

**BAY CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
BAY CITY, MICHIGAN**

SECTION 2 - PUBLIC SAFETY  
GENERAL ORDER

September 16, 2020  
INDEX NO. 2.22

**PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Bay City Department of Public Safety Personnel Accountability System (PAS) is to ensure personnel and unit safety. The primary objective of the system is to assist supervisors in maintaining a constant awareness of the status, location, and functions of the personnel and / or units under their command. The personnel accountability system is intended to meet the requirements of NFPA 1561 and will be operational on all fire / rescue incidents and training exercises.

The PAS may be expanded, at the discretion of the Incident Commander (IC), to meet the demands of the incident and provide basic incident-wide personnel accountability; or more detailed accounting of members working in high hazard areas or at major incidents.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. **Personal Responsibility:** Each member's duty to understand his / her role in the accountability system including the use of Accountability components; the requirement to remain under supervision; the prohibition against freelancing; and the need to be constantly aware of the status of fellow crew members.
- B. **Unit Accountability:** A state of awareness whereby the status, locations, and functions of each individual in a unit are monitored and known by the Unit Leader and other command officers on-scene. Unit accountability should be documented by attaching name identifiers to Unit Riding Lists (URLs).
- C. **Scene Accountability:** A state of awareness whereby the status, locations, functions and crew-count of each unit are monitored and known by the Incident Commander and other command officers on-scene. Scene accountability should be documented by attaching Unit Riding Lists to a Command Status Board.
- D. **Unit Level Accountability:** This level of accountability shall be implemented during the initial stages of incident operations, as responding units / crews arrive on scene and are given assignments by the initial IC (normally the Officer / Acting Officer of the first arriving unit).

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- E. **Command Level Accountability:** This level of accountability may be implemented by an Officer / Acting Officer upon his / her arrival on the scene and after the transfer of command from the initial IC.
- F. **Enhanced Command Level Accountability:** This level of accountability may be initiated at the discretion of the IC when it becomes necessary to delegate the task of managing accountability and / or tracking a point-of-entry control due to complex accountability requirements.
- G. **Check-in:** A positive acknowledgement to a supervising authority that a person or unit is present or in attendance.
- H. **PAR:** A Personnel Accountability Report is where each Unit / Crew Leader is contacted to positively affirm the unit's location / assignment and the number of personnel attached to the unit.
- I. **Site Credentials:** An official accountability tag, ID tag, card or license that proves the individual is qualified to be on site and / or perform certain functions.
- J. **Authorized Site Visitor:** A qualified emergency responder that is neither from the Department or mutual aid (Example: MDOT, MSP, FEMA representative, etc) or non-emergency services personnel (example: news media, business / home owner, civilian contractor / utility worker) who at the Incident Commander's discretion has a valid business reason to be present at the incident. Upon validation of credentials, the IC may attach the site visitor to his / her command.
- K. **Freelancer:** An emergency responder that is operating independent of supervision.
- L. **Incident Perimeter:** The area surrounding the site or incident that is off-limits to non-authorized personnel.
- M. **Hot Zone or Hazardous Zone:** The area within the incident perimeter that is dangerous and where entry is strictly controlled.
- N. **Warm Zone:** The area within the incident perimeter, but outside the hot zone, where operations are conducted and apparatus are staged.

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- O. **Cold Zone:** The area outside the incident perimeter where there is no danger to civilians and where civilians will not interfere with operations.

**III. EQUIPMENT**

The Bay City Department of Public Safety PAS uses the following components to account for personnel:

- A. **NAME IDENTIFIER** - Every member will be issued individual accountability name identifiers. These identifiers will be printed with the member's name.



- B. **UNIT RIDING LIST (URL)** - Each department shall ensure that each emergency operations division has a device that is capable of holding both the Unit and Name identifiers on a single mechanism that represents “who” from a department is riding on “which” apparatus. This URL shall be located in the Battalion Chief's Command Case as well as the cab of the vehicle in close visible proximity to the Officer seat.



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- C. **COMMAND STATUS BOARD** - Each Command Post will have some means to manage the accountability URLs.



- D. **MAKE-UP KITS** - Each Department shall have an on-site ability to make up all components of the accountability system.

**IV. ACCOUNTABILITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

It shall be the responsibility of the Incident Commander (IC) to ensure that the locations of all members operating at an emergency incident scene are tracked for the duration of the incident. The location of units / crews on the incident scene shall be continuously tracked, from the time of arrival to the time of departure from the scene. This task may be delegated, at the discretion of the IC, to allow the IC to focus on the overall management of incident scene operations.

Members who are arriving in staff vehicles must report to staging / base, or to the IC to be assigned and properly accounted for.

- A. **All Crews** - Work for division / group supervisors, section chiefs, branch directors, or the IC.
1. Designated crews, assigned to the incident, and arriving on scene must maintain crew integrity. Minimum crew size is two (2) members.
  2. Each crew must have at least one (1) portable radio, although one (1) portable radio for each crew member is recommended.
  3. All crews must have a designated crew leader.
  4. All crews will be assigned together, stay together and be demobilized together.

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**B. All Members**

1. Must ensure that their individual identifier is placed in the proper riding position on the URL.
2. Must know who their unit / crew leader is at all times on the emergency incident scene.
3. Must maintain crew integrity at all times on the emergency incident scene.
4. Must maintain situational awareness, awareness of his / her exit air supply, and emergency escape route (if operating in an IDLH atmosphere).

**C. Incident Commanders, Operations Section Chiefs and Branch Directors (Strategic Application) -** Addresses the strategic level of accountability by tracking all incident resources; branches, divisions / groups, and crews / units by location and assignment on a Tactical worksheet.

1. At the start of every shift, the on-duty Battalion Chief must ensure that all on-duty personnel identifiers are placed in the proper riding position on their respective URL within the Command Case.
2. Command / Operations must know who the branch directors and division / group supervisors are and the crews / units assigned to each branch / division / group.
3. Command must obtain personnel accountability reports (PAR) from division / group supervisors and unit / crew leaders.

**D. Division and Group Supervisors (Tactical Application) -** Addresses Tactical level accountability by tracking all units / crews assigned to divisions / groups.

1. Division / group supervisors must know the location and function of all assigned units / crews.
2. Division / group supervisors must be in their assigned area to maintain close supervision of assigned resources.
3. Division / group supervisors must obtain PARs of all units / crews assigned to their division / group.

**E. Unit and Crew Leaders (Task Application) -** Addresses the task level of accountability and requires knowledge of the location of each firefighter and what they are doing at all times.

1. Unit / crew leader shall maintain a current Unit Riding List (URL) of all personnel responding on the unit. Unit / crew leaders must obtain PARs for their unit / crew, which is a confirmation that all members assigned are accounted for and have an adequate exit air supply (if operating in an IDLH atmosphere).

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2. Unit / crew leaders must maintain crew integrity, maintain situational awareness, and awareness of their crew's exit air supply (if operating in an IDLH atmosphere).
3. In the event of responding to a mutual aid request, the unit / crew leaders must ensure that the Unit Riding List (URL) is delivered to the regionally designated accountability location prior to performing their assignment on the emergency scene.

**V. LEVELS OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

The PAS level activated depends on the size and magnitude of the incident, and the type and degree of hazards members are exposed to. The three levels of personnel accountability and related procedures are:

- A. **Unit Level** - Unit Level Accountability shall be implemented during the initial stages of incident operations, as responding units / crews arrive on scene and are given assignments by the initial IC (normally the Officer / Acting Officer of the first arriving unit).
- B. **Command Level** - This level of accountability may be implemented by an Officer / Acting Officer upon his / her arrival on the scene and after the transfer of command from the initial IC. The following steps shall be taken to implement Command Level Accountability:
  1. Command Status Boards with URLs will be used by the IC to track the location of units / crews under their command when Command Level Accountability has been established.
  2. If tracking the location of units / crews on the incident scene becomes unmanageable due to the size or complexity of an incident, the IC should consider implementing Enhanced Level Accountability.
- C. **Enhanced Command Level** - This level of accountability may be initiated at the discretion of the IC when it becomes necessary to delegate the task of collecting Unit Riding Lists (URLs) to an accountability officer.
  1. This action does not relieve the IC of the overall responsibility of incident accountability; rather it provides a more specific base of accountability.
  2. All incidents that require point-of-entry control and / or those incidents with extremely hazardous conditions (confined space, big box, etc.) SHALL require Enhanced Command Level Accountability.
  3. The following steps shall be taken to implement Enhanced Command Level Accountability:

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- a. Formally declare the initiation of Enhanced Command Level Accountability over the radio and relay the accountability expectations for on-scene and arriving units.
- b. The tasks of tracking the location of members may be delegated to the supervisory level in the command structure that is best suited for this assignment at a given incident. When selecting the supervisory level in the command structure for the delegation of accountability tasks, the IC should consider the ability of supervisors to effectively track the location of members while remaining in a non-hazardous area.  
Consider using:
  - i. Section Chiefs
  - ii. Branch Directors
  - iii. Division or Group Supervisors
- c. Command Status Boards with URLs will be used by the IC to track the location of units / crews under their command when Enhanced Command Level Accountability has been established.

**D. Special considerations for Enhanced Level Accountability:**

1. **Point-of-Entry Control** - When complex accountability incidents are encountered, (i.e., confined space, technical rescue incidents, high-rise, big box, hazardous materials incidents, etc.) the IC should consider establishing a point-of-entry control. This will provide stricter accountability for those members who enter into complex accountability environments. When point-of-entry control is established, the tasks of collecting Unit Tags / name tags and tracking the location of those members who are operating within a complex accountability area shall be delegated to the division / group supervisor or branch directors responsible for that area (i.e., Extrication Group, Haz-Mat Group, etc.).
2. **Lobby Control Situations** - When units / crews are working within the guidelines of the Bay City Department of Public Safety High Rise Procedure, accountability URLs will be used by the IC and the Lobby Officer with the Command Case being set up in the lobby.
3. **Extreme Hazard Areas** - When tracking the location of members who are working in extremely hazardous areas (i.e. confined space rescue, building collapse search, big box etc.), the supervisor or their designee, shall record the time each member entered the area, the air pressure in his / her SCBA cylinder and the time he / she exited the area.

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**VI. PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (PAR)**

- A. Personnel Accountability Reports (PAR) involves a roll call and shall be used to confirm the safety and location of all members operating at an incident scene where IDLH environments exist (structure fires, carbon monoxide incidents, technical rescues, etc.) or at the discretion of the IC.
- B. Should the situation arise in which a PAR results in a lost / missing unit or person, the accountability officer / individual conducting the PAR will immediately notify the IC who will initiate appropriate departmental actions, while simultaneously completing the PAR.
- C. Personnel Accountability Reports (PAR) shall include statements that relay the following information:
  - 1. Unit, crew, division, group or team, designation (i.e., “Bay City Engine 1”).
  - 2. Current location of the unit, crew, group, or team (i.e., “floor two (2)”).
  - 3. Number of members present and accounted for within the direct line of sight, touch or voice of the reporting leader (i.e., “Engine 1, floor 2, PAR 3).
  - 4. Any members not in the direct line of sight touch or voice of the reporting leader will be reported (i.e., “Engine 2, floor 2, PAR 3 with one member outside). NOTE: This is not a statement of accountability, rather an indication to the IC or designee that the member is not with the reporting crew.
  - 5. When a PAR results in an unaccounted member of a unit / crew, see section VII. Missing or Trapped Personnel.
- D. The IC or designee shall be responsible for ensuring that PARs are requested on the assigned FIREGROUND channel from units, crews, divisions, groups or teams operating at an incident scene at the following times:
  - 1. At 20 minutes elapsed time of working any incident presenting the danger for possible loss of crew accountability and every 20 minutes thereafter until it can be confirmed that an IDLH environment no longer exists at the discretion of the IC.
  - 2. Whenever the IC feels that there is a need to confirm the location and assignment of any units, crews, divisions or groups.
  - 3. When there is a report of a missing or trapped member or crew.
  - 4. When any sudden hazardous event occurs (i.e., backdraft, flashover, explosion or collapse).



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5. Following the evacuation of all members from a structure and / or a change in strategy from offensive to defensive mode.
- E. During Unit Level and Command Level Accountability, the IC or designee (accountability officer) may call individual units, crews, divisions or groups and request a PAR. When conducting a PAR, the following actions shall be taken:
1. The IC or designee (accountability officer) shall announce that a PAR will be conducted (i.e., “All Units from Command, stand-by for PAR”).
  2. The IC or designee (accountability officer) shall restrict normal radio transmissions on the assigned FIREGROUND channel during the PAR (i.e., “all traffic standby unless you have emergency traffic”). All members on the assigned FIREGROUND channel shall refrain from transmitting radio messages during a PAR, with the following exceptions:
    - a. They are providing a PAR or
    - b. Need to notify command of an “urgent” or emergency situation (i.e., structural collapse, flashover, mayday, member down, etc.).
  3. The IC or designee (accountability officer) shall contact each unit, crew, division or group operating at the incident scene on the assigned FIREGROUND channel and request a PAR (i.e., “Engine 3” from Accountability, PAR”).
  4. Upon completing a PAR, an announcement shall be made on the assigned FIREGROUND channel that all members have been accounted for (i.e., “State Street Command from Accountability, all personnel have been accounted for”).
  5. The IC shall release the FIREGROUND channel for normal radio transmissions (i.e., “All units from Command, Fire Ground is no longer on Standby”).
- F. During Enhanced Command Level Accountability, the following steps shall be taken when requesting PARs:
1. The IC or designee (accountability officer) shall announce on the primary FIREGROUND channel that a PAR will be conducted.
  2. The IC shall restrict normal radio transmissions on the assigned FIREGROUND channel during the PAR (i.e., “all traffic standby unless you have emergency traffic”). All members on the assigned FIREGROUND channel shall refrain from transmitting radio messages during a PAR, with the following exceptions:
    - a. They are providing a PAR or

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- b. Need to notify command of an “urgent” or emergency situation (i.e., structural collapse, flashover, mayday, member down, etc.).
3. The IC or designee (accountability officer) shall contact each division / group supervisor at the level of the command structure to which accountability tasks have been delegated, and confirm the units that have been assigned to his / her area of responsibility (i.e., “Division 5 from Accountability, I show Bay City Engine 4, Engine 5, Aerial, and Engine 1 assigned to your division”).
4. Upon receiving a confirmation of units assigned to a division / group supervisor, the IC or designee (accountability officer) shall request a PAR from the division / group supervisor. (i.e., “Division 5 from Accountability, PAR”).
5. Each supervisor shall conduct a PAR of all units / crews operating in his / her area of responsibility (face-to-face is the preferred method). Upon completing a PAR, each supervisor shall report the status of members assigned to his / her area of responsibility to the IC or designee (accountability officer) (i.e., “Accountability from Division 5, floor 5, PAR 12”).
6. Upon receiving status reports from all supervisors at the level of the command structure to which accountability tasks have been delegated, an announcement shall be made on the primary FIREGROUND channel that all members have been accounted for.
7. The IC shall release the FIREGROUND channel for normal radio transmissions (i.e., “All units from Command, Fire Ground is no longer on Standby”).

**VII. MISSING OR TRAPPED PERSONNEL**

- A. When a PAR results in an unaccounted member or critical life safety condition of a unit / crew, the following steps will be implemented until the situation is resolved. Any member who is absent from any unit, crew, division or group should be presumed missing until he / she is otherwise determine to be safe.
  1. The identity (Agency / unit, last name, and first name or names) and assignment shall be immediately reported to the IC through the appropriate supervisory levels of the command structure.
  2. When notified of an unaccounted member or critical life safety condition of a unit / crew the IC shall initiate appropriate emergency actions.

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- B. NOTE: An unaccounted member or crew shall not stop the PAR. The IC can assign a resource to check on the unaccounted crew; however, the PAR must continue to determine if more than one person or crew is unaccounted for.

**VIII. DEMOBILIZATION**

- A. No individual is to collect or manipulate any accountability device without authorization from the IC or designee.
- B. No unit or crew is to leave without being properly released by command.

By order of:

  
Michael J. Cecchini  
Public Safety Director