

Occupational Safety and Health, SOG 250
ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Scope. This standard applies to members operating at an emergency incident. It was promulgated to provide a structured approach for tracking all members operating at an emergency scene.
2. Guidelines.
 - A. The provisions of this standard shall be followed whenever members are required to work in an environment that requires the use of SCBA or where a member may become lost, trapped, or injured by the environment.
 - B. Members operating in a hazardous environment as defined above shall maintain company or crew integrity and shall use the buddy system. This requires that:
 - (1) Company or crew members enter and exit the environment together.
 - (2) Members remain within sight, voice, or tactile distance of each other while they are within the environment. No one shall ever be left alone.
 - (3) Incident commanders and sector officers shall not direct members to operate independently of their companies or crews.
 - (4) Task assignments shall be made through the company officer or crew leader.
 - C. A company or crew may be divided into multiple teams to perform tasks that do not require the efforts of the entire company, provided that:
 - (1) Each team has a minimum of two members.
 - (2) Each team is equipped with a portable radio.
 - (3) The officer remains in contact with each team and is constantly aware of their locations.
 - (4) A given team enters and exits the hazardous environment together.

- (5) On completion of an assigned task, the team leader reports to the company officer or crew leader for another assignment.

3. Accountability Equipment.

Note: A number of excellent accountability systems are available. The system described below is just one of them. If your department is regularly involved in automatic or mutual aid, adopt a system that is compatible with your neighbor's.

- A. Personal accountability tag: A thin plastic plate that identifies the firefighter is to be attached to the firefighter's turnout jacket by a self-adhesive fastener.
- B. Company responder board: A board mounted on the dash of each apparatus in full view of the company officer or crew leader. The board shall remain with the apparatus at all times unless the safety officer orders it to be removed to locate a lost member.
 - (1) Members shall attach and remove their tags as appropriate.
 - (2) The company officer or crew leader shall update the company responder board as required and remove the tag of any member not on board the apparatus.

2. Roll Call.

- A. A roll call is a systematic method for reporting to command that all members operating at an incident are accounted for. It should be conducted periodically throughout an incident to ensure that all members are safe and accounted for.
- B. A roll call shall be conducted:
 - (1) When changing from an offensive to a defensive mode.
 - (2) When an unexpected or catastrophic event occurs, for example in the case of flashover, backdraft, or structural collapse.
 - (3) After an emergency evacuation.
 - (4) At the first report that a member is missing.

- (5) When a fire is declared to be under control.
 - (6) Prior to suspending the use of passports.
 - (7) At the discretion of the incident commander or safety officer. A localized report may also be conducted by a sector officer.
- C. On receipt of an order to conduct a roll call:
- (1) Company officers or crew leaders shall confirm that their personnel are accounted for and shall notify the safety officer.
 - (2) The safety officer shall notify the incident commander when all of the members have been accounted for.
 - (3) The roll call is complete when everyone has been properly accounted for. This includes staff support assigned to a sector or to Command.
3. Lost or Trapped Member.
- A. In the event that one or more members cannot be accounted for, a roll call shall be requested immediately by the member or officer who believes that a member is missing.
 - B. If a member cannot be accounted for during a roll call, he will be presumed lost until he can be accounted for.
 - C. An attempted rescue will become the top priority at the incident and sufficient resources shall immediately be assigned to conduct the rescue effort.
 - D. As soon as all members have been positively accounted for, the rescue effort shall be suspended.
4. Emergency Communications.
- A. The term emergency shall be used by anyone on the scene who needs to communicate an urgent message.
 - B. The term Mayday shall be used by anyone on the scene who becomes aware of or is involved in a life-threatening situation.

5. Emergency Evacuation.

- A. When it is unsafe to continue emergency operations, Command shall order a rapid and complete evacuation from the hazardous environment.
- B. An evacuation may be initiated by anyone at the incident, but the order to evacuate must be transmitted through the established chain of command to ensure that everyone can be accounted for.
- C. The order to evacuate shall be transmitted as follows: “Interior Sector to Command, emergency! Evacuate the building immediately!”
- D. Command shall immediately order everyone to evacuate the hazardous environment. Example: “Command to all personnel, all units evacuate the building immediately! Repeat - all units evacuate the building immediately!”
- E. All companies and each sector shall acknowledge the order to evacuate.
- F. Safety shall conduct a roll call after everyone has acknowledged the order to evacuate.