

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent, realistic and effective Fire Ground Accountability System for **all** fire agencies within the San Diego County Operational Area. With increased automatic aid and boundary drops throughout San Diego County it is critical that all fire agencies work toward consistent operations.

This Fire Ground Accountability System has been designed to meet the following requirements and needs:

- Firefighter safety & rescue
- Applicable federal and state laws
- Firescope
- NFPA 1500
- Operational realities and priorities
- Ability to aid in the organized and effective rescue efforts of a downed firefighter(s)
- Agency specific differences
- Equipment, technology and staffing

Policy:

All fire agencies within the San Diego County Operational Area shall adhere to this policy, which is divided up into five sections:

- Section I – Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health Accountability
- Section II – Incident Resources & Personnel Management
- Section III – Equipment & Technology Requirements
- Section IV – Radio Alias Names (800 Mhz)
- Appendix #1 – Terms & Definitions

The focus and intent of the policy is to give on-scene fire companies and the Incident Commander (IC) a practical and effective tool to track the locations, activities and status of all incident personnel. The over-riding goal of this policy is to help provide for well organized, timely and effective rescue operations of a downed firefighter(s).

In order to accomplish the above goal and meet federal laws, this policy encompasses two distinct areas of functional need at an incident. The successful implementation of this policy requires a philosophical and prioritization adjustment away from historic fire ground accountability practices.

All fire personnel must clearly understand that there are two distinctly different but collaborative functional needs related to the tracking of resources and personnel at an incident.

The first functional tracking need and highest priority is Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) Accountability. The other functional tracking need is Incident Resource and Personnel Management (IRPM), which is secondary in importance.

Section I - IDLH ACCOUNTABILITY

IDLH Accountability shall be the **highest functional need** related to resource and personnel tracking due to its' direct impact on effective, timely and organized rescue operations of a downed firefighter(s). Implementation and management of IDLH Accountability is the overall responsibility of the IC. IDLH accountability must be implemented at all incidents in which personnel are actively engaged and/or operating within IDLH environments.

During the initial phases of a typical first alarm incident, the IC will be tasked with managing IDLH Accountability until delegated to other appropriate personnel. The early implementation of IDLH Accountability is critical to ensuring that the IC and other incident personnel are able to quickly react and initiate rescue operations for a downed firefighter(s).

The management of IDLH Accountability must be handled at a location that is realistic and effective based on the dynamics of the occupancy, fire activity, health risks and actual operations of engaged personnel. Based on their location, areas of incident responsibility and operational involvement, the following individuals may at the discretion of the IC be tasked with assisting with and/or managing IDLH Accountability:

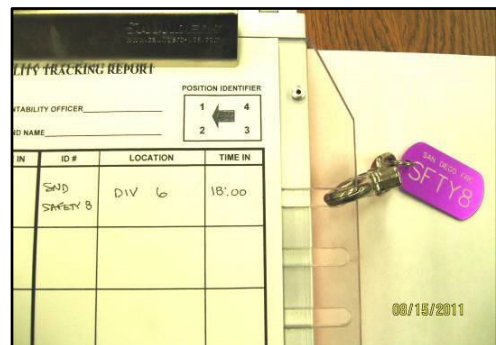
- Company Officer(s)
- Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC) Leader(s)
- Rapid Intervention Crew Supervisor (RGS)
- Division / Group Supervisor(s)

- Branch Director(s) Incident
- Commander (IC) Operations
- Section Chief (OPSC)
- Other designee(s)

The individual(s) tasked with IDLH Accountability must be able to account for the specific information detailed below for all companies assigned under their area of incident responsibility when operationally engaged in IDLH environments:

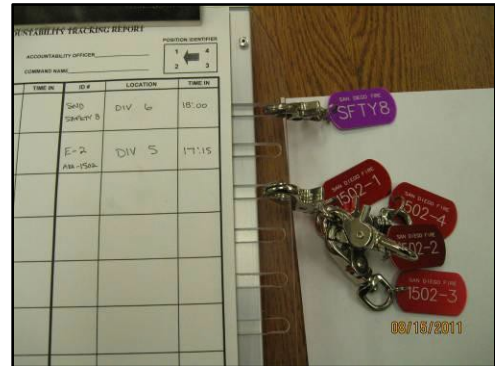
- Resource Type
- Unit #
- # of Personnel
- Assignment and General Location
 - Operational area, Group and/or Division
- Activities
- Times
- Radio Assignment(s)

One of the most important steps of the IDLH Accountability process is to obtain the Accountability Tags from all personnel / companies entering an IDLH environment. The collection of tags should typically occur at the affected point of entry(s) into the IDLH. All tags should be attached to the Accountability Clipboard with corresponding documentation on the Accountability Tracking Report (ATR). The only time that a single Accountability Tag should be attached to the Accountability Clipboard is for a Division / Group Supervisor or Safety Officer who may be located or near the IDLH or Point of Entry (POE).



Upon entry of an entire company into an IDLH environment, a grouping of tags (as shown below) should be used to assist with management of IDLH Accountability. It is imperative

that all personnel within a company and/or a grouping of tags exit the IDLH environment together. Upon removal from the IDLH environment the tags must be returned to the exiting personnel / companies with corresponding documentation on the ATR.



The individual(s) tasked with IDLH Accountability should communicate proactively with the IRIC Leader, RIC Group Supervisor (RGS), IC and/or OPSC throughout the incident to provide updates on the status and wellbeing of companies engaged in IDLH environments. Frequent IDLH Accountability updates have a significant positive impact on the quick and effective implementation of rescue efforts for a downed firefighter(s).

Section II – INCIDENT RESOURCE & PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Incident Resource & Personnel Management (IRPM) is secondary in importance to IDLH Accountability; however, it must still be managed. Implementation of IRPM is the sole responsibility of the IC. The management of IRPM must be handled at or near the Incident Command Post (ICP) by any one of the following individuals:

- IC
- OPSC
- Planning Section Chief (PSC)
- RESL

IRPM must include a general accounting of the following information:

- Assigned resource types, unit #s & personnel names
- Assigned locations and operational activities
- Total # of incident personnel

The best and most effective tool to assist with the management of IRPM is a mobile data computer (MDC) at the ICP as detailed below:

- MDC

- Via “MDC user” request for all assigned units and personnel via the “Incident Personnel” feature
 - MDC screen provides a detailed list of all units, unit types, unit #s and personnel names

As mentioned earlier, this policy must work for all fire agencies with the San Diego County Operational Area; therefore, this policy has to provide flexibility and back-up options due to equipment and technology differences amongst several fire agencies. As a result of these differences and intermittent technology / connectivity failures it is imperative that this policy provide for back-up IRPM equipment options. The following back-up equipment options have been identified to assist with IRPM. These back-up equipment options should only be used as a contingency at the ICP for IRPM when necessary:

- **Hard Copy(s) of Daily Staffing Rosters**
- **Passports**
 - Delivered to the ICP by companies and/or fire agencies that do not have the ability to transmit personnel information electronically via MDC
- **Name Tags**
 - Delivered to the ICP by personnel, companies and/or fire agencies that do not have the ability to transmit personnel information electronically
- **Company Tags**
 - Delivered to the ICP during MDC failures
- **Blank Passports**
- **Blank Name Tags**
- **White Boards**

Section III – EQUIPMENT & TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The policy provides for “mandatory” and “back-up” equipment in order to insure that the policy works for all agencies within the San Diego County Operational Area. The equipment listed as “**mandatory**” (as detailed below) is required for all agencies and resource types. The equipment listed as “back-up” is only required for some agencies and/or resource types based on agency differences and/or standard incident command responsibilities.

Mandatory equipment for all Safety and/or Fire Ground Personnel

- **Two “Name Tags”**
 - Attached to the under-brim of helmet

Mandatory equipment for every Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBAs)

- One “Accountability Tag”
 - Tag to be affixed to left front shoulder strap of SCBA
 - Must be readily detachable
 - Must accurately match the resource type (color coded), unit # and seat position # of assigned personnel
- SCBA “Unit Number & Position” Identifier
 - A sticker with reflective numbers to include resource type and unit #
 - Affixed to the cylinder strap of the SCBA harness



Mandatory equipment for all Fire Apparatus and Battalion / Duty Chief Vehicles

- *Includes engines, trucks, rescues, battalions, duty chiefs, specialty rigs or other vehicles that could be used for fire ground operations and/or for initial incident command responsibilities*
- **One “Company Tag”**
 - Attached to the SCBA (left shoulder strap) of the company leader
- **One “Accountability Clipboard” to include**
 - Accountability Tracking Reports (ATR)
 - Writing instruments
- **“Back-up Passports” and “Back-up Names Tags”**
 - Only required as mandatory equipment for companies and/or agencies that do not have the ability to transmit personnel electronically due to technology or CAD system limitations

Additional mandatory equipment for all Battalion / Duty Chief Vehicles

- *Includes all battalion chief / duty vehicles as well as fire apparatus that are typically used for long-term (2nd or greater alarm) incident command purposes*
- **MDC (with “Incident Personnel” functionality)**
 - Capable of being used for electronic IRPM functionality via the “Incident Personnel” feature
 - Minimum of one MDC, must be capable of being operated at the vehicle and/or remotely when taken over to a separate ICP
 - It is understood that not all agencies will be able to comply with this equipment requirement
- **Hard Copy(s) of Daily Staffing Rosters**
 - For respective battalion and/or agency
 - To be used as a contingency tool at the ICP to assist with IRPM
- **Blank Company Tags**
 - To be used as a contingency tool at the ICP to during MDC failures
- **Blank Passports and Name Tags**
 - To be used as a contingency tool at the ICP to assist with IRPM for those agencies and/or companies that cannot electronically via MDC or manually via staffing passports and name tags
- **White Boards**
 - To be used as a contingency tool at the ICP to assist with IRPM

Section IV – RADIO ALIAS NAMES (800 Mhz)

In order to effectively and safely manage a downed firefighter and/or emergency activation (EMER) situation thru accurate accountability, all fire agencies shall adjust their standard “radio alias” names to the following naming conventions:

Mobile 800 Mhz Radios

- Agency designator followed by resource type, followed by unit # only
 - **“SND Engine 30”**
 - **“SMC Truck 141”**
 - **“ESC Chief 1301”**

Portable 800 Mhz Radios

- Agency designator followed by resource type, followed by unit #, followed by seat / position #
 - **“SND Engine 30 – 1”**
 - Captain’s portable from engine 30
 - **“SMC Truck 141 - 2”**
 - Engineer’s portable from San Marcos Truck 141
- Agency designator followed by resource type, followed by unit #, followed by portable #
 - **“ESC Battalion 131 – 2”**
 - Escondido Battalion Chief’s second portable

Spare and/or Reserve Apparatus 800 MHz Radios

- All spare and/or reserve apparatus radios will have “radio alias” names that match the radio’s 6-digit radio identification number as permanently programmed into the radio by Motorola
 - **“759284”**
 - Spare portable for CHV
- Once assigned to an apparatus, the radio’s “alias name” will be changed back to its’ standard radio alias name
 - **“CHV Battalion 51 – 3”**
 - Chula Vista Battalion 51’s third portable

Out of Service Radios

- Any radio taken out of service for repairs, will temporarily assume the following “radio alias” name
- **“Radio Shop”**

Accurate “radio alias” names must be maintained at all times by every fire agency and dispatch center within the County. This information must be shared amongst and readily available to all dispatch centers and fire agencies.

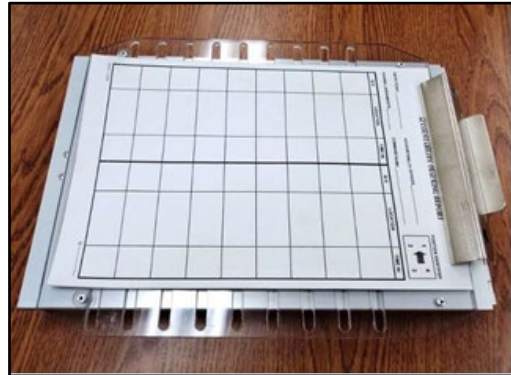
Appendix #1 - TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Abandon

- An immediate and rapid exit of all personnel from an IDLH environment, operations and/or structure as directed by an IC, Safety Officer or other Supervisor

Accountability Clip Board

- A metal clipboard designed to hold accountability tags and/or company tags in an orderly fashion.
 - Can also be a solid plastic board with clip with cutouts
 - Must include writing instruments and several copies of the standard ATR



Accountability Tracking Report- (ATR)

- A standard County-wide document used to track the resource types, unit #s, assigned locations, times and status of all companies engaged in IDLH environments

Accountability Tag(s)

- A color-coded metal tag including agency designator, resource type, unit number and seat / position number
 - Color specific based on resource type
 - **Red** - Engines
 - **Black** – Trucks
 - **Blue** - Ambulances
 - **Purple** – Chief Officers and Staff
 - **Green** - Specialty Apparatus / Companies
 - Agency Designator
 - Resource Type
 - Standard **E, T, M, B** or other specialty
 - Unit # followed by seat / position #
 - Standard seat position numbers #1 thru #4
 - Captain's position is #1
 - Engineer's position is #2
 - Firefighter position behind Engineer is #3
 - Firefighter position behind Captain is #4



Company

A term used to define a group of individuals that make up the standard staffing pattern for an engine, truck, specialty rig or ambulance based on each agency's respective staffing pattern(s)

Company Tag

- A color-coded single metal tag used to identify an entire company by agency designator, resource type and unit number

- To be used at Lobby Control during high rise fires
 - Can also be used as a contingency tool at the ICP for IRPM



Evacuate

- The orderly evacuation of civilians from a hazardous area or structure

Emergency Abandonment Signal

- A standard audible notification (a series of three short blast of an air horn repeated several times) used to inform all incident personnel of an order to immediately stop all operations and exit the IDLH environment until further notice
 - Typically used in combination with verbal radio traffic

Emergency Activation - (EMER)

- The action taken by a firefighter who has activated their radio's emergency (EMER) button

Incident Commander – (IC)

- A position within the incident command system that is responsible for the overall management of an emergency incident or other event

Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health - (IDLH)

- An environment and/or operation that are Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health

Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) Accountability

- The accountability of specific crews and personnel that are actively engaged in known IDLH environments and/or operations
 - IDLH Accountability is typically handled by an individual or group of individuals as assigned by the IC or OPSC
 - IDLH Accountability is the highest functional need related to the tracking of resources and personnel at any incident in which crews are engaged in an IDLH environment

Incident Resource & Personnel Management - (IRPM)

- The term used to describe the overall tracking of all resources and personnel assigned to an incident regardless of their operational involvement or status
 - IRPM is important, but secondary in importance to IDLH accountability
 - Typically handled by the IC, OPSC or RESL at the ICP

Initial Rapid Intervention Crew - (IRIC)

- The first (initially) assigned team of at least two personnel that are not actively engaged in other fire ground operations that can serve to act as a Rapid Intervention Crew in the event of a downed firefighter(s) early in an incident
 - Intended for initial stages of an incident only
 - Temporary in nature until replaced and/or augmented by a RIC team(s) and a RGS

May Day

- A Firefighter's verbal communication (typically via radio) that they are in trouble and/or in need of rescue by other firefighters

Name Tag

- A Velcro backed plastic tag with a minimum of an individuals' last name
 - Name tags can be all white or color coded by rank

Name Tag (Blank)

- This is a back-up piece of equipment to be used for IRPM when necessary
 - A Velcro backed plastic tag capable of being temporarily written on

Operations Section Chief - (OPSC)

- A position within the incident command system that is responsible for the overall operations at an emergency incident or other event

Passport

- *This is a back-up piece of equipment to be used for IRPM when necessary*
 - A small plastic card or Velcro backing capable of holding the name tags of all company members
 - Top of passport must have agency designator, resource type and unit number

Passport (Blank)

- *This is a back-up piece of equipment to be used for IRPM when necessary*
- A small plastic card or Velcro backing with or without agency designators, unit numbers and/or blank name tags

Point of Entry - (POE)

- The term used to describe single or multiple Points Of Entry or Egress into an IDLH environment and/or structure

Radio Alias Name

- A pre-established, commonly known name that is attached to each 800 Mhz portable or mobile radio via a 6-digit radio identification number
- Both the “radio alias” name and the “6-digit radio ID” number will appear on a dispatcher’s radio console at each agency’s home dispatch center when a radio transmits and/or is placed in EMER mode.

6- Digit Radio ID Number

- A specific 6-digit identification that is permanently assigned (by Motorola) to all 800 Mhz radios
- The “6-digit radio ID” is the only designator that will appear on the dispatcher’s radio console if the radio transmitting an EMER is not operating within its’ home dispatch center.

Rapid Intervention Crew - (RIC)

- A team of at least three or more personnel that are assigned RIC duties for the entire period of an incident while companies and/or personnel are engaged in IDLH environments
 - Typically assigned to replace and/or augment IRIC
 - Should get a RGS and other support assigned depending on size and complexity of incident and/or when actual RIC deployment occurs

Resource Unit Leader – (RESL)

- A position within the incident command system that is responsible for the overall tracking and status of all resources and personnel assigned to an incident
 - Assigned by an IC to formally manage IRPM
 - Typically assigned during 2nd or greater alarm incidents with more resources, personnel and complexity
 - Co-located at the ICP
 - Standalone assignment
 - Responsible for IRPM as well as the coordination of IDLH Accountability as directed by the IC or OPSC

RIC Group Supervisor - (RGS)

- The supervisor assigned to lead the pre-planning, RIC deployment operations and post deployment activities of a RIC team(s)
 - Reports to the OPSC or IC

Team

- A group of two personnel working together