

# Springdale Fire Department

## Policy & Procedures Manual

### Volume 2 – Operations

#### Section 201 – Personnel Safety

#### 201.9 – Personnel Accountability System

Effective accountability begins with the individual. No system will operate as designed if participants lack the discipline and dedication to follow the established framework. Although ultimate responsibility falls to the Incident Commander, each member of the SFD must adhere to the guidelines and best practices contained herein. Freelancing and poor communication will each undermine or destroy personnel tracking efforts. At no time will these be acceptable practices.

In this context, accountability refers to a system designed to enhance tracking of personnel assigned to emergency incident scenes. This system is scalable for use at events of differing size and complexity as well as during training sessions or planned responses.

Accountability as a function is the responsibility of the on scene Incident Commander. Until another is assigned, the Incident Commander is the Accountability Officer.

When an incident is deemed sufficiently large or complex, the Incident Commander shall delegate the accountability function to a separate department member. This assignee will be designated “Accountability Officer” and will work at the Command Post with the Incident Commander until such time as this becomes impractical or a formal IMS check-in system is established. Similarly, when one of the following conditions is met the accountability function should be delegated:

A mayday is called  
Incident exceeds a level 3 alarm response (or equivalent)

#### **Tags and Passports**

Each department member is provided Tactron Velcro-backed name tags for use in personnel tracking. The tags are color coded by rank as listed:

Yellow—firefighter  
Red—Captain  
White—Chief Officer

The tags are affixed to the underside of each member’s helmet brim until placed on a passport. The Shift Commander is also provided with tags for each department member.

Passports are unit designated Velcro boards that accommodate the tags of individuals assigned to an apparatus. The Primary Passports are those carried in the Pocket Commander of Battalion 1. Passports carried on the apparatus are considered Secondary Passports. The Crew Leader’s name tag should be the first one on the Passport followed by the rest of the crew.

The Pocket Commander on Battalion 1 shall be updated at the beginning of each shift by the Shift Commander. Every apparatus has a passport in the cab. Each member assigned to a unit shall affix a name tag to the passport at the start of each tour of duty and move it back to his or her helmet at the end. Company Officers will assure that the unit passport is current and correct at all times.

Primary Passports are used to track crew members during incidents. The Secondary Passports may be used to track crew members when the Primary Passports are unavailable. For example, having two working incidents at the same time would require use of the Secondary Passports to manage Personnel Accountability. If the Shift Commander can't respond (already on an incident or otherwise out of service) the Primary Passports will not be accessible to use.

All Chief Officers are provided with a pocket commander, but these are not required to be current with tags and passports.

### **On-Scene Implementation**

The Accountability Officer will use passports to keep track of all personnel working at the incident and within the hot and warm zones.

All mutual aid companies and staff officers shall check in with Command or the Accountability Officer when they arrive on scene. Crews made up of off-duty personnel shall have a passport created for their crew from blank passports. This needs to be completed before the crew begins operations.

In the event an officer, other than the Shift Commander (D-shift personnel, off-duty shift commander, etc.) initially takes command of an incident, secondary passports should be collected when possible.

If a Chief or staff officer does not respond, the first arriving engine company will be responsible for establishing Command and Accountability. If the situation calls for a "fast Attack" mode, the second arriving engine company officer will be responsible for establishing Command and Accountability after water supply is addressed.

### **Personnel Accountability Reports (PAR)**

A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) gives the Accountability Officer an updated snapshot of crew integrity. A PAR may be requested by unit, function (group) or geography (division). Only the Company Officer or group/division supervisor will communicate PAR status. He or she will respond with radio designation followed by "PAR—and the number of assigned personnel accounted for."

The Incident Commander will request a PAR as needed to be confident that crew integrity is maintained. Additionally, a PAR will be requested after any significant event occurs. The following list of PAR triggers includes known best practice times for conducting a PAR. This does not however preclude or mandate a PAR in any particular instance but rather provides guidance for potential Incident Commanders:

After 20 minutes on scene and repeated as necessary

A Mayday is called

A change of strategy has occurred (ex. offensive to defensive)

Structure collapse

Rapid change in conditions

Crews are rotating into and out of rehab or air bottles are being changed

### **Continuity**

The Incident Commander is responsible for tracking not only crew movement but also work periods, rest periods and the progression of conditions. Dispatch will assist by announcing standard incident times until the benchmark “under control” is given.

Any time a crew’s assignment is complete or changes the Company Officer or supervisor needs to notify Command of the changes. It is the responsibility of the Accountability Officer to keep the Command Board updated as changes occur on scene.

Transfer of Command shall include transfer of the accountability system status and any passports in use.