

Lake County Fire Service Standard Operating Guidelines

Personnel Accountability System	SOG: 009 Effective Date: April 1, 2011 Supersedes: Approved: <hr/> President, Lake County Association of Chiefs of Fire Page 1 of 8
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1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 It shall be the policy of all Lake County Fire Departments to account for the location and safety of all personnel within the HAZARD ZONE at an emergency incident.
- 1.2 The Personnel Accountability System (PAS) described herein shall be used in conjunction with the Incident Management System (IMS) to identify individual members of a team and their assignment, and account for the assignment of teams and units at an emergency incident.

2.0 DIVISIONS AFFECTED

- 2.1 All Fire Department personnel.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 All Officers are responsible to comply with and ensure that personnel under their command are adequately trained, fully understand, and comply with this guideline.
- 3.2 All members have the responsibility to learn and follow this guideline.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Emergency Incident:** Any situation in which the Fire Department responds to deliver emergency services including: rescue, fire suppression, EMS, and other forms of hazard control and mitigation.
- 4.2 **Hazard Zone:** Any area that requires use of a SCBA or in which a firefighter is at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure.
- 4.3 **Key Ring:** Device used to hold crew members' name tags; marked with type of apparatus and radio identification number (i.e., E2003).
- 4.4 **Name Tag:** A plastic or metal tag equipped with a device to attach to the key ring. The tags shall have a member's last name, rank, and Department name embossed thereon.
- 4.5 **Personnel Accountability System (PAS):** A procedure that uses name tags and status boards to track the assignment of personnel at an emergency incident.

- 4.6 **Personnel Accountability Report (PAR):** A poll of teams/crews at an emergency incident to account for all personnel.
- 4.7 **Status Board:** A large plastic board with writable surface equipped with metal rings to attach key rings.

5.0 GENERAL

- 5.1 Members shall use the Personnel Accountability System (PAS) in conjunction with the Incident Management System (IMS) to identify individual members of a team and their assignment, and account for the assignment of teams and units at an emergency incident.
- 5.2 Participation by members in emergency incident mitigation without entering the Personnel Accountability System (PAS) is unauthorized.
- 5.3 Commanders at an emergency incident shall use the Personnel Accountability System (PAS) to account for those commanders, companies, and crews within their direct span of control, as outlined in this procedure.
- 5.4 Company officers, crew leaders, and firefighters shall maintain an awareness of each other's physical condition and shall use the command structure to request help, relief, and reassignment of fatigued or injured crews or members.
- 5.5 Company officers, crew leaders, and firefighters are accountable for the safety of themselves and other members of their team. Crew members shall maintain a constant awareness of the position and function of all members working with them.
 - A. Crew members must always be in contact with each other through one of the following methods:
 - **VOICE (not by radio)**
 - **VISUAL**
 - **TOUCH**
 - B. If a crew member is in trouble, the other member(s) of the crew shall take appropriate steps to:
 - **DECLARE A MAYDAY**
 - **PROVIDE DIRECT HELP**
 - **CALL FOR HELP**
 - **GO FOR HELP**
 - C. Members will stay together as crews when in the hazard zone, and as otherwise directed by the Incident Commander, until incident termination.

6.0 PROCEDURE

- 6.1 Name tags shall be kept on the member's coat until response has been made. While responding to an emergency members shall place a tag on the key ring in the cab of the vehicle. Upon arrival at the scene, the key ring shall be placed on the status board. This procedure shall be followed by the initial assignment units immediately involved in operations at the scene.
- 6.2 The first engine to reach each geographic side of the incident shall become the accountability location for that side of the incident; the engine operator shall be the Accountability Officer.
- 6.3 The engine operator shall remain the Accountability Manager until relieved. As Branch Directors or Division Supervisors are established, they should assume the responsibility of personnel accountability manager. At large or complex incidents, personnel may be assigned to accountability, relieving Branch or Divisions and engine operators of the responsibility.
- 6.4 Squad personnel: Squad personnel are to place their name tags on the squad's key ring and turn the key ring over to the engine operator. If they will be functioning as part of the engine company, the squad key ring shall be clipped to the engine ring. If they will be performing a separate task, the key ring shall not be clipped to the engine ring. Their task/location shall be indicated on the status board and the key ring attached thereon.
- 6.5 Additional companies entering the hazard zone shall leave their key rings with the appropriate engine operator. The engine operator shall place the rings on the status board.

If the distance between companies is so great as to make this impractical, the key ring may be left on the company's own apparatus. This, in effect, establishes another accountability point, which would be consistent with the manner in which divisions or groups will be set up. The first engine at each entry point will become the accountability location for that entry point, additional companies entering through those locations shall tag in with the appropriate engine.

If the situation is such that all company members of the subsequently arriving units will be entering the hazard zone, the procedure must be modified somewhat. The Officer in Charge of that apparatus shall be responsible to ensure that all members entering the hazard zone have their name tags on the vehicle key ring. The engine operator shall be responsible for placing it on the status board in the engine operator's compartment before the company enters the hazard zone.

The operator of the initial attack engine, who is serving as the Accountability Officer, must be advised that the key ring is being left on the other apparatus. This information is to be communicated to the engine operator responsible for accountability by radio; an acknowledgement must be received by the Officer in Charge of the second company before entry to the hazard zone is made.

- 6.6 Members responding from home should report to the personnel staging area for assignment. Members who arrive before command has established a personnel staging area shall tag in at the attack engine. They will then be assigned to function as part of that engine company. The engine operator will ensure the company officer is advised of the additional personnel responding to his/her location. This may be accomplished face-to-face, or by radio. Additional personnel will be sent to command or to a personnel staging area.
- 6.7 Personnel from other responding units shall be held in the staging area. The staging officer shall assure that these personnel have appropriate name tags. The officer/firefighter in charge of the company shall hold the key ring in which the tags are attached until given an assignment. The key ring shall be given to the division or group officer for whom the company will be working for, or to the Accountability Officer, whichever is appropriate for the given scene. The key ring shall never enter the hazard zone.
- 6.8 When a group has completed their assignment and is going to another location, such as Rehab, the Officer in Charge will obtain the key ring and take it with them. The key ring shall remain in his/her possession until the company is reassigned to function in the hazard zone or the incident is terminated.
- 6.9 Personnel Accountability Report
- A. A PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (PAR) is a roll call of personnel assigned to a company. For a company, this is accounting for all company members. For a Division or Branch, it is accounting for all of the members of all companies assigned to the Division or Branch. These reports should be accomplished face-to-face at the company level; from the company to division or group they may be accomplished by radio or face-to-face.
- B. Examples:
- "1313 to South Division, I have a PAR (# of personnel)" indicates that the Officer in Charge of Engine 1313's company has accounted for all his/her personnel in the hazard zone.
- "South Division to Command, I have a PAR" indicates that all companies in the South Division have reported a PAR to the South Division.
- C. A PAR shall be required whenever any of the following occur:
1. Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter—Command must initiate a PAR of all companies on the scene. Any missing / trapped / MAYDAY situation: Each group leader or division supervisor must account for his or her personnel; the only radio report to Command shall be to report a negative PAR.
 2. A change of operational mode, as from offensive to defensive—

Command must initiate a PAR of all companies on the scene.

3. Any hazardous event such as flashover, backdraft, or collapse—
Command must initiate a PAR of all companies on the scene.
4. At twenty (20) minute intervals.
5. When under control is achieved.

6.10 Accountability Branch Director or Group Leader

- A. The role of Accountability Manager may be filled by engine operators, Branch Directors, Group Leaders, Division Supervisors, or other personnel assigned to Divisions or Branches to serve as accountability.
- B. The first engine to reach the geographic side of an incident shall become the accountability location for that side of the incident.
- C. As the incident progresses and division supervisors or group leaders are assigned, they may manage the key rings only if they are not entering the hazard zone. If they enter the hazard zone, they must tag in at the accountability location already established.
- D. As additional personnel are obtained, Accountability Managers in Branches or Divisions shall be assigned. Accountability assigned to a Branch or Division shall report to that area and assume management of accountability of that division or branch. Accountability shall be assigned a radio frequency and will communicate with Command or the Accountability Group, if established.
- E. If the need for Accountability to assist Divisions or Branches is critical, command may elect to split up a company and distribute its members to the various Divisions or Branches to serve as Accountability Managers.

6.11 Accountability Group

- A. At large incidents or incidents which require intensive monitoring of personnel, command should establish an Accountability Group to coordinate accountability managers.
 1. Ensure that accountability managers are established in all Branches or Divisions where they are needed.
 2. Develop and implement a plan to track all personnel working in the hazard zone.
 3. Request and manage resources as needed.
 4. Provide progress reports to command.

5. Initiate PARs on benchmarks and/or for any other need.
6. Coordinate with personnel/staging and safety.

6.12 Point of Entry Control

- A. The key ring must remain with the designated Accountability Officer at the point of entry into the hazard zone.
- B. When a company exits the hazard zone, the key ring must be picked up. At all times the names on the key ring should identify only those members in the hazard zone.

NOTE: Given a four-person company working in the hazard zone, if two members, with a portable radio, are detailed to exit the hazard zone to get equipment and return directly to the hazard zone, no modification of the key ring tags will be required. Division of the company into pairs will be permitted; however, the Officer in Charge of the company retains responsibility for the accountability of his/her company.

- C. Companies exiting at a point other than where they entered the hazard zone must immediately notify their accountability manager and/or division/group supervisor/leader. The key ring must be retrieved as soon as possible. If critical needs mandate the immediate reassignment of the company, the accountability manager at their new point of entry must track them.
- D. High Rise Buildings
 1. As the incident escalates, the key rings should be transferred from the engine operator to lobby control, to the accountability manager, as these functions are established. Forward staging will track personnel through use of pencil and paper or other suitable means.
 2. The forward staging area should be located in a safe area within the building (usually at least two floors below the fire).
 3. Point-of-Entry Accountability Managers should be assigned to all fire combat positions.
 4. Branch Managers or Division Supervisors shall maintain the key rings of companies working in support areas of the building.
- E. Large Buildings

In large buildings the forward staging area may be placed in a safe area within the building. The Accountability Manager will function at that location. All key rings should be collected and turned in to this officer.

Point-of-Entry Accountability Managers should be assigned to all fire combat positions.

Branch Managers or Division Supervisors shall maintain the key rings of companies working in support areas of the building.

6.13 Rapid Intervention Crews

As the incident escalates, or when companies are operating in extremely hazardous situations such as confined space or building collapse, command shall assign Rapid Intervention Crews (RIC) to stand by at each side or point of entry. These crews shall be equipped and ready to function immediately as rescue teams should the need arise.

6.14 Lost or Missing Firefighter – MAYDAY Situation.

Any absent, unaccounted-for member of a company will automatically be assumed to be lost or trapped in the hazard zone, until proven to be safe. Command must immediately send the RIC to the last known area in which the missing firefighter was working; a PAR must be initiated. See 6.9 C 1. Command will shift the operation to a search and rescue mode and must ensure adequate resources are either present or requested immediately.

6.15 Summary of Responsibilities

- A. Firefighters are responsible to ensure that they use the name tags as required.
- B. Firefighters must stay together in their assigned companies.
- C. The first engine operator to each side of the incident shall become the Accountability Manager until relieved. The engine operator must obtain key rings for all companies entering the hazard zone through his/her point of entry.
- D. The company officer must ensure that personnel comply with these procedures. The company officer must make sure that the key ring identifies only the personnel in the hazard zone. He/she must ensure that it is turned in at the point of entry and is retrieved when the companies exit the hazard zone.
- E. The Branch Managers or Division Supervisors must maintain an accurate awareness of all companies operating in his/her area. If the Branch Managers or Division Supervisors is managing accountability, he/she must obtain and manage all key rings for the companies in his/her area.
- F. The Accountability Manager for a given Branch or Division / Group is responsible to team up with the original apparatus or Division Supervisor or Group Leader in order to obtain and manage the key rings of all companies working in that area. The Accountability Manager must obtain all key rings

from the apparatus operators and Branch Managers or Division Supervisors / Group Leaders to ensure that he/she has a complete picture of all personnel in the hazard zone. He/she is responsible to coordinate with other Accountability Officers and with the Accountability Manager or command, whichever is appropriate for the incident.

- G. The Accountability Key Ring shall never enter the hazard zone.
- H. The Accountability Manager shall be responsible to manage the accountability supervisors / leaders and the overall scene accountability system. He/she is responsible to initiate PARs at tactical benchmarks or as directed by Command
- I. Command is responsible to monitor and track the location of all companies. Command must ensure that later arriving companies are advised of the identity and location of the accountability point of entry they must report to.
- J. When one of the operational benchmarks for a PAR is met, command shall initiate the PAR with the Accountability Manager. The Accountability Manager(s) shall contact each company officer and give the number of personnel the company officer should have in his/her company.

Example: Assuming Engine 1713 is one of the Accountability Managers.

"Command to Engine 1713, please call for PARs." After counting the coat tags on 1713 key ring (4 tags), the PAR should be called for as follows:

"Engine 1713 to WT 1713, do you have a PAR 4?"
WT 1713 answers, "Yes, I have a PAR 4."

After counting the name tags on 1723 key ring (3 tags):

"Engine 1713 to WT 1723 do you have a PAR 3?"
WT 1723 answers, "Yes, I have a PAR 3."

Engine 1713 to Command, "We have a PAR for all companies."
Command acknowledges the PAR.