



GLASTONBURY FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



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CATEGORY: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS - GENERAL

SUB-CATEGORY: ACCOUNTABILITY

SUBJECT: TAG SYSTEM

RELATED GUIDELINES: FDO-301, FDO-303, FDO-304, FDO-305, FDO-306, FDO-307, FDO-308, FDO-309

Section I -- Introduction

A. Objective

Members will use the firefighter tracking system established by the Department to enhance firefighter accountability.

B. Applicability

This guideline is to be used prior to initiating an assigned task or when not in site of the Incident Commander.

C. References

Town of Manchester Fire-Rescue-EMS – General Operating Guideline

Section II – Guideline

Purpose

The primary function of the Personnel Accountability System (PAS) is to keep track of all the personnel working at an emergency incident. It is imperative that COMMAND knows who is on the scene and the **function and location** of all groups, divisions, and members.

The PAS is an important firefighter safety tool. It is a critical technical benchmark in the fire service. It is required by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and is a federal regulation from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The tags that will be assigned to all members will also serve as a credentialing system as required by the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The PAS will be used at all emergency incident and drills. The Mobile Data Capture Devices (MDCD) assigned to each Company should also be used at routine and social events to maintain member proficiency with this tool.

Key Points

1. Accountability must be to someone. There must be COMMAND before any member goes to work at a *critical incident function*.
2. Members, Group Supervisors, and Division Supervisors must keep COMMAND notified at all times their **function and location**.
3. All personnel must tag-in at an apparatus and a command board before working in any critical function. Your tag must "touch yellow" before performing any *critical incident function*.
4. COMMAND will normally be on the A side. COMMAND will radio Dispatch to inform the department if it is established at another location.

Key Point Exceptions

- Investigation when there is nothing showing – a radio report to Dispatch is acceptable.
- There is an immediate life safety issue.

Definition – Critical Incident Function

Personnel working outside of the critical incident function are tagged in at their apparatus. When crews report to COMMAND for assignments in the critical incident function area, the second tag must be placed on a command board.

The critical incident function areas are:

- Any member, group, or division working in, on, or in near the proximity of a structure fire, hazardous material, or technical rescue incident.
- Any time a member, group, or division will work outside the sight of COMMAND such as investigations at large building or outdoor searches.
- Anytime the span of control is exceeded.
- Any area with a potential risk to any member
- Any area as determined by COMMAND
- When deemed necessary by COMMAND, there may be multiple command boards in use initially. The Personnel Accountability Officer will collect the tags as the incident progresses.

Physical Information

- Each member will be assigned three tags. Two of which are carried on rings attached to the turnout gear and one of which will be carried on their person for use as a membership ID and NIMS credentials card.
- Apparatus rings will be used to tag in at the apparatus. Portable radio rings will be used to tag in as a group or division.
- The front line apparatus in each station will carry yellow first due command boards for initial operations.

Personnel Responsibilities

- Members must always have their tags with their turnout gear to work at any emergency incident.
- Members, Groups, and Divisions must "touch yellow" at a command board to work in critical incident function areas.
- Members, Groups, and Divisions must retrieve their tags each time they leave the critical incident function area.

- Group and Division Supervisor must keep COMMAND notified of their function and location throughout the incident.
- COMMAND must know the location and function of all personnel working in any critical incident function area.

Personnel Accountability Officer (PAO)

COMMAND must establish a PAO. The PAO (and assistants if necessary) will maintain the manual tagging system.

Radio Reports

Each Group, Division, or Branch, will assume the radio call sign of that assignment until reassigned or the incident termination. Examples – Fire Attack, Division C, or Medical Branch.

Personnel Accountability Report – PAR

The Personnel Accountability Report is a roll call of personnel operating at the incident. For the Group or Division Supervisor, a PAR is a confirmation that all personnel assigned to his/her sector are accounted for. For the Incident Commander a PAR is called to initiate a roll call to ensure all members are accounted for.

Example from the Group or Division Supervisor – “Command/Search – Search of the second floor is completed; we’re heading to the third floor to search. I am PAR with 4”.

Example for COMMAND – “Attention all Companies – stand by for PAR. FIRE ATTACK”. Answer is “FIRE ATTACK PAR with 4 in the basement.”

PAR shall come from all groups and divisions on all progress reports.

PAR shall be called by COMMAND whenever:

- There is a report of anyone trapped or unaccounted for.
- There is a sudden event at the incident such as structural collapse or backdraft.
- At every 30 minute interval.
- There is a change of attack mode from offensive to defensive.
- COMMAND deems it necessary.
- There is a report of the situation under control. A report of the fire under control will require the initiation of a PAR.

Summary of PAS Responsibilities

The PAS will work only with a strong commitment to the system. This commitment involves the following responsibilities:

Firefighter

Each firefighter is responsible to stay with his/her crew at all times and to ensure that his/her accountability tag is either on their turnout gear or on the appropriate apparatus ring, portable radio ring or command board.

Officers, Division and Group Supervisors, Crew Leaders, and Branch Directors

Responsible to keep his/her crew intact at all times and to ensure they are tagged in at a command board, keep COMMAND informed of their location and function at all times, to give quality progress reports with PAR, and respond to PAR roll calls from COMMAND.

GENERAL

To enhance accountability and to improve tracking of firefighters in the hazard zone, the "Tag & Clip" accountability system will be used. The system involves a large plastic (host) tag [with a photo ID of the firefighter] which affixes to the collector ring. The large plastic [host] tag together with the crew members tag affixed is referred to as the tag system.

Each firefighter will be issued two personal name tags. These will be affixed to the firefighter's turnout coat. The firefighter will place the personal name tag on the large collector ring or portable radio and will remove it, returning it to coat, when the incident is terminated.

At a working emergency incident the Incident Commander will have all tag systems collected by an aide for those units that arrive on the first alarm and will place them appropriately on the accountability board; including those of the pump operators that may have remained with their units.

At a working incident the Incident Commander will have all tag system delivered to him/her by the unit crew members for those units that arrive after the first alarm (special called; second alarm or greater).

Section III - Approval

Fire Chief

Michael P. Tracy

Date of Approval:

1/11/16