



Firefighter Accountability Regional Procedure #05

Adopted by:
WCFA
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PURPOSE

It is the intent of the Williamson County Fire Chiefs Association (WCFA) to have an emergency incident accountability system in place at all incidents. The use of an accountability system will reduce the risk of losing a firefighter and can expedite search and rescue for a firefighter who has become lost, trapped, or is missing.

The accountability system will be active whenever personnel are operating in a hot zone and as the incident commander deems necessary. The hot zone is defined as an area that requires an SCBA, a charged hand line, special protective clothing, or in which a firefighter is at risk of becoming trapped, lost, or missing.

BACKGROUND

The WCFA “Accountability Regional Procedure” is a cooperative effort between all members to assure that firefighter Accountability is handled the same across Williamson County.

PROCEDURE

- A. To enhance the accountability of firefighters operating in a hot zone, the Passport System will be used. The Passport System involves a plastic or metal card, personnel accountability tag (PAT), with the crew members name and at a minimum the fire department for which they work or volunteer for initials. The PAT will be placed on a passport which will ride in the responding apparatus. It is the responsibility of the individual turning the passport in to the accountability officer or placing on the crew resource board to ensure that all tags on the board are accurate for that apparatus.
- B. When a unit is first to arrive on a scene, a secondary board, named the “Crew Resource Board” CRB, which is larger and able to accommodate multiple passports will be placed on the front bumper of the apparatus. For many departments in Williamson County, it will be the responsibility of the officer on the first arriving unit to announce that they have accountability. For Williamson County fire departments that may not have a designated officer on the responding unit, the person riding in the officer seat or the driver of the first in unit if no one is in the officer seat will announce that they have accountability. Example: “Engine 1 has alpha side accountability.” As more units arrive on the scene and are given assignments, they will place their passport on the CRB before entering the hot zone.
- C. When the Incident Commander sets up a stationary command post, it is at his/her discretion to have the CRB(s) brought to the command post. As the incident continues to take on resources, the incident commander may assign an individual to act as the accountability officer. The first in unit only acts as the collection point for the passports and does not designate the driver of the apparatus as the accountability officer unless that is the standard operating procedure for an individual department. In all other instances, accountability is the responsibility of the incident commander until he/she names an individual as the accountability officer.
- D. The accountability system will remain active until units are released from the scene.

COMPONENTS OF THE PASSPORT SYSTEM**A. Helmet Identification**

1. All helmets shall have their representing departments name on a shield or decal that is visible on the exterior of the helmet.

B. Personnel Accountability Tags (PATs)

1. A small plastic or metal tag that is placed on the passport that is assigned to each unit.
 - i. Tag should have members name and at a minimum, the initials of the department that the crew member works or volunteers for.
 - ii. The tag will either have a Velcro back or a metal clasp on it so that it can be attached to a ring. Some tags may have both.
2. The person sitting in the officer seat or the driver if there is no one in the officer seat is responsible for ensuring the passport on their apparatus has the PATs for all members on the apparatus.
 - i. For departments that have responders responding directly to a scene and then forming a company on scene, the person turning in the passport will ensure all the tags are captured.

C. Passport

1. A small plastic/metal board that is assigned to each apparatus.
 - i. Board should have the unit and agency name at the top of the board.
 - ii. Board should have a way to securely hold the tags for the apparatus, Velcro, key rings, etc.
2. The passport will be hand delivered to the Command Post or placed on the CRB when an assignment is given.

D. Crew Resource Board (CRB)

1. A larger plastic/metal board that is assigned to each apparatus.
 - i. Board should have the agency name or initials at the top of the board.
 - ii. Board should have a way to securely hold passports from their own agency as well as other agencies that may be assisting.
2. This board act as a collection point for all units on the scene; therefore, it is advised that the CRB be large enough to hold a full first alarm assignment for a commercial or multi-family structure fire.

GENERAL GUIDELINES OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- A. Accountability and scene safety involves the commitment by all personnel operating at an emergency scene to actively participate in the Passport System.
1. Accountability is the responsibility of the Incident Commander or Accountability Officer if one is assigned.
 2. The Incident Commander will be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategic and tactical planning, and will consider and react to any barriers that negatively affect personnel accountability.
 3. Officers or those acting as the responsible party of a crew will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crewmembers assigned to them.
 4. Passports will never enter the hot zone, but they may make it into the warm zone on a CRB with a Division officer.
 5. Accountability shall be maintained throughout the incident.

TERMINATING THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

- A. As units are released from an incident, the Incident Commander or Accountability Officer if one was assigned, will return passports to the responding units.
- B. If a passport fails to make it back to its unit before the unit left the scene, the incident commander will make arrangements to return the passport as soon as possible.