

Union County Standard Operating Guidelines  
**Incident Command System**

**Incident Command System 2.08**

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**Accountability**

1. Purpose

The Passport Accountability System gives incident commanders a fast and efficient means to account for all fire/rescue personnel that are working within a small geographical area, within the “hazard zone” of an incident. The system addresses the requirements for firefighter accountability as stipulated in NFPA 1500 and 1561.

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 personnel working in the hazard zone.

The hazard zone will be defined as any area that requires an SCBA or in which a firefighter is at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or the structure. This would include entering a structure reported to be on fire, operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior operations, confined space operations, trench rescue, etc.

2. Accountability

Accountability involves a personal commitment to work within the safety system at an incident.

- A. Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident.
- B. Command will always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attach planning, and must consider and react to any barriers to effect accountability.
- C. Division/Group officers will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crews assigned to them. This will require the Division/Group Officer to be in his/her assigned area and maintaining close supervision of crews assigned to them.
- D. All crews will work for Command or Division/Groups - no freelancing.
- E. Crews arriving on the scene should remain intact for all intents and purposes. A minimum crew size will be considered two or more members and a radio will be required.
- F. All crews entering a hazard zone must be supervised by a designated supervisor or other ranking individual.
- G. All crews will go in together, stay together, and come out together. Reduced visibility and increased risk will require very tight togetherness.
- H. If a radio fails while in the hazard zone, the crew will exit unless there is another working radio with the crew.

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3. Passport System Hardware

A. Personnel Accountability Tag (PAT)

1. Each member of the Division will be issued two brass tags. (When the PASSPORT system is activated, one PAT is placed on the PASSPORT and the other will remain attached to the individual's turnout coat).
2. Each tag will have the individual's unit number stamped on one side and their last name labeled on the other side.
3. It will be each member's responsibility to maintain their PATs and if missing or in need of replacement, to report this to their company officer.

NOTE: Riders and Observers – A PAT stamped “observer” shall be maintained on station. When riders or observers are assigned, the observer PAT will be utilized by that individual. All observers will be briefed on the accountability system as part of their safety briefing at the beginning of their observation time.

B. Passports

1. Each emergency vehicle (except cars) shall be equipped with a PASSPORT.
2. The PASSPORT will consist of a plastic card, 2 ¾ x 3 ¾ inches, white in color, black lettering/etching. Company designation (i.e. #E-271) etched at the top.
3. Hook and velcro on front, and velcro on rear.
4. Hook on PASSPORT receives PAT. (When working with ranking County departments, the Velcro on the front will accommodate their accountability name tags, and should be utilized with our system when departments from both counties are at an incident.
5. The PASSPORT is attached to a Velcro strip located on the dash of the apparatus, company officer (or passenger) side.

C. Status Boards

1. A plastic board, 12 x 18 inches, white in color, black lettering/etching.
2. Velcro front and back
3. Position for eight passports
4. Located on driver's inside door of all apparatus, velcroed to door.
5. Used by pump operator, Division/Group officer, or accountability officer to manager passports at point of entry.

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D. Large Status Boards

1. A plastic board, 16 x 12 inches, white in color, black lettering/etching.
2. Velcro front and back
3. Position for 12 passports
4. Carried in chief officers vehicles
5. Used by chief officers, or accountability officers, to manager passports at point of entry.

E. Helmet Markings

1. the shield on the front of the helmet will bear the department name and station number.
2. Each helmet will bear the individual's unit number on the rear.
3. Any decals or insignias not previously approved by the Chief shall be prohibited.

4. Tactical Benchmarks

Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The Personnel Accountability Report (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/Group Officer, a PAR is an accounting for all crew members of all companies assigned to his/her Division/Group. Reports of PAR's should be conducted face-to-face within the company or with the Division/Group whenever possible. Example: Engine 271 to C Division/Group, I have PAR (all members accounted for).

A personnel accountability report will be required for the following situations:

1. Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter (Command initiates a PAR of all crews on the scene).
2. Any change from offensive to defensive (Command initiates a PAR of all crews on the scene).
3. Any sudden hazardous even at the incident – flash over, back drafts, collapse, etc. (PAR is initiated by Command).
4. By all crew(s) reporting an “all clear” (Company Officers of crews responsible for search and rescue will ensure they have a PAR for their crews at the time they report an all clear).
5. At 20 minute elapsed time
6. At a report of a “situation contained”

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5. Accountability Officers and Division/Groups

Accountability officers may be pump operators, Division/Group Officers, or personnel specifically assigned to Division/Groups to serve as Accountability Officers for the Division/Group Officer.

The first firefighting apparatus to each geographic side of the incident will serve as the initial accountability location. The pump operator will service as the initial accountability officer. All crews entering the incident will deliver their PASSPORTS to the accountability location closest to their “point of entry” prior to entering the hazard zone. As Division/Groups are implemented, Division/Group Officers will manager PASSPORTS only if he/she is not entering the hazard zone (i.e., defensive operation). PASSPORTS will remain on the first engine (accountability location). As staff officers arrive on the scene and stage, they will be assigned accountability responsibilities for given Division/Groups. These officers will report to their assigned Division/Group Officer to manager accountability for that Division/Group (i.e., min-lobby Division/Group).

As the incident escalates and staff officers fill accountability positions for each Division/Group, these Accountability Officers will be assigned to a radio channel designated by Command. Accountability Officers will report to Command.

At incidents with a critical need for Accountability Officers to assist Division/Group Officers, Command may choose to split up a company and distribute the crew members to different Division/Groups to act as Accountability Officers.

As the incident escalates to the level that Accountability Officers are assigned, Command should implement an Accountability Division/Group to coordinate officers.

The Accountability Division/Group will be assigned to either Command or operations Sections and will operate on the assigned radio channel. The Accountability Division/Group Officer should be located in or at the Command Post.

That Accountability Division/Group Officer’s responsibilities include:

1. Develop and implement a plan designed to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.
2. Ensure that Accountability Officers are implemented in each Division/Group as necessary.
3. Request and manager Division/Group resources as needed.
4. Provide progress reports to Command
5. Initiate PAR’s upon benchmarks or as needed.

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6. PASSPORT Implementation at the Incident

The objective of the PASSPORT system is always to have the crew member's PASSPORT near the point of entry and that they be accurate, reflecting only those members entering the hazard zone. 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.

**Implementation of the PASSPORT system will occur at any incident that requires the use of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus.** PASSPORT implementation should consider the following basic rules of thumb:

1. PASSPORTS never enter the hazard zone.
2. PASSPORTS must be maintained at the point of entry to the hazard zone.
3. PASSPORTS must reflect only those personnel presently in the hazard zone.
4. Crews must turn in their PASSPORTS upon entering and must retrieve their PASSPORTS upon exit from the hazard zone.

A. Level 1 Accountability

1. Level 1 accountability begins with placing the individual PATs on the PASSPORT.
2. For single company incidents, the PASSPORTS remain on the apparatus. The pump operator will assume accountability Division/Group responsibilities.
3. Any personnel arriving via private auto, as well as command officers shall report to the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander shall have the option of:
  - i. Collecting the member's PAT and assigning the individual as part of the Incident Command Structure, or
  - ii. Assign the member to a specific piece of apparatus on the scene, at which the member shall affix their PAT to the specified apparatus PASSPORT.
4. Personnel arriving prior to the Command post being established shall establish a command post.

B. Level II Accountability – “A” Assignment Response

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1. At any time during the course of an incident, the Incident Commander has the option of directing units to account for the number of personnel operating with that company by means of PASSPORTS.
2. At the order of the Incident Commander, all PASSPORTS will be brought to and maintained at the command post.
3. the PASSPORTS will be organized at the command post by utilizing the Large Division/Group Board.

#### C. Level III Accountability – “B” Assignments and Greater/Complex Incidents

Level III PASSPORT Accountability System will function as follows:

1. The first engine or ladder to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial accountability location for all later arriving companies to that side of the incident.
2. The driver/operator becomes the initial Accountability Officer until the Division/Group or Accountability Officer who assumes accountability responsibilities collects PASSPORTS in the incident.
3. Apparatus designed by the Incident Commander to be accountability locations shall communicate, via radio, their geographic position on the fireground.
4. Crews entering the hazard zone shall place their PASSPORTS on the status board of the apparatus designated as Accountability for their point of entry. The status board will be located on the inside panel of the operator's/driver's door.
5. Ladder companies on the initial assignment (first alarm) may leave their PASSPORTS on the dash of the apparatus if they are parked at a position that would permit easy delivery of the PASSPORTS to the accountability engine.
6. Any ladder company assigned to a Division/Group will deliver the PASSPORTS to the Division/Group Officer, or a designated Accountability Officer (designated by the Division/Group Officer or Command).
7. As the incident escalates, and Division/Group Officers and/or Accountability Officers are assigned, all PASSPORTS will be delivered to these officers prior to entry into the hazard zone.
8. Where the Division/Group Officer is operating within the hazard zone, PASSPORTS must remain Outside the zone with a designated Accountability Officer (i.e., initial operator/driver or staff officer) serving as Accountability Officer. A Division/Group Officer operating within the hazard zone will not have PASSPORT accountability responsibilities.
9. 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 (i.e., C Division/Group).

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D. Point of Entry Control

When the Incident Commander determines that the Incident requires more stringent accountability, he/she will implement Point of Entry Control.

1. PASSPORTS will remain with the designated Accountability Officer near “point of entry” to the hazard zone. Upon entry, crews will turn in the PASSPORT. Upon exit, the crew must retrieve their PASSPORTS. The accountability status board will contain only the PASSPORTS of those crews in the hazard zone.
2. to implement Point of Entry Control, the designated officer(s) will monitor all points of entry into the structure, confined space, or areas involved.
3. Entry control will ensure that each member’s name, company number, time of entry, and assignment is recorded.
4. Entry Control shall ensure that members are relieved as appropriate.
5. As members exit a control point, the time of exit shall be recorded. Members who must exit at a point remote from the control point shall inform Entry control personnel of their exit from the building/area.
6. Entry Control shall notify Incident Command of unaccounted for personnel.

E. Terminating the PASSPORT System

PASSPORT accountability will be maintained through a report of “situation contained”, 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 crew members will ensure that the PASSPORT is returned to the dash of their apparatus and that the PASSPORT is up to date.

7. Rapid Intervention Crews

As the incident escalates, and/or crews are operating at a special hazard (i.e., confined space rescue), Command will assign “Rapid Intervention Crews” to each side of the incident or point of entry. These crews will serve as stand-by rescue teams during all hazardous operations.

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