CLARK COUNTY FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION
FIREFIGHTER ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

1. Purpose.

    a) Using available best practices, this document establishes procedures for a firefighter accountability system in accordance with NFPA 1500 and NFPA 1561.
    b) This accountability system is intended to provide a means for the Incident Commander to readily identify both the location and function of all members operating at an incident scene

2. Scope. This SOP applies to all emergency response organization members of the Clark County Fire Chief's Association.

3. References.

    a) NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*
    b) NFPA 1561, *Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System*

4. Definitions.

    a) Accountability Officer: Accountability Officers are personnel specifically assigned by the IC. Where there are no on scene supervisors, the first vehicle to arrive on scene will serve as the IC and establish initial accountability. The Driver/Operator will serve as the initial Accountability Officer. All crews entering the incident will deliver their PASSPORT to the accountability officer upon arrival. The arrival of a Chief Officer or SFO will obtain brief from initial IC, the assume command of the incident, and establish accountability and safety.
    b) Accountability Group: As the incident escalates to the level that Accountability Officers are assigned, Command should implement an Accountability Group Leader to coordinate Accountability Officers.
    c) Emergency Incident. Any situation to which the emergency services organization responds to deliver emergency services, including rescue, fire suppression, emergency medical care, special operations, law enforcement, and other forms of hazard control and mitigation.
    d) Hazard. A condition that presents the potential for harm or damage to people, property, or the environment.
    e) Hazardous Area. The area where members might be exposed to a hazard or hazardous atmosphere. A particular substance, device, event, circumstance, or condition that presents a danger to members of the fire department. This would include entering a structure reported to be on fire, operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior operations, confined space, or trench rescue, training ground, etc.
    f) Hazardous Atmosphere. Any atmosphere that is oxygen deficient or that contains a toxic or disease-producing contaminant.
    g) Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH). Any condition that would pose an immediate or delayed threat to life, cause irreversible adverse health effects, or interfere with an individual's ability to escape unaided from a hazardous environment.
    h) Incident Management System (IMS). A system that defines the roles and responsibilities to be assumed by responders and the standard operating procedures to be used in the management and direction of emergency incidents and other functions.
    i) Oxygen-Deficient Atmosphere. Air atmospheres containing less than 19.5 percent oxygen by volume at one standard atmosphere pressure.

j) <u>Personnel Accountability Report (PAR)</u> - A supervisor's report on the accountability of all companies or members working within their area of responsibility

k) <u>Personnel Accountability System</u>. A system that readily identifies both the location and function of all members operating at an incident scene.

l) The Accountability Officer's responsibilities include:

    i. <u>Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)</u>: As the incident escalates, and/or crews operating at a special hazard (i.e., confined space rescue), Command will assign a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT). These crews will be fully bunkered and ready for duty. They will serve as stand-by rescue teams during hazardous operations. RIT team members must give PASSPORTS to accountability officer.

    ii. <u>Lost/Missing Firefighter</u>: An absent member of any crew will <u>automatically be assumed lost or trapped</u> in the hazard zone/IDLH until otherwise determined safe. Company Officers/Crew Leaders must **immediately** report any absent members to Command. For any report of missing firefighters, Command will request additional resources as needed. Command <u>must</u> next initiate an immediate PAR for all companies assigned to duty in the hazard zone/IDLH first then all other areas. Command must also send the RIT to the last reported working area of the lost firefighter to begin a search. Simultaneously with these actions, Command must adjust on-scene strategies to a priority search and rescue effort while maintaining the effort to suppress the fire or hazardous condition.

5. Accountability Responsibilities. Accountability will only work with a strong personnel commitment to the safety of all members operating at an incident. This commitment involves the following responsibilities:

a) <u>Incident Commander/Accountability Officer</u> – Responsible for managing Division/Group Leader and system. Causes PARs to be initiated at tactical benchmarks or as needed. Responsible for tracking the location of all crews.

    i. The Incident Commander shall maintain an awareness of the location and function of all companies or crews at the scene of the incident.

    ii. At major incidents, the personnel accountability system should be separate from the role of the Incident Commander. These types of incidents require the assignment of an Accountability Officer who is responsible for maintaining the status of all assigned resources at an incident. As an incident escalates, this function would be placed under the Planning Section.

    iii. Develop and implement a plan designed to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone/IDLH.

    iv. Ensure that Accountability Officers are implemented in each division/group/sector as necessary.

    v. Initiate PARs upon benchmarks or as needed.

b) <u>Accountability Group Leader</u> – Responsible for multiple accountability officers and overall accountability for the incident. Ensures the Point of Entry Control is established and maintained throughout the incident

c) <u>Division/Group Leader</u> – Responsible for accounting for all crews in his/her assigned area of operation, maintaining an awareness of their exact location.

d) <u>Company Officer/Crew Leader</u> – Responsible for keeping his/her crew intact at all times and that the PASSPORT is current and accurate. The PASSPORT must be turned in to the Accountability Officer or at the point of entry and retrieved upon termination of the incident.

   i. Officers assigned to a specific, tactical level management component shall directly supervise and account for the companies and/or crews operating in their specific area of responsibility.
   ii. Company officers shall maintain an ongoing awareness of the location and condition of all company members.
   iii. When assigned as a company, members shall remain under the supervision of their assigned company officer.
   iv. When entering the hazard area, the Officer will advise the Accountability Officer that they are making entry and state the number of personnel entering the hazard area.
   v. A minimum crew size will be considered as two or more members. One member must have a radio. If all radios fail while in the hazard zone, the crew will exit.
   vi. l Companies in staging will maintain their passports until assigned a task by command. As staged units are assigned, Company Officers will ensure that their passports are turned over to the Accountability Officer before they enter the hazard zone.

e) <u>First Arriving Pump Operator</u> – The operator of this vehicle will be responsible for Initial Accountability of crews and their PASSPORT until relieved by a designated Accountability Officer.

f) <u>Firefighter</u> – Responsible for staying with his/her crew at all times and ensuring that his/her name tag is on the PASSPORT at all times.

g) <u>All Members Operating At An Incident</u> –

   i. All members who are likely to be involved in emergency operations shall be trained in the incident management and accountability system used by Clark County Emergency Services Organizations (ESO).
   ii. All members operating at an emergency incident are required to actively participate in this accountability system.
   iii. Members shall be responsible for following personnel accountability system procedures.
   iv. The personnel accountability system shall be used at all incidents.
   v. Crew members must always be in contact with each other utilizing one of the following methods:
      a. Direct voice contact (not radio)
      b. Direct visual contact
      c. Touch

   Exception: Radio or phone contact is acceptable for Apparatus Operators, Chief Officers, etc., where the remainder of the crew has constant awareness of position or function.

6. Clark County Passport System.

    a) <u>Passport Basics</u>.   A Passport is a standardized accountability and tracking system for firefighters in a hazard area.

        i. A Passport involves two plastic cards with the crewmember's name affixed.

        ii. The Passports are normally 3" x 5-1/2" plastic cards, etched with a vehicle's identification. I.e., Engine-51, Rescue-95, Medic-1, etc.

        iii. One remains with the assigned vehicle. The other is turned over to an Accountability Officer upon entry to the scene.

        iv. The Passport shall contain the nameplates of all personnel presently assigned to that company.

        v. Driver/Operator's nameplates will be placed upside down to designate their position.

        vi. Each Company Officer will be responsible for ensuring that their vehicle Passports are updated with the currently assigned personnel.

    b) <u>Passport Golden Rules</u>.

        i. Passports NEVER enter the hazard area at an emergency incident.

        ii. Passports must reflect only those personnel assigned to a vehicle.

        iii. Crews surrender their Passports to the Accountability Officer upon entering a hazard area or upon entering Rehab.

        iv. Crews retrieve their Passports when departing a hazard area or upon exiting Rehab.

        v. The Passport is used to enter or exit any area designated by the Incident Commander (Rehab, Hazard area, Staging, termination of the incident).

    c) <u>Individual Passport Equipment</u>.

        i. Individual Name Plates (tags) will be color coded per rank designation.
- White background – Chief Officer
- Red background – Company Officer (Captain, Lieutenant)
- Yellow background – Firefighter
- Blue background – EMS Only
- Orange background – Cadet

        ii. Each firefighter will be issued six individual nameplates. Four will be affixed to Velcro strips on the underside of their helmet. The remaining two will be used for the Passport of a member's assigned vehicle(s).

        iii. Newly assigned personnel will contact their Officer and arrange for four accountability nameplates to be made.

        NOTE: Under no circumstances will newly assigned personnel be allowed to participate in firefighting operations without having his/her accountability nameplates.

d) Passport Location.

    i. Two Passports will be located on the dash of the apparatus at the Officers position or passenger side.

    ii. Two Velcro strips will allow the Passport to be affixed to the Officer/Passenger side dash, door or the ceiling above the Officer Seat.

    iii. One Passport will always remain with the vehicle. The other is turned over to the Accountability Officer.

    iv. A crew's or member's Passport is their ticket into and out of an incident scene. Without a Passport, crews/members are freelancing – a potentially dangerous and life-threatening situation for all members operating at an incident.

e) Passport Implementation – The Incident: The objective of the Passport system is always to have crewmember Passports turned into the Accountability Officer.

    i. Any responses greater than a two vehicle assignment, the Passport system will function as follows:

        a. The SFO at the incident becomes the IC and will ensure the First Arriving Company has Accountability and Passports.

        b. After arrival of additional crews, an SFO will receive Command with appropriate transfer and assign an Incident Accountability Officer.

        c. All additional crews will bring their Accountability Passport to the Accountability Officer.

    ii. Point of Entry Control: When an incident requires more stringent accountability, the Incident Commander may implement **Point of Entry Control**.

        a. Passports will remain with the Accountability Officer.

        b. Crews exiting at a different location than the original point of entry will immediately report to the Point of Entry Control and notify the Accountability Officer of their changed status.

f) Terminating The Passport System. Upon termination or release from the incident, Company Officers and crewmembers will ensure their Passport is returned to the dash of their apparatus and that the Passport is up-to-date.

7. Personnel Accountability Emergency Condition. Examples of emergency conditions could be "firefighter down," "firefighter missing," "firefighter trapped," "officer needs assistance," "evacuate the building/area," "wind shift from the north to south," "change from offensive to defensive operations," "firefighter trapped on the first floor."

a) In the event of an emergency condition, use the radio term "MAY DAY" as a designator to clear the radio traffic. If not able to speak, activate the distress function on the PASS device. If available, activate distress button on radio even if you cannot speak.

    i. "MAY DAY" may be declared by anyone on scene. It can be used when a member is in trouble or is subjected to emergency conditions, lost, disorientated; the member feels they need assistance.

    ii. If "MAY DAY" is used over the radio, the Incident Commander may have Dispatch use an alert tone over all Fire Department frequencies to alert everyone to maintain radio silence while the emergency traffic is transmitted, if available.

    iii. The IC will designate a radio frequency for continued fire operation communications, with the exception of the RIT crew, Safety Officer and RIT Officer. They will maintain the same frequency as the crew(s) that have the emergency.

    iv. The IC may turn transfer Command of the fire ground operation to another Chief Officer while dealing with the "MAY DAY" operation.

b) When a member has declared "MAY DAY" that person shall use clear text to identify the type of emergency, change in conditions, or tactical operations.

c) In addition to the "MAY DAY", the IC may evacuate the building/structure using evacuation signals. These are repeated short blasts of the apparatus air horns. The sequence of air horn blasts should not exceed 10 seconds in length, followed by a 10 second period of silence, and it is done three times. Total air horn evacuation and signal including periods of silence lasts 50 seconds. When this evacuation signal is used, ALL apparatus sound the evacuation signal using air horns.

d) The member who has declared the "MAY DAY" shall conclude the "MAY DAY" message by transmitting "All Clear, Resume Radio Traffic" to the Incident Commander. The IC will clear the emergency over the radio to all crews and re-open the radio channels to all communication.

8. Communications:

a) The first arriving SFO will complete the "scene size up report and establishment of Command". Then initiate the accountability system.

For example: Engine 51 is on scene of a two-story, wood frame, residential occupancy, smoke showing, this is a working fire. Engine-51 attacking with 1 ¾" line, starting search and rescue operation, Lieutenant Jones will be Command in an offensive mode. Dispatch repeats, if available.

b) The next arriving companies will place their Passport on the Officer Door of the First Arriving Companies door.

c) The IC or assigned Accountability Officer will report to this location to retrieve the Passports of committed crews and receive a briefing from the Apparatus Operator normally the Engine Pump Operator. This briefing will include last known location of crews inside the IDLH and conditions on arrival versus current conditions present.

9. Personnel Accountability Reports (PAR).

a) A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) is essentially a roll call of personnel assigned to an incident.

b) For the Company Officer/Crew Leader, a PAR is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are visually accounted for.

c) For the Division/Group Leader, a PAR is an accounting for all crewmembers of all companies assigned to his/her area of operation.

d) Reports of PARs should be conducted face-to-face within the company, whenever possible.

Example: "Operations, Engine-51, I have a PAR on the first floor with three (3) and the driver was left at the pump panel". Always identify where you are and how many members are with you.

e) A PAR will be required for the following situations:
   i. Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter. The Incident Commander/Accountability Officer will initiate a PAR upon receiving this report.
   ii. Any change from offensive to defensive. The Incident Commander/Accountability Officer will initiate a PAR.
   iii. Any sudden hazardous event at the incident – flash over, backdraft, collapse, Emergency traffic calls, etc. The Incident Commander/Accountability Officer will initiate a PAR.
   iv. Crew(s) reporting an "All Clear" will ensure they have a PAR for their crews at the time they report an "All Clear". "All Clear" is a benchmark used to designate that the search revealed nothing and have PAR.
   v. At every 30 minutes of elapsed time. Dispatch keeps track of time and reminds the Incident Commander to conduct a PAR.
   vi. At a report of fire "Under Control". The Incident Commander/Accountability Officer will initiate a PAR.
   vii. Any time Command feels it is necessary.

10. Deviations. At the discretion of the Incident Commander, deviations may be made to these procedures in order to facilitate response operations. Deviations will not jeopardize the health or safety of members operating at an incident.