



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:  
Section:  
Original Date:  
Revised Date:

## PURPOSE

This policy establishes the use of the Personnel Accountability System at emergency incidents and training sessions. This policy is written to comply with Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) regulation 29 CFR 1910.134 and NFPA Standards 1500 and 1561. All personnel shall be familiar with this system, and facilitate the functions of the systems under their job descriptions in accordance with this policy and as so assigned by Command. All persons entering a scene under fire department control will adhere to this policy. This includes, but is not limited to: building owners and/or occupants, media, and personnel from other agencies. The PAS is used to accurately identify and account for personnel engaged in hazardous operations. It is also a control measure to prevent freelancing and provide a more efficient utilization of manpower and resources.

## POLICY

Accountability involves a personal commitment of all personnel to work within the accountability system at all times. Accountability is an accurate roster, companies keeping together, staying on the hoseline, working in teams, leaving when low on air, having your portable radio, and knowing what to do if in trouble or separated from your crew.

### Basic concepts of accountability

1. All department members are responsible to utilize the accountability system.
2. The minimum size team when operating in an IDLH shall be two (2) persons.
3. All teams will go in together, stay together and come out together.
4. Team members operating in an IDLH shall always be in contact through either voice, vision, or touch. Radio communications is not an acceptable method of maintaining contact with the exception of apparatus operators, command or group/division supervisors or other situations where the location of such personnel is constant and known by the rest of the team.

### **Definitions:**

1. Accountability Officer – Person designated by the Incident Commander to conduct the monitoring and recording of all personnel and unit accountability on the scene throughout the operation. The Accountability Officer collects the Unit Collector Rings and tracks them at the Command Post during Level II Accountability.
2. Accountability Status Board/Binder – A board or binder to which Primary Collector Ring and unit Identifiers can be attached during Level II (Command Post) and Level III (Single point of entry).
3. Collector Ring – 2¼-inch Ring attached to a 1” by 4” hard plastic tag with the unit number engraved on it. It is mounted on a quick release clip located in the front cab of all apparatus. It is the device all Personnel Accountability System (PAS) yellow information tags are clipped onto for personnel who are assigned to that unit at the start of their shift. (Level I Accountability).
4. Company – Personnel from any engine company, ladder company, rescue company, EMS Unit, etc. who work together as a team to perform a function at the scene of an emergency.

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5. Company Officer – An individual responsible for the operation of a company and the personnel who are assigned to that company.
6. Emergency Evacuation Signal – Three intermittent 10-second blasts of an apparatus air horn followed with Radio announcement of “Emergency Traffic.” Units should leave the hazard zone immediately and retreat to a safe area outside the Hazard perimeter. After this is completed, an accounting of units and personnel should be done immediately by the Accountability Officer.
7. Hazard zone – The hazard zone is defined as any area that requires use of SCBA or in which a firefighter is at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or the structure. This would include entering a structure reported to be on fire, operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior fire attack, cause and origin investigation, confined space, trench rescue, etc.
8. Incident Commander – The senior or designated officer in charge of an incident. Responsible for the strategic decisions and assignment of other primary supervisory functional positions necessary to control an incident as per the Incident Management System.
9. Level I Accountability – Personnel accountability system used during all fire and rescue responses. The (PAS) yellow information tag placed on the Unit Collector Ring of the apparatus they are assigned. This should be completed as soon as personnel report for duty.
10. Level II Accountability – When Command has been established, the Collector rings are collected and placed on the Accountability Status Board to track the location and status of all Fire/Rescue companies and support personnel working at the scene of an incident.
11. Level III Accountability Single Point of Entry – A person should be assigned when an emergency has been upgraded to Level III Accountability to monitor the entry and status of all personnel in the Hazard Zone. The 2nd (PAS) Metal ID tag is collected and tracked when a single point of entry can be maintained.
12. Personnel Accountability System Yellow Information Tag – A 3” by 4” laminated plastic tag displaying the department name on one side and the individuals name, ID number and issue date on the backside. The folded card will have the individuals Emergency Medical Information data on the inside two pages.
13. Personnel Accountability System Metal ID Tag – A metal tag with the individuals name and ID number stamped on it. This tag should be carried on the 2nd snap ring of the individual's bunker coat. During Level III Accountability Single Point of Entry, this tag will be left with the person monitoring that central point.
14. Rapid Intervention Crew/Company – A team of at least two firefighters with full protective clothing, SCBA's, RIC pack, radio, flashlight, and forcible entry tools, staged at the Command Post ready to respond with emergency intervention to an individual or company in need of rescue. Standby crew will also respond in an attempt to locate unaccountable personnel who have not acknowledged a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR).

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15. Division – The organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area.
16. Group The organizational level having responsibility for operations based on a functional assignment.
17. Division/Group Supervisor – The individual responsible for a division or group. Personnel or companies assigned to a Division/Group will report to the D/G Supervisor.
18. Command Post – The first arriving engine will be designated as the command post until changed by the Officer in Charge.

#### Utilization of the System

The Personnel Accountability System (PAS) will be used and initiated in the following situations:

1. On any response where personnel are involved in interior structural firefighting operations or when they are conducting operations that could be potentially dangerous.
2. During any incident where the officer in charge deems it necessary to implement the PAS in order to safeguard the lives of response personnel. This shall apply regardless of whether the incident is under fire department control or the control of another agency with fire department personnel operating under the direction of the officer in charge.
3. On any drill, exercise, or Company Performance Evolution that involve hazards similar to those encountered to actual emergency incidents.

#### Issuing/Maintenance of Yellow Information Tags

1. Each member of the department will be issued a yellow information tag. The tag shall be accounted for at all times.
2. Members will ensure that the yellow information tag is in good condition. The tag will be replaced if it is in poor condition or if the information located on the tag has changed.

#### Use of Yellow Information Tags

1. Personnel who arrive on shift shall place their yellow information tag on their assigned apparatus at shift change.
2. Personnel who respond off duty to the station shall place their yellow information tag on the assigned apparatus and check in at the Command Post when arriving on scene.
3. When personnel go off shift, they shall remove their tag from their assigned apparatus and maintain accountability of the tag.

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#### Issuing/Maintenance of Metal ID Tags

1. Each member of the department will be issued a metal ID tag. The tag should be attached to the second snap ring of the individual's bunker coat.
2. Members will ensure that the metal ID tag is in good condition. The tag will be replaced if it is in poor condition.

#### Use of Metal ID Tags

1. During Level III Accountability Single point of entry the (PAS) Metal ID Tag will be left with the person in charge of that control point (Personnel Accountability Officer) to monitor the entry and status of all personnel in the hazard zone.

#### Designation of a Personnel Accountability Officer

1. Initially the officer in charge shall be responsible for accounting for personnel assigned to hazardous duties. Once formal command has been established and additional personnel arrive on the scene the Incident Commander shall designate someone as Personnel Accountability Officer if needed. It shall be the duty of this person to collect the Unit Collector Rings and attach them to the Accountability Status Board which should be located at the Command Post. This is referred to as Level II Accountability. If a single point of entry can be maintained to the hazard zone and manpower permits the 2nd (PAS) METAL ID TAG should be left with the officer in charge of the control point. This is referred to as tagging in. Upon completion of assigned task or anytime you leave the control point personnel shall tag out with the same officer by retrieving their tag.

#### Accountability Status Board

1. The designated Personnel Accountability Officer shall utilize an accountability board to track and account for personnel assigned to hazardous tasks or interior operations.
2. Mutual Aid Companies will also be tracked on the accountability status board.

#### Personnel Accountability Report

1. The Personnel Accountability Officer (if designated) will conduct a PAR check every 20 minutes.
2. A PAR should also be performed with the report of lost or trapped companies, after a significant event has occurred, or at the request of the Incident Commander.
3. Dispatch should remind the IC when the 20-minute PAR is due.
4. Each company will be called and a positive check of the number of crewmembers and their working location will be verified.
5. When the Accountability Officer has verified that a unit is trapped or missing, the IC will be notified immediately. The RIC will be deployed by the IC to the location of the trapped or missing unit when it has been determined by the Safety Officer that the area is safe to enter.
6. Anytime the IC or the Safety Officer determines that the building, fire conditions, or other hazardous condition exist, the IC will then activate the Emergency Signal and make an announcement for all companies operating in the hazard zone to evacuate immediately.
7. The Incident Commander will not commit units into a hazard zone when the fire conditions have gone from Offensive to Defensive Operations.
8. There shall be no Freelancing in the Hazard Zone.

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