



# PS-5

## PUBLIC SAFETY POLICY

In effect:

Authorized by:

## PS-5 Firefighter Accountability

### I. Purpose

This procedure identifies a system of incident site firefighter accountability. Use of the system will provide for the safety of the individual firefighter, and will provide the Incident Command Organizational staff an improved means to track and account for all personnel working on the scene. It is only through safe and effective firefighter accountability on the emergency scene that we can reliably provide for the public's safety.

### II. Policy

Special emphasis shall be placed on personnel working in the hot zone. The hot zone will be defined as any area that requires an SCBA, charged hose line, special protective clothing or in which a firefighter is at risk or becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. This would include entering a structure reported to be on fire, operating in a close proximity to the structure during exterior operations, confined space or trench rescue.

The Passport system may also be used for firefighter accountability outside the hot zone. It may be used to track personnel in rehab, staging, or other non-emergency assignments.

### III. General Guidelines

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

1. Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of personnel when resources are committed at an incident.
2. Command will always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attack planning, and must consider and react to any barriers to effective accountability.
3. Officer will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crew members assigned to them.
4. All crew members will have an assignment – **NO FREELANCING**



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5. Unless critical to operations, crews arriving on the scene should remain intact at all times. A minimum crew size will be two firefighters with a radio.
6. All crews entering the hot zone must be supervised by a designated supervisor or other ranking individual.
7. All crews will go in together, stay together, and will come out together. Reduced visibility and increased risk will require very tight togetherness.
8. If a radio fails while in the hot zone, the crew will exit unless there is another working radio with the crew.
9. All personnel must ensure they have the radio that is assigned to them.

### IV. Procedure

A. The PASSPORT system equipment involves a 3-3/4" x 6" plastic card with the company's ID and the letters SBFD etched on it. The PASSPORT should contain the names of all personnel presently assigned to that company.

B. All apparatus are equipped with a 13" x 16" status board. For engine and truck companies, the PASSPORT will be affixed at the STATUS BOARD with Velcro. Familiarize yourself with locations on different apparatus.

C. Each firefighter will be issued a Personnel Accountability Tag (PAT). While not assigned to an apparatus, it is to be secured to the firefighter's helmet with the key ring provided. When assigned to an apparatus, the PAT will be affixed to the PASSPORT of the apparatus assigned.

D. Unless otherwise stated, the Driver of the first arriving company will be the Accountability Officer. Once a command post is established, accountability is transferred to the Command Post. If Command designates a Safety Officer, the Safety Officer will normally assume the role of Accountability Officer.

E. If the Driver is operating a committed apparatus, the crew will be the Firefighter(s) and an Officer. In this and other situations where a member of the company is not entering the "hot zone", their PAT should be removed from the PASSPORT and placed upside down directly on the STATUS BOARD.

F. If a company is split, their PAT's should be placed on the PASSPORT of the crew they are working with at that time.

G. All crews entering the incident will deliver their PASSPORT to the accountability location prior to entering the hot zone. Crews assigned to a task within the hot zone will have their PASSPORT attached to the "IN" section of the



STATUS BOARD. Crews not yet assigned will have their PASSPORT attached to the "OUT" section of the STATUS BOARD.

H. When the crew leaves the hot zone, they retrieve their PASSPORT from the status board. One of three things should be done with the PASSPORT:

1. If they are going to Rehab, they should take the PASSPORT with them to Rehab.
2. If they are assisting with the incident outside the hot zone, they should turn their PASSPORT sideways on the status board.
3. If they are back in service, ready to respond, their PASSPORT should be returned to their apparatus.

## **V. Terminating the PASSPORT System**

PASSPORT accountability will remain through a report of "fire under control". Command will determine at that time, based on the situation and risk, as to whether to continue with the PASSPORT system. If vision is still impaired or a significant hazardous condition still exists, Command should chose to extend the PASSPORT system further.

Upon termination of the PASSPORT system or release from the incident, Company Officers and crewmembers will ensure that the PASSPORT is returned to their apparatus and that the PASSPORT is up to date.

## **VI. Rules of Thumb**

PASSPORT implementation should consider the following basic rules of thumb.

1. PASSPORTS never enter the hot zone.
2. PASSPORTS must be maintained at the command post.
3. PASSPORTS must reflect only those personnel presently in the hot zone.
4. Crews must turn in their PASSPORTS upon entering the hot zone.
5. PASSPORTS may also be used when reporting to rehab, staging, etc.
6. PASSPORTS or PAT's are turned into the officer-in-charge and retrieve when being reassigned.