



Subject: Incident Safety

Purpose

1. To provide appropriate risk management and safety practices at all structure fire incidents.
2. Establish a universal personnel accountability system to be used amongst all agencies.
3. Establish guidelines that will result in proper and on-going medical monitoring, hydration, caloric intake, and rest/rehabilitation for personnel at ALL structure fires.

Scope

1. All structure fire incidents within San Luis County.
2. All incidents that may involve extended work shifts, physically demanding work, extreme environmental (hot or cold) conditions and/or involving use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Definitions:

- **Accountability Officer-** person assigned to track the location and assignment of each person on the emergency incident. The Accountability Officer will maintain the Accountability Board and maintain direct communications with the IC. If an accountability Officer is not assigned, the IC maintains all accountability functions.
- **Accountability Group:** established if more than one PAS officer is needed consists of supervisor and members responsible for accountability of firefighters working in an IDLA atmosphere. Should be located as close to point of entry and rapid intervention crew as possible.
- **EMERGENCY TRAFFIC:** radio broadcast alerting all personnel operating at incident of a real or potential firefighter hazard. Criteria for using Emergency Traffic may include, but is not limited to; a Mayday situation, potential structural collapse, rapidly changing fire conditions, clearing tactical/command radio channels etc.
- **Evacuation Command:** verbal command “Emergency Traffic – Evacuate the Building,” delivered on all incident frequencies by incident commander indicating all firefighters shall exit hazardous area.
- **Evacuation Signal:** Evacuation signal shall be air horn blasts sounded for sixty (60) seconds in ten (10) second intervals. It indicates that all firefighters shall exit hazardous area.
- **Functional Accountability-** The process that the IC uses to maintain an awareness of the location and function of all companies or crews at the emergency incident. Typically only used during the First Alarm Assignment. All portions of accountability must be maintained at all time by the IC: Unit Name (# of personnel), Location, Assignment
- **Nametag:** color coded plastic tag with firefighter’s three-letter department designator, and last name.
 - White: Chief Officer
 - Red: Fire Captain



- Yellow: Fire Apparatus Engineer and/or Firefighter
- Blue: Paramedic

- **IDLH:** Immediately dangerous to life and health. All interior structure fires, beyond the incipient phase, are considered IDLH and require appropriately equipped full PPE firefighters and 2in/2out.

- **PAR:** Personnel Accountability Report, a report provided by the supervisor indicating the status of the company. The Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) is a roll call procedure initiated by Command to confirm that all personnel assigned to an emergency incident are physically accounted for. Incident Commander should initiate PAR for:

- Report of missing or trapped personnel.
 - Hazardous event at the incident (flashover, backdraft, collapse, etc.).
 - Change from offensive to defensive operations.
 - Responses to a PAR will be in the following format: Unit Number, Number of Personnel, and Current Assignment.
- **Personnel Accountability System Card:** Plastic card with Velcro on the front and back. Card is labeled at the top with agency's three-letter designator and identifies assigned piece of equipment. The names of each assigned person will be attached to the front of the card.
- **Safety Officer:** person assigned to monitor and mitigate safety issues at the incident. The Safety Officer will maintain direct communications with the IC. The Safety Officer has the ability and obligation to stop any unsafe act.
- **Status Board:** 14" x 9" plastic board that has three vertical velcro strips on each side that are used for affixing PAS Tags and PAS Cards of personnel working within hazardous environment.

Operational Guideline

General Safety Considerations and Risk Management

- Personnel operating at incident must maintain situational awareness and consider safety at all times. Risk will be monitored and mitigated appropriately based on the severity of the incident and the presence of a savable life. Lower risks will be allowed for property and environment that has already been lost.
- Personnel operating inside IDLH environments shall work in teams of two or more. Per OSHA 2 In/2 Out, there shall be a minimum of two personnel available outside of the IDLH while personnel are operating within the IDLH.
- As the complexity of the incident progresses, a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) should be in place when personnel are operating in IDLH and will be dedicated to the safety and rescue of firefighters. Refer to the Rapid Intervention Crew policy for additional requirements of the RIC.
- Life safety hazards shall be communicated and identified with three horizontal strands of red/white banner tape.
- Personnel must realize that fire conditions can deteriorate rapidly.
- Personnel should utilize safe positioning, whether interior or exterior, to safeguard against sudden hazardous developments like backdraft explosion, flashover or structural collapse.
- When operating in offensive mode, personnel should be aggressively offensive; effective, coordinated interior attack operations directed at knocking down the fire often eliminate most eventual safety problems.



- When operating in conflicting positions (roof/interior, front/rear attack streams) effective communications must be maintained at all times to coordinate operations.
- When operating above or below ground level, at least two (2) separate means of egress should be established and maintained, preferably at opposite ends of the buildings.
- Interior firefighting operations should be abandoned when the extent of fire prohibits safe operations, or when the structure becomes unsafe to operate inside.

Incident Safety Officer

- Should be assigned on greater alarm structure fire incidents.
- Monitors conditions, activities and operations to determine if they are safe. In extreme circumstances the Safety Officer has authority to stop actions determined to be unsafe.
- Monitors scene and reports the status of conditions, hazards and risks to Incident Commander (IC).
- Provides IC risk assessment of current and planned operations.
- Ensures that IC establishes rehabilitation system for personnel during extended operations.

Personnel Accountability

A personnel accountability system shall be in place whenever personnel are operating in an IDLH environment.

- The first in officer establishes command and assumes the PAS officer duties. All incoming resources will attach their cards or tags to the board with the IC or on the Driver's side door of the first arriving apparatus. The function of accountability shall stay with the IC until the assignment is delegated.
- The IC may elect to maintain Functional Accountability until the incident complexity increases beyond the ability to track the resources and/or their functions. Once functional accountability is no longer possible, an Incident Status Board must be used.
- As the incident expands, the IC may assign a PAS officer to take over the accountability function.
- As personnel enter hazardous area, the PAS Officer moves PAS tag or PAS card to the critical function side of the status board and notes the time.
- As personnel exit hazard area, the PAS Officer moves PAS tag or PAS tag to support function side of the status board and notes the time.
- If the incident expands and more than one PAS Officer is assigned, a PAS Group should be established.
- If personnel need to be removed from the IDLH area, incident commander shall initiate an emergency evacuation immediately followed by a personnel accountability report (PAR).
- Incident Commander shall transmit "Emergency Traffic – Evacuate the building," on all radio frequencies assigned to incident. This message shall be repeated clearly three (3) times.
- Incident commander shall initiate the Evacuation Signal. The evacuation signal shall be sounded for sixty (60) seconds in ten (10) second intervals.
- Upon hearing the Evacuation Order or Signal, all personnel shall immediately evacuate the building to a safe location.
- All frequencies being utilized during the incident shall remain free from any radio traffic not related to the immediate emergency traffic.
- When the IC orders a PAR, each supervisor shall ensure that all individuals working for him/her are accounted for and have safely exited the hazardous area. This shall be reported to incident commander or designee during the PAR.
- In the event personnel are reported missing, the IC may deploy the Rapid Intervention Crew. Once a PAR is complete, the IC shall broadcast "All Clear" over the Command and Tactical Frequency.



Incident Rehabilitation

- The IC should order sufficient resources to allow for crew rotation as appropriate.
- A Rehabilitation Area (“Rehab”) should be established that provides relief from climatic conditions, rest and recovery, cooling or warming, feeding and hydration, medical monitoring.
- Rehab Area will include shelter from adverse climatic conditions of temperature, rain or wetness, smoke or fumes (including diesel exhaust), and allow for removal of PPE.
- Rest and recovery should be at least 20 minute period following use of a second 30 minute SCBA bottle or a single 45 or 60 minute bottle or 40 minutes of intense work without SCBA. These work and rest time frames may be adjusted given different working and climatic conditions. Supervisors shall assess their crew at least every 20 minutes to determine the need for rehabilitation. A crew member should not return to work if he/she does not feel adequately rested or EMS or supervisory personnel see signs of medical, psychological or emotional distress.
- Members in rehab who feel warm or hot will remove PPE, drink fluids (not at excessive rates) and apply active or passive cooling as needed to lower core body temperature.
- Members in rehab that feel cold will remove wet cloths and add clothing or blankets or use other available warming techniques to regain normal body temperature.
- Water and/or appropriate electrolyte replacement fluids will be provided in rehab and at the incident. Simple sugars and caffeine should be avoided when possible.
- Food should be provided on extended incidents along with an area to wash hands and faces (wash station or disinfectant wipes). Avoid candy and simple sugars when possible.
- Medical monitoring shall be made available in the rehab area. This may be a crew assigned to this function or crew members checking on each other. Vitals signs will be monitored and members displaying abnormal vital signs, signs of heat or cold stress, chest pain, dizziness, shortness of breath, weakness, nausea, headache, cramps, poor skin signs (paleness or redness/flushing), decrease in orientation or awareness, and/or changes in gait, speech or behavior shall be removed from active duty and treated or transported to a medical facility as needed.
- Member accountability should be maintained in rehab with a “Rehab Check in/Checkout sheet”.
- Release from rehab; EMS personnel assigned to medical monitoring may also be assigned to evaluate members prior to their leaving rehab. Supervisors and crew members should also evaluate each other for obvious indications that a person may not be ready or able to safely return to an assignment on the incident.

Date	Revision	SLO T/O Pres.	SLO Co. Chief Pres.
10/03/17	Updates approved by T/O and Co. Chiefs	<i>M. Miranda</i>	<i>S. Jalbert</i>