


## Ames Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

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Book: 3 – Emergency Operations  
Section: II – Fire Company Operations  
Chapter: 8 – **Personal Accountability System**  
Date Approved: 01-15-2014      Revision No.: 2 (02/15/00)      Approved by:   
Review Date: 2017

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### **PURPOSE:**

The Ames Fire Department accountability system is a tool used by Incident Command to manage incidents and facilitate the tracking of resources, personnel, and assignments. Incident Command uses the accountability system to track the crews assigned to the scene.

### **POLICY:**

Company officers will use the accountability system to track firefighters assigned to them. Firefighters use the accountability system to monitor their team members and should always know their company officer. Use of this system will promote firefighter safety and help standardize the management of incidents.

### **PROCEDURE:**

In order to operate safely during emergency situations, the following special precautions must be followed and rigidly enforced. The Accountability System shall be utilized at all responses. The firefighter accountability system is designed to minimize firefighter death and injury. Every individual from the firefighter to the Fire Chief shall be responsible for ensuring they are included in the accountability system.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Incident Commander (IC)
  - Implement the accountability system to ensure overall accountability and responsibility for tracking individuals on the emergency scene
  - Determine to what degree the system is to be implemented based on the magnitude of the incident
  - Maintain an effective span of control
  - Account for all personnel assigned within the command structure
  
- Company Officer
  - Provide direction, accountable for all crewmembers
  - Maintain a constant awareness of the position and function of all personnel assigned to crew
  - Ensure crew remains intact in order to account for members
  - Maintain and ensure nametags are placed on both the primary and back-up passports correctly

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- Firefighter
  - Accountability begins with the individual firefighter, thus it's important to remember that individual decisions and actions may have significant impact on firefighter safety and accountability
  - Each firefighter must ensure they are assigned and report directly to a company officer
  - Nametags should be placed on both the primary and back-up passports for an assigned vehicle
  - Crewmembers must exercise the buddy system (two-members) as a means to ensure team safety and accountability
  - Maintains a minimum of 6 nametags

### Accountability Operations


- Tagging into Passport
  - Each member is responsible for placing one nametag each on the primary and back-up passports at the start of their shift.
  - The primary passport (white) is typically located with the company officer or acting company officer. The back-up passport (red) is typically located near the front right seat (officer's seat) of the apparatus.
  - The nametag for the company officer or acting company officer's is placed on the top of both passports.
  - The nametag for the driver/operator assigned to the apparatus is placed upside down on the passports.
  - Remaining crewmember's passports are placed below the company officer or acting company officer and driver/operator's nametags.
  - Anyone leaving a station or changing apparatus assignment are responsible for removing their nametags from both passports.
  - Make up kits are available and found on Command 1 if tags are lost, damaged, or if someone reports directly to the incident without tags.

Note: The company officer must ensure this procedure is followed.

- Arrival on Scene
  - Company officers or acting company officers are responsible for the delivery of the primary passport to the IC at the earliest and safest opportunity. Back-up passports remain on the apparatus unless primary passport is missing or otherwise directed by the IC.

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- During initial single company operation, it is not necessary for the company officer or acting officer to deliver the primary passport.
  - The IC may use the status board to track assignments.
  - Crews arriving after incident command is established should establish contact with the IC and transfer their passport to the I.C., or his/her delegate in charge of tracking accountability. This includes crews reporting from staging.
  - Upon completion of an assignment, a company will report to the IC, who confirms that all crew members are accounted for, returns the crews' passport to the company officer, and/or assigns a new task.
  - If, for some reason, the driver/operator is no longer with the apparatus, their nametags should be turned right side up.
- Personnel Accountability Report (PAR)
    - Allows for the exact location of firefighters and their status
    - The IC may request a PAR at anytime, but always requested under the following conditions:
      - Incident declared under control
      - Change in strategy (e.g., offensive to defensive, etc.)
      - Catastrophic event (e.g., flashover, backdraft, collapse, etc.)
      - Emergency evacuation
      - Report of a firefighter missing or in distress
    - When a PAR is requested, units report in an ascending number sequence in the following order: Engine(s), Truck(s), Rescue Unit(s), and Command Vehicle(s)
- Termination
    - Upon completion of the shift, individuals are responsible for retrieving their nametags from the passports.
    - Nametags not removed from the passport(s) at the end of the shift, will be attached to a “missing in action” board posted by the bunker gear storage at each station.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

*Back-up Passport (Red):* Remains in the apparatus serving as a back-up to the primary passport. If a team is unaccounted for, the back-up passport can be used to identify

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the team members. In addition, it may be used as a temporary replacement for a lost primary passport.

*Make-up Kits:* Command 1 is equipped with make-up kits containing the necessary materials to construct new crews of personnel who report directly to an incident or to replace lost or damaged components for in-service crews.

*Make-up Passport (Green):* Found in make-up kits, and used for creating customized passports in the field. Personnel who arrive from outside agencies or for the formation of a specialized team can be given a make-up passport. Make-up crews are assigned identification by writing the crew designation at the top of the passport.

*Nametags:* Each department member is issued a minimum of six engraved nametags. Nametags are stored on a Velcro patch under an individual's helmet. Personnel enter into the system by placing their nametags on the primary and back-up passports of their assigned crew.

*Passport:* Passports consist of a Velcro and a plastic card, which identifies company and crew. Passports are used to attach the nametags of firefighters. In an emergency, the passport may be used to account for companies, crews, and to identify individual members of a crew.

*Passport System:* The system of emergency scene accountability, using nametags, passports, and status boards to account for individual members of crews, companies, and teams.

*Personnel Accountability Report (PAR):* A roll call of all units (crews, team, groups, companies, sectors) assigned to an incident. Usually by radio, the supervisor of each unit reports the status of the personnel within the unit at that time. A PAR may be

required by SOP at specific intervals during an incident, or may be requested at any time by the IC or the Incident Safety Officer (ISO).

*Primary Passport (White):* Used to check crews in and out of the emergency scene and track assignments.

*Status Boards:* This is a plastic board with Velcro strips, used by Commanders or delegated individuals to attach passports, designate assignments of crews, and as a

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tactical worksheet.

**REFERENCES:**

<http://passportaccountability.com/>

Essentials of Firefighting (5<sup>th</sup> Ed), International Fire Service Training Association (2008)