

---

**Section: 5.10      Accountability**

Effective Date:      01/01/2007

Revision Date:      04/12/2006

Approved by: SMFD Officers 04/26/2006

---

**SCOPE**

This guideline applies to all South Metro Fire Department personnel responsible for emergency response.

**PURPOSE**

This procedure identifies a system of incident site firefighter accountability. The purpose is to account for all firefighters within the area of an incident. Use of the system will provide enhanced personal safety for the individual firefighter, and will provide the Incident Command Organization staff an improved means to track and account for all personnel working in the incident area.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

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

Accountability involves a personal commitment to the following:

- Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident.
- Command will always be responsible for overall accountability at an incident.
- Officers will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crews assigned to them. This will require the Officer to be in their assigned area and maintaining close supervision of crews assigned to them.
- Utilize proper air management techniques.
- Company officers shall maintain a current passport of personnel responding on the apparatus at all times.
- All crews will work within the incident command system -- no freelancing.
- Crews arriving on the scene should remain intact. A minimum crew size will be considered two or more members. Each member should have a radio.
- When possible, all crews will go in together, stay together, and come out together.
- If communications fail while working in an IDLH area, the crew will exit.

**PASSPORTS**

To enhance accountability and to improve tracking of firefighters in the IDLH area, the "PASSPORT" system will be used. PASSPORTS involve a plastic card with the crew members names affixed that is turned into an Accountability Officer. The Accountability Officer may be a pump engineer, a Company Officer, or a designated Accountability Officer, depending on the nature, type, and complexity of the incident.

**PAR CHECKS**

Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The Personnel Accountability Report (or "PAR") involves a roll call of personnel assigned. For the Company Officer, a "PAR" is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are visually accounted for. For the Division Officer, a "PAR" is an accounting for all crew members of all companies assigned to his/her division. Reports of PAR's should be conducted face-to-face within the company or with the division whenever possible.

A personnel accountability report will be 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, backdraft, collapse, May Day, etc.
- At every 10 minutes of elapsed time.

---

**Section: 5.10      Accountability**

Effective Date: 01/01/2007

Revision Date: 04/12/2006

Approved by: SMFD Officers 04/26/2006

---

- At a report of fire under control.
- Any time Command feels it is necessary.

**MEMBER INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Personnel will be responsible for immediately updating the company PASSPORT as they arrive to duty.

Each Company Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the PASSPORT reflects only currently assigned personnel. When entering a IDLH area with a partial crew (i.e., engineer remains at the engine to pump lines), the Company Officer must remove name tags of those members not entering the IDLH area. The name tags of these members may be returned to the member, placed on the Company Officer's helmet velcro strip or placed in his/her coat pocket.

**RULES OF THUMB**

PASSPORT implementation should consider the following basic rule of thumb:

- PASSPORTS must be maintained at the point of entry.

**PASSPORT IMPLEMENTATION - THE INCIDENT**

The PASSPORT system will occur at every incident.

The objective of the PASSPORT system is always to have the crewmembers PASSPORTS near the point of entry and that they be accurate, reflecting only those members entering the IDLH area. For those situations where it is not clear-cut as to when and where to turn in PASSPORT, crews should consider the above-cited objective for their decision.

For single company incidents, the PASSPORT remains on the apparatus dash. The Engineer will assume accountability sector responsibilities.

For larger incidents, the PASSPORT system will function as follows:

- The first engine to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial accountability location for all later arriving companies to that side of the incident.
- PASSPORT of the first engine to each geographic side of the incident will remain attached to the dash.
- The Engineer of the first engine to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial Accountability officer until a Division or Accountability officer who assumes accountability responsibilities collects PASSPORTS later in the incident.
- All crews will take their PASSPORTS to their assigned accountability location prior to entering the IDLH area.
- As the incident escalates, and Division officers and/or Accountability officers are assigned, all PASSPORTS will be delivered to these officers prior to entry into the IDLH area. Accountability officers will collect passports from the engineers.
- Where the Division officer is operating within the IDLH area, PASSPORTS must remain outside the zone with a designated Accountability officer (i.e., initial engineer or staff officer) serving as an Accountability officer. A Division officer operating within the IDLH area will not have PASSPORT accountability responsibilities.
- Command must maintain an awareness of which engine companies are serving as accountability locations, and provide this information to companies being assigned to each geographic side of the incident (sector).

---

**Section: 5.10      Accountability**

Effective Date:      01/01/2007

Revision Date:      04/12/2006

Approved by: SMFD Officers 04/26/2006

---

**POINT OF ENTRY CONTROL**

PASSPORTS will remain with the designated Accountability Officer near the "point of entry". Upon entry, crews will turn in their PASSPORT. Upon exit, the company officer must retrieve their PASSPORT. Both the Company Officer and Accountability Officer will be responsible to see the PASSPORTS are retrieved. The accountability status board will contain only the PASSPORTS of those crews on scene.

Crews exiting at a different location other than the original point of entry, must immediately notify their original Division Officer and/or Accountability Officer of their changed status. The PASSPORT must be retrieved.

The original Division Officer and/or Accountability Officer must be made aware of the change.

**TERMINATING THE PASSPORT SYSTEM**

PASSPORT accountability will be maintained through a report of "fire under control," at which time a PAR for all crews must be obtained. Command will determine at that time, based on the situation and risk, as to whether to continue with the PASSPORT system. If visibility is still impaired or a significant hazardous condition still exists, Command may choose to extend the PASSPORT system further.

Upon termination and release from the incident, Company Officers and crewmembers will ensure that the PASSPORT is returned to the dash of their apparatus and that the PASSPORT is up-to-date.

**ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS**

**Individual Name Tags** – Reflect the firefighter's Department, Name and Rank. Name tags will be engraved plastic. Name tags will also be color-coded: Firefighters = Yellow, Line Officers = Red and Chief Officers = White. Name Tags will have the hook side of velcro. Name Tags will be kept under the firefighter's rear helmet brim. The helmet will have the loop side of velcro.

**Passports** – Will reflect the individual company assignments by attaching Name Tags. Department Name and Unit ID will be engraved on the Passport. The front of the Passport will have the loop side of velcro. The back side of the passport will have the hook side of velcro. Passports will be 2" wide x 4" high. Passports will be kept on the Each units Status Board.

**Status Board** – Used to attach Passports to track unit/crew assignments. Status Boards will be 8" wide x 11" tall. Status Boards will be engraved with the Department's Name and Unit ID. The front of the Status Board should have the loop side of velcro. The back of the Status Board shall have the hook side of velcro for attaching to the apparatus and Command Board. Status Boards will be stored on Engines, Ladders and other fire units. These should be kept on or near the dash of the apparatus.

**Command Board** – Used by incident commanders for overall scene management. The size and layout of the board to be determined by each command officer. The Command Board shall have strips of loop velcro for attaching Name Tags, Passports and Status Boards.