

# Waterloo Vol Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

## PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

### Scope

This SOG applies to the Waterloo Fire Department, operating at any incident under Waterloo Command. If Mutual Aid departments are at the incident, then these personnel must also be accounted for in alignment with this SOG.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Personnel Accountability System is to keep track of the names and assignments of all Fire personnel operating at an incident, so as to enable rapid and accurate verification of safety of all personnel in the event of a potentially hazardous situation.

### Responsibility

- Each firefighter has the responsibility to tag in and out of each incident.
- Each firefighter has the responsibility to remain with his/her company or assignment.
- Each line officer is responsible for the personnel operating under him/her and for reporting on the status of his/her personnel during Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) checks.

### Personnel Accountability System (PAS) Tags

- All Waterloo Fire Department personnel who are qualified to respond to or assist at incidents will be issued a PAS Tag. If the firefighter does not have tags or are broke or missing, he is responsible to notify the Chief.
- The Chief may refuse to issue a PAS Tag to an individual for medical or other reasons relating to personnel safety or competency, or may temporarily revoke any PAS Tag previously issued.

### Level 1 Accountability

The following accountability procedure must be followed for all incidents:

1. All Waterloo Fire Department personnel who respond to a call must have a current **Personnel Accountability System (PAS) Tag**.
2. Each fire apparatus will have an **accountability ring**. This will be a metal ring on the driver's side view mirror.

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3. All responders must “**tag in**” when they first arrive at the scene by clipping their PAS Tag to the accountability ring in the first responding apparatus or as designated by the Incident Commander.
4. The **Incident Commander (IC)** must maintain an awareness of location and function of all personnel under their command at the incident.
5. The IC may at any time escalate the incident to a **Level 2 Accountability** status.
6. When released by Command, all responders must “**tag out**” by retrieving their PAS Tag. If an apparatus departs while other responders are still on the scene, IC or their designee will remove tags of responders still on-scene from that vehicle’s accountability ring. Remaining responders will retrieve their tags as they are released.
7. At the conclusion of the incident, the Incident Commander will verify that all responders are accounted for by ensuring that all PAS Tags have been retrieved from the accountability ring(s), or by confirming the safety of the owners of any remaining tags.
8. **Mutual Aid** fire or EMS resources may either maintain accountability for their responders using their department’s system, or may attach their PAS Tags to the appropriate Waterloo rings.

### Level 2 Accountability

The Incident Commander may designate any incident as “Level 2 Accountability”. Level 2 Accountability should be implemented, at the judgment of the IC, for large or hazardous incidents such as:

- Structure fire
- Brush fire
- Incident with multiple teams / locations
- Mutual aid
- Mass Casualty Incident (MCI)

1. The **Incident Commander** will take the following actions upon designating an incident as Level 2 Accountability:
  - a. Appoint an **Accountability Officer**.
  - b. Define the **accountability sector** (“area of operation”) where Level 2 Accountability will apply.
2. The **Accountability Officer** will stage by the operations officer and:
  - a. Maintain an **Accountability Board** or Log.
  - b. Collect the accountability rings from firefighters
  - c. Maintain accountability for all personnel in the accountability sector (including **Mutual Aid** responders).

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- i. Personnel in the accountability sector may be subdivided into teams, by task or responsibility, each under the command of an officer (e.g., interior, exterior, other).
    - ii. Personnel in staging or otherwise outside of the accountability sector will remain at Level 1 Accountability.
  - d. Start an **accountability check timer** and prompt the operations officer at 15 minute intervals to initiate an accountability check for personnel in the accountability sector.
  - e. The accountability officer will notify the operations officer when operating team personal is on SCBA air every five minutes they are on air.
3. Any additional personnel entering the area of operations shall report to the Accountability Officer, so that their PAS Tags can be added to the appropriate accountability ring.
  4. Once a firefighter exits the area of operation they must report to the Accountability Officer, and retrieve their PAS Tag.

### Rehabilitation

1. After a firefighter has gone through two SCBA bottles, or sooner at their own discretion or at the direction of an officer, they must exit the area of operation, report to the Accountability Officer, retrieve their PAS tag, and move to **Rehab**.
2. The firefighters entering rehab will give their PAS tags to the Rehab Staff, complete a medical review of the firefighter, and determine whether the firefighter is fit to return to duty.
3. Once cleared to return to duty, Rehab will give the PAS Tag back to the firefighter.
4. If Rehab determines the firefighter is not fit to return to duty, Rehab will keep the firefighter's PAS Tag and only return it when it is determined that the firefighter is fit to return to duty, or upon incident termination.

### Personnel Accountability Report

1. Command must initiate an **accountability check** after each 15 minutes elapsed time, or under the following situations:
  - Any report of a missing firefighter or EMS
  - Any change from offensive to defensive operations
  - A sudden hazardous event, (collapse, flashover, etc.)
  - Emergency evacuation of the building
  - Any other situation where the IC deems it necessary