

CHAPTER II OPERATIONS**SUBJECT 2 COMMAND****TOPIC 7 FIRE FIGHTER ACCOUNTABILITY****A. PURPOSE**

- To provide a system for rapid resource accountability at an emergency incident.
- This system shall provide for the rapid accounting of all personnel on the scene.
- To account for the location and function of all Companies on the scene of an emergency
- To proactively manage crews “on air” during an incident through continuous tracking of personnel accountability and SCBA monitoring

B. SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Company Passport – Each Fire Company, Medic Unit and Staff vehicle will be assigned a Unit Identification Passport. This Passport consists of a plastic card engraved with the Company number or unit designation on the top. Passports will be color coded as to unit type. (Engines – Red, Trucks – Black, Etc.) The Truck Company Passports are divided into two (2) groups; “A” & “B”. The Passport will have Velcro attached to receive the company member’s nametags. Each member will be assigned name tags to be kept on the underside of the fire helmet for accountability purposes. At the beginning of every shift the firefighter will present a name tag to the officer to be placed on the company passport. The Passport shall be attached with Velcro to the Officer’s side dashboard so as to be in plain view of someone standing on the ground at the officer’s door.

Accountability Board – Each District vehicle will carry an Accountability board to assemble the passports at an emergency scene. The accountability board will consist of a dry-erase board with velcro attached to receive the Company passport. The Accountability board will have an area next to the passport to track the location of the Company within the emergency scene.

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.

Tactron Incident Management Board – The tactron board is a magnetic/dry-erase board used to show physical positions of companies in relation to the incident site-plan. Each fire Company and Staff Officer has a corresponding magnet located inside the tactron board. When possible, The Accountability Officer will deploy the tactron board upon request of the Incident Commander and draw a site plan (building sketch) of the incident and place the Companies in their respective locations. The tactron board is an effective tool for the Incident Commander to use for strategy purposes.

C. **POLICY**

1. **Firefighter Accountability:**

In order to account for members working at the scene of an emergency the following procedures will be followed:

- a. It is the responsibility of the Company Officer to ensure that the passport is accurate at all times and only contains the names of those members actually riding on the apparatus. Any time a member's status on the apparatus changes, the Passport must be updated.
- b. The Officer and one other member from the **SAFETY ENGINE** will be assigned to Accountability. The Safety Engine Officer's radio designation is now "Accountability" throughout the incident or until relieved of their duties by another Officer. The Firefighter / FAO assigned to Accountability shall collect Passports from all first alarm Companies and place them on the accountability board and then assists the Accountability Officer with any other duties as directed.
- c. The Accountability Officer shall determine the location of all Companies assigned to the incident and document the location on the Accountability board. This may require the Accountability Officer to initiate a radio transmission to make this determination.

Example: "Accountability to Engine 23 – Location"
"Engine 23 - first floor rear"

The Accountability board shall be located adjacent to the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander should be located at the rear of the District vehicle. The Accountability Officer should also note all "Benchmark" transmissions. (Refer to Proc. 203.01-D).

- d. **All Company Officers shall notify Command/Accountability of location changes on the fire ground.**

Example: "Engine 23 moving to second floor to check for fire extension"
Command – "Okay Engine 23 moving to second floor"

Command Officers shall ensure that the Accountability Officer receives the location change. To assist the Accountability Officer with the location of Companies, all Companies shall begin all transmissions with their Company ID and location prior to transmitting their message.

EXAMPLE:

“Engine 1, second floor C side to Command, we need a second line in here”.

These location reports shall be used at all locations on the fire ground including Rehab and Staging.

- e. SCBA Monitoring Computer – As soon as possible, the Accountability Officer shall make sure the SCBA Monitoring Computer is being set up in the rear of the Command vehicle and monitor all firefighters that enter the building using the MSA SCBA monitoring software.
- f. Companies responding on additional alarms shall report to Command with the Passport for assignment. Upon receiving orders, the company officer shall notify Accountability of the assignment location and deliver the company Passport to the Accountability Officer.
- g. In cases where there is a recall or mutual aid assistance, a Passport shall be completed by the Officer in-charge of the unit and presented to the Incident Commander or the accountability officer if assigned before entering the hazard zone. Spare Passports will be available with the accountability board. The Passport will contain the names of all members assigned to the recalled or mutual aid unit.
- h. Incident Commanders are responsible for on scene Accountability on every emergency run. Command shall assure that an Accountability Officer/Sector has been established early on in large scale or hazardous incidents. Incidents requiring a Safety Engine include:
 - 1. One-Alarm Dispatch.
 - 2. Mutual aid given or requested.
 - 3. Hazardous materials incidents.
 - 4. Natural Disasters
 - 5. Mass Casualty Incidents
 - 6. Technical Rescue Situations

Command may appoint a Staff Officer to assume the accountability duties from the initial Accountability Officer.

- i. As soon as practical and upon request of the Incident Commander, the Accountability Officer shall set up the Tacron Incident Management Board.
- j. Whenever additional Fireground Radio Channels are requested and utilized, an additional firefighter or Officer shall be assigned to Accountability to monitor this channel. This is only necessary if Fire Companies utilizing the fire ground channel are operating in a high hazard environment.

2. Personnel Accountability Report:

A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) will be utilized to account for members working at the scene of a hazardous incident. A PAR report is a roll call of all members working at the scene.

- a. For the Company Officer, a PAR is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are visually accounted for.
- b. For the Sector Officer, a PAR is an accounting for all crew members of all companies assigned to his/her sector.
- c. Reports of PAR's should be conducted face-to-face within the Company or with the Sector whenever possible.

The Incident Commander or Operations Sector only shall institute a PAR report, except that a Sector may institute a PAR of units under his/her command if the Sector is operating on its own radio channel. If a sector PAR is requested, the Incident Commander or Operations must be notified before and after the PAR is initiated. The Incident Commander may direct the Accountability Officer to conduct the Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) on his behalf.

The PAR report is different from a location request in that the Accountability Officer may not self initiate a PAR. The request by the Accountability Officer for a location report does not require a PAR response.

EXAMPLE:

“Reading Road Command to all companies - standby for a PAR”

or

“Accountability to all companies standby for a PAR”

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| Command | “Command to Engine 2” |
| Engine 2 | “Engine 2, PAR OK” |
| Command | “Command to Engine 9” |
| Engine 9 | “Engine 9, PAR OK” |
| Command | “Command to Ladder 2” |
| Ladder 2 | “Ladder 2, PAR OK” |
| Command | “Command to Ladder 32” |
| Ladder 32 | “Ladder 32, PAR OK” |
| Command | “ Command to District 3” |

District 3 “District 3, PAR OK”

Command “End PAR report, all members accounted for - resume normal radio traffic.”

d. **During a PAR report, all units should refrain from using that channel unless the message is urgent or emergency in nature.**

e. A PAR report should be initiated for the following situations:

1. Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter. (MAYDAY)
2. Any change from an offensive to defensive operation.
3. Any sudden or unexpected event (explosion, backdraft, collapse, etc.)
4. When the fire is reported under control.
5. Anytime Command/Operations determines there is a need.

f. Negative or No Response to Location or Personal Accountability Report (PAR)

When the Accountability Officer requests a location or a PAR and receives no response from the Company, a second attempt to contact the Company will be made. The second attempt will be made within one minute of the initial attempt to contact the company.

After the second attempt to contact the Company and no response is received, the Incident Commander shall be notified immediately that a Company is not responding to the request for location.

The Incident Commander shall then make a general announcement that a specific Company is missing and request any Company knowing the location of said Company to report the location to Command.

EXAMPLE:

“All units stand by – All units on the fire ground we have no contact with Ladder 1. Any Company knowing the location of Ladder 1 identify”.

If the Company is not located following this announcement a Mayday shall be declared and the Mayday procedures followed as outlined in Operations Manual 202.08 and 202.09.

If the Incident Commander attempts to contact a Company and does not receive a response, the Incident Commander shall follow the same procedures as outlined for the Accountability Officer.

3. **SCBA Air Monitoring System**

The SCBA Air Monitoring system shall be initiated and utilized at all incidents attended by a District Chief 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 first District Chief.

a. Definitions:

1. **Base Station** – The component of the SCBA Telemetry System that attaches to the antenna and receives the signal from the SCBA before it is routed to the software on the District laptop computer.
2. **Comments Box:** The area of the Team Box that shows a drop down list of fire ground tasks that can be assigned to teams.
3. **Conditions, Actions, Needs Report (CAN):** Report on the immediate conditions found, actions taken by the crew and additional requirements needed to continue or successfully complete the task assigned.
4. **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.
5. **"Dummy" Firefighter:** A fictitious firefighter created within the SCBA Air Monitoring System to mimic the air consumption of a team (crew) that has lost telemetry with the base station. This provides a means to approximate the air consumption when there has been a loss of communication. This "dummy" firefighter defaults to a 4500 psi mask that breathes down at a rate of 239 psi / minute (NFPA rate). This "dummy" firefighter's SCBA air pressure is adjustable to mimic the crew member with the lowest SCBA pressure before loss of telemetry.
6. **Evacuation:** This is the process where the Incident Commander can effectively order individuals, an individual company or all "on air" firefighters to exit the hot zone. Evacuating all firefighters is done in conjunction with an "Emergency Traffic Evacuation" message.
7. **Holding Bin:** The portion of the SCBA Telemetry System software screen where firefighters initially log onto the system and where "dummy" firefighters are held until utilized.
8. **Loss of Telemetry:** This is where the communications between the base station and "on air" firefighter(s) SCBA has been interrupted. This is usually due to construction features within the hot zone.

9. **Master Tags:** Set of identification fobs kept with the Heavy Rescue Companies or the Mask Services Unit. These fobs are used to identify spare SCBA when on loan to the station and to re-fob assigned SCBA that have returned from maintenance or repair to ensure proper apparatus seat identification.

10. **SCBA Statistics:** The portion of the SCBA Telemetry System software screen where individual SCBAs are identified and the details shown with respect to air and critical events.

b. Important Notes:

- The SCBA Air Monitoring System will only monitor SCBA that have been pressurized
- Each Company in the system is limited to 6 firefighters
- One base station can monitor up to 50 firefighters “on air”. Each District has 2 base stations connected to the district laptop computer for a total monitoring capability of 100 firefighters.
- Once a SCBA has logged onto a base station, that SCBA cannot be monitored by another base station until the SCBA has been fully shut down and then re-pressurized.
- Building construction features involving heavy concrete and steel will inhibit telemetry between the SCBA and the Base Station.
- At the beginning of every shift the Truck Company housed with the District Chief will ensure connectivity of the Laptop computer to the Base Station and ensure the “PC Link” light on the base station is RED (Not active)

c. On-Scene Procedures:

- SCBA Telemetry System will be placed in operational mode once on scene by the **first arriving** District Chief or the Accountability Officer. The SCBA Telemetry base station "PC Link" light will be GREEN (active).
- Only **one (1)** SCBA Air Monitoring System shall be activated at an emergency scene unless the total firefighters “on air” exceed 100. A second SCBA Air Monitoring system shall only be activated upon direct order of the Incident Commander.
- The Accountability Officer shall monitor the system for “critical events”.
- "Dummy" firefighters will be created should the need arise to mimic air consumption for companies that have lost telemetry between the SCBA and the base station.

d. Critical Events:

1. **Thermal Alarm Activation:** 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. This alarm is indicated by an audible sound, pop up box on screen and thermal alarm indicator beside the individual(s) SCBA in the Statistics area of the telemetry system. 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.

2. **PASS Alarm:** This could be either motion or manually activated. In either case there will be a pop up box on screen as well as a man down indicator above the individual(s) SCBA in the Statistics area of the telemetry system. 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.
3. **Low Battery:** This will result in reduced telemetry to the base station with a likelihood of potential loss of telemetry. This is indicated by an audible sound, pop up box on screen, and a battery icon beside the individual SCBA in the Statistics area of the telemetry system. It is recommended that when the battery indicator on the SCBA Control Module reads one bar - Replace the batteries.
4. **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. The lost radio link is indicated by an audible alarm, pop up box and crossed lines over the telemetry symbol of the individual(s) SCBA in the statistics area of the telemetry system. In loss of telemetry situations, it may be necessary to utilize the “dummy” firefighters.

Note: The primary task of the Accountability Officer is to maintain the accuracy of the Accountability Board. The SCBA Monitoring Computer is a tool to be monitored by the Accountability Officer's Aid (the second person assigned to Accountability from the Safety Engine) with the assistance of the Accountability Officer.