most accurate record of those members entering the hot zone.

For multiple company responses, the PASSPORT system will function as follows:

- The first unit to arrive will provide a thorough size-up and assignments for additional responding companies.
- For level II accountability incidents, the incident commander will assign a location for the PASSPORTs to be deposited. This location will typically be the command post or command vehicle however command may assign an alternative location.
- The incident commander may elect to assign a member to perform the function as an accountability Officer, if not, the IC will assume the responsibilities.
- All crews will take their PASSPORT to the assigned location prior to entering the hot zone or carrying out their assignment.
- On large scale incidents, multiple PASSPORT accountability deposit locations may be assigned. This will require multiple Accountability Officer and they must communicate and provide any information to the incident commander.

Terminating the PASSPORT system

PASSPORT accountability will be maintained through a report of "fire under control". Once the fire is under control, the accountability officer will conduct a final PAR check and based on the situation and risk, the incident commander will make the determination as to continuing with PASSPORT accountability or disbanding it.

Upon termination and release the incident, the officer/senior firefighter of each apparatus will ensure the PASSPORT is returned to their respective apparatus.

