

**PEMBERTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

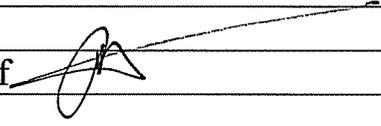
**Number:11-007**

**Cross Reference: Department SOP Section 6 Emergency Operations 6.3**

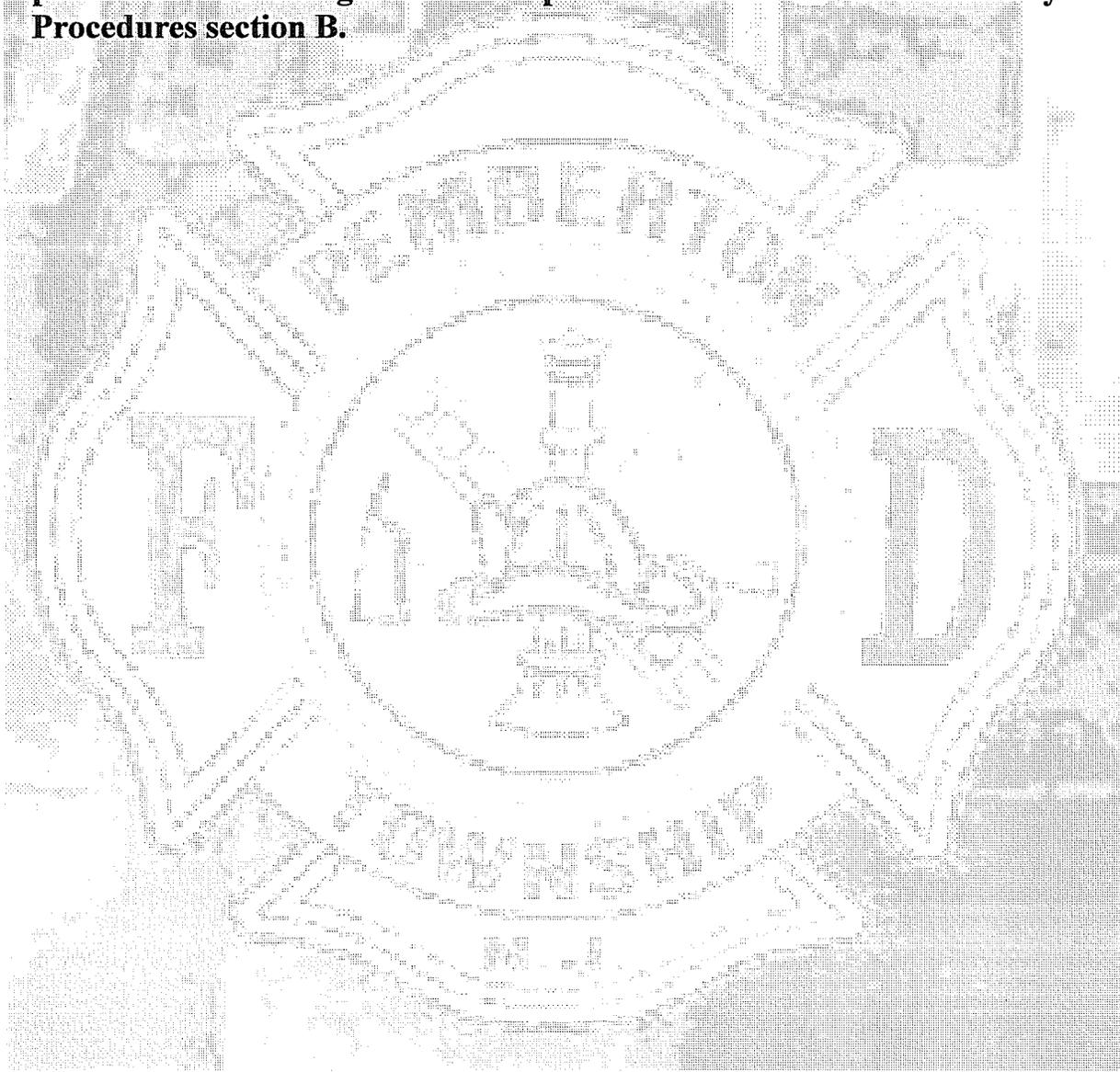
**Subject: Updated Accountability Procedure**

**Effective Date: Monday October 31, 2011**

**By Order of: Pemberton Township Fire Chief**



**Please review and post this updated procedure with your company personnel. The changes are II. Scope section E and IV. Accountability Procedures section B.**



## 6.3 ACCOUNTABILITY

6.3.1 The fire department shall operate under the Burlington County Fire Chief Associations Personnel Accountability System Guideline.

6.3.2 Personnel accountability systems should be used at all incidents.

6.3.3 The standard operating procedures should provide the use of additional accountability officers based on the size, complexity, or needs of the incident. These accountability officers should work with the incident commander and sector officers to assist in the ongoing tracking and accountability of members.

### 6.3.4 Definitions

Hazard Area: any location that may pose a significant safety or health risk to members due to but not limited to: (the presence of products of combustion, Oxygen deficient or enriched atmospheres, any IDLH atmosphere, hazardous equipment or operations, fire suppression, any area or location which predisposes members to become lost, disoriented or trapped, including confined spaces and wild land interface zones).

IDLH: Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health.

PAS: Personnel Accountability System.

PAS TAG: A tag made of engraved plastic or laminated luggage type, with a snap hook connector that can easily be attached to an accountability board or collector ring.

Riding Tag: PAS Tag left on the apparatus the member responded on.

Work Tag: PAS Tag placed on apparatus collector ring, to be placed on the accountability board.

Medical / Information Tag: optional tag remaining with the member containing personal or medical information.

Accountability Board: Used by the Incident Commander or Personnel Accountability Officer to track personnel assigned and operating within a Hazard area at an incident.

Personnel Accountability Officer: Assigned by the Incident Commander to track and maintain personnel accountability.

## I. Purpose

- A. To address the minimum requirements for tracking of personnel and resources on an incident scene, as required in N.F.P.A. 1500 and 1561, and N.J.A.C 5:75-1.5.

## II. Scope

- A. The department shall adopt and routinely use a system to maintain accountability for all personnel assigned to the incident scene. It shall be the responsibility of all members operating at an emergency incident to actively participate in the Personnel Accountability System (P.A.S.).
- B. A passport or tagging system shall be one component of, but not the primary part of a Personnel Accountability System.
- C. All supervisors shall maintain a constant awareness of the position and function of all personnel assigned to operate under their supervision. This awareness shall serve as the basic means of accountability that shall be required for operational safety. Company officers /group supervisors shall maintain an ongoing awareness of the location and condition of all company/group members.
- D. Crew integrity shall be maintained during the course of the incident. This will help maintain personnel accountability on the incident scene and also prevent freelancing. Companies/Groups may be split only when necessary. If a company/group is split, companies/groups must always operate with a minimum of two personnel and shall have a portable radio.
- E. PTVFD Fire Chief will designate a person to maintain the integrity of the Personnel Accountability System. This person will maintain the accountability boards on the apparatus and issue temporary and permanent P.A.S. tags. This person will also ensure that training is being done on the use of the P.A.S.

## III. P.A.S. Tags

- A. Personnel Accountability System (P.A.S.) Tags will be made of engraved plastic tag type, with a snap hook connector that can be attached to an accountability board. Each person will be issued a minimum of **two** (2) tags. These tags will be attached to the rear of each member's helmet.
- B. The **primary** tag will be the "Riding Tag". The "Riding Tag" will be attached at each member's seat assignment 1<sup>st</sup> apparatus collector ring. The tag shall remain at this position until the unit returns to the station or if the incident commander directs someone to collect them. The main purpose of this tag is to provide a complete list

- of all responders who have arrived on location at an incident and to identify the unit to which they are assigned.
- C. The **secondary** tag will be the "Work Tag". The "Work Tag" will be handed to the officer prior to unit response. The officer will place the "Work Tag" on the 2<sup>nd</sup> apparatus collector ring. This tag will be used for on-scene accountability at the incident. This tag will go with the injured personnel to the hospital or medical treatment area.
  - D. Medical information shall be contained within a third tag. The "Medical / Information Tag" will be secured in an interior bunker coat pocket, in order to protect the tag from the hostile working environment. If an inside pocket is not available, this tag should be secured in an exterior coat pocket.
  - E. The minimum information on a P.A.S. tag will be the person's name **and** the Department name (not initials) or Station #. This information is very important for the collection of tags at an incident scene that involves multiple agencies.
  - F. Blank P.A.S. tags will be kept with the Accountability board for use by Official visitors, local government officials, outside agency personnel (utilities, DEP, State Police) or mutual aid companies without P.A.S Tags. The Blank tags will be written on or labeled with the person's name and agency or Station #.

#### **IV. Accountability Procedures**

- A. **Personnel Accountability will be done on every assignment.**
- B. Upon donning their respective PPE and boarding the apparatus, the each member shall attach the "Riding Tag" to the 1<sup>st</sup> apparatus collector ring at their designated seat assignment and pass their "Work Tag" to the Officer for collection. The Officer shall attach all "Work Tags" to the 2<sup>nd</sup> apparatus collector ring. Apparatus collector rings will be located in the front cab and easily visible to anyone looking in the cab to collect this ring and tags. The apparatus collector ring shall have a tag that clearly identifies the apparatus number. The apparatus operator will **not** attach his/her "Work Tag" to the apparatus collector ring, **unless** the operator is working on the incident scene as part of the crew.
- C. Upon arrival at the incident scene with no Command Officer present, the Officer or Acting Officer of the first arriving unit shall immediately have the 2<sup>nd</sup> apparatus collector ring placed on the Accountability Board apparatus. If a Command Unit is present the 2<sup>nd</sup> apparatus collector ring and accountability board should be delivered to the Incident Commander ASAP. If the crews need to go into service immediately the apparatus operator shall deliver the accountability board / 2<sup>nd</sup> apparatus collector ring to the Incident Commander ASAP.

- D. Additional arriving apparatus shall place their 2<sup>nd</sup> apparatus collector rings on the accountability board, which will be beside the pump panel of the first due engine or at the Incident Command Post. Personnel arriving in a P.O.V. will report directly to the Command Post (or Incident Commander if no C.P.) with their "Work Tag" for an assignment. Personnel missing their P.A.S. tag will report directly to the Command Post to be issued a temporary P.A.S. tag.
- E. At such time as the incident dictates, such as "All Companies in Service" OR whenever the Incident Commander's span of control exceeds 5 units operating at the incident scene a designated Personnel Accountability Officer should be assigned, as soon as personnel becomes available. The Personnel Accountability Officer may be identified by wearing the ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER vest. The Personnel Accountability Officer should be located in Division A of the Hazard Area or near the first due engine. When an Accountability Officer is present the 2<sup>nd</sup> apparatus collector rings should be delivered to him/her. At times the Incident Commander may have to retain the role of Personnel Accountability Officer as well as his/her respective duties. Anytime personnel leave the hazardous area they must collect their "Work Tag". This includes going to rehab, etc.
- F. In keeping with ICS best practices, crew integrity is a vital part of the accountability process. It shall be the responsibility of all members and officers to ensure crew integrity. Every effort shall be made to enter, remain and exit together as a crew. The Incident Commander and Personnel Accountability Officer shall maintain a working knowledge of the locations and assignments of crews operating within the Hazardous Area. As assignments and locations change, that information must be relayed to the incident Commander and the Personnel Accountability Officer. The Personnel Accountability Officer, through the Incident Commander or Command Post, can request from Central what apparatus are responding and on location at the incident. The Accountability Officer will maintain / update the accountability board to track the units operating on the incident scene. The Incident Commander should also use a written resource tracking board or incident management worksheet to assist with tracking units responding on the initial alarm. This will allow the Accountability Officer to verify that all Apparatus collector Rings have been collected and accounted for. By monitoring radio transmissions and meeting with the Incident Commander, the Accountability Officer can note the progress of the incident and continue tracking units on the accountability board, without yet having a unit's P.A.S. tags.
- G. Incident scenes covering large geographical areas (ex. – warehouse, hospital, school, hi-rise, apartment complex, and row homes) may require that multiple Personnel Accountability Officers be assigned by Divisions to effectively track personnel. The Incident Commander should assign additional staff to Accountability based on the needs of the incident.

## V. Additional Recommendations

- A. After a R.I.T. has arrived on the incident scene and prepared its personnel and equipment for operation, the R.I.T. Officer may designate one team member to assist the Personnel Accountability Officer with tracking units and personnel. This will also allow the R.I.T. to know where units are operating on the incident scene. This member should remain available for service if the R.I.T. is activated.

## VI. Conducting a Personnel Accountability Report (P.A.R.)

- A. A Personnel Accountability Report (P.A.R.) or roll call will be taken as needed, based on the scale of the incident. A P.A.R. will also be done any time a catastrophic event has occurred on the incident scene (ex. – Building collapse, explosion, fire-ground evacuation, etc.).
- B. When conducting a P.A.R., the Incident Command Post (I.C.P.) will contact all staff officers (Division Officers, Chiefs, Safety, etc.) and request a P.A.R. The Division Officer and companies/groups answering to a request for a P.A.R. shall report the status of their companies/groups and their assignment (ex. – “CP30 from Division A – all companies/groups accounted for and making good progress”, OR “Command from Division 2, we’re missing two personnel”). The Division Officer will check with all company officer/group leaders operating in their Division to confirm that all personnel are accounted for. The P.A.S. tags will also be used as a secondary method to check the position and status of personnel operating in the Division or on the incident scene.
- C. In the event of any missing personnel, the Division Officer or runner will report to the Command Post immediately with the names of the missing personnel. Names or company/group number should not be given over the radio. A P.A.R. should not delay a search for missing personnel. Start a search immediately and then confirm the need for a search with a P.A.R.

## VII. Accountability Kit

- A. The department shall provide accountability kits to assist with personnel accountability at an incident scene. It is recommended that a Personnel Accountability Kit be assigned to at least the department Chief’s/Incident Command vehicle and the first out apparatus at each station. Each kit will be located in the cab of the vehicle for easy access and visibility, and be labeled with the apparatus number. The kit will include: **(1) Accountability board with rings, (1) grease pencil or wipe off marker, (1) dry cloth, (10) blank P.A.S. tags.**

## VIII. Training

- A. Training on the Personnel Accountability System will be done at least annually. All new members will be trained on the P.A.S., so that they can function as part of the

system. It is encouraged that P.A.S. be used during all department training evolutions, especially those involving live fire. Accountability should also be practiced on every response, so that when a true emergency arises, we will be able to use the P.A.S. to assist with accounting for all of our personnel in a timely manner.