CONTRA COSTA COUNTY OPERATIONAL AREA

POLICY# 8

TOPIC: ICS 219 Resource Status "T" Card Policy			
Revision Date *July 6, 2009*	**Replaces** *NEW*	**Approved By** County Chiefs	**Pages** **4**
DISPOSITION: Operational Area Policy Manual			

Purpose:

To ensure personnel safety, it is the policy of the Contra Costa County Operational Area that all personnel and equipment will be accounted for at the scene of an emergency incident. The personnel accountability system is intended to meet the requirements of NFPA 1561 and will be operational on all fire/rescue incidents and training exercises. The primary objective of the system and this policy is to assist the fire ground supervisors in maintaining a constant awareness of the status, location, and functions of the personnel and/or equipment under their command. It is the responsibility of each member of the department to read and fully understand the policy and procedures for personnel accountability.

Background:

All Fire Department personnel in the role of Incident Commander at an incident are responsible for including accountability as a major element in the strategy and tactics planning and must maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of all personnel and resources at the emergency scene.

All Fire Department personnel are responsible for their own personal safety and the safety of their assigned personnel. Each member must maintain a constant awareness of the position and function of all personnel working with and around them.

The tracking of fire personnel and companies at an emergency scene is one of the key elements in managing successful operations. As the ICS expands, the need for a personnel and equipment accounting system increases rapidly. The T-Card system is a proven, standardized, simple system of personnel and equipment accountability.

Introduction:

The Incident Command System 219 T-Card System is an established and standardized tool that provides a mechanism that aids in the control and tracking of personnel and equipment at all incidents involving a multi-unit dispatch and/or major incidents. As a Level 1 personnel accountability system, the T-Card system provides the Incident Commander a fast and efficient means to account for personnel and equipment at the

scene of an emergency.

The T-Card system shall also provide for Level 2 accountability that shall track and account for all personnel at any given time within a small geographical area within the "Hazard Zone" such as an interior division or specific group that has an assigned area or task. This Level 2 personnel accountability system shall provide for enhanced personal safety for the individual firefighter by providing a means for the Incident Commander or a fire ground supervisor to track all personnel in the "Hazard Zone".

Policy:

All Contra Costa County fire apparatus, support and staff vehicles will carry the appropriate pre-designated T-Card at all times. The cards shall be filled out to include the 3 letter California Agency designator, the type of resource, the apparatus identifier and the personnel names and their resource I.D. assigned to the apparatus. (See attached example) The company officer shall be responsible to insure that the T-Card carried on their apparatus is updated as required and is accurate at all times. Any staffing changes on the company, no matter of time frame shall require the T-Card to be updated. The pre-designated cards shall be as follows:

- **Rose T-Cards** (ICS form 219-3) are required for each single engine, Type I, Type II, Type III, and Type IV
- **Tan T-Cards** (ICS form 219-8) are required for each miscellaneous equipment such as the truck and support vehicles
- **White T-Cards** (ICS form 219-5) are required for all overhead personnel including chief officers, training officer, fire prevention and administration personnel
- **Gray T-Cards** (ICS form 219-1) are carried in the Battalion Chief's vehicles for the purpose of organizing the different components of the scene in the T-Card sorter

The T-Card shall be carried in a plastic holder located on the company officers (right front) door area of each fire apparatus. All staff vehicles, Type IV engines and support vehicles shall carry their T-Cards in the glove box. Companies responding with a secondary apparatus such as a Type IV engine will list those crew members on their engine card. All command vehicles shall carry the T-Card nylon sorter or board for use at large incidents.

Level 1 Accountability

Level 1 accountability is the initial phase that provides the means to control and track personnel and equipment at the scene of an incident. On any emergency response where two or more apparatus are dispatched, (vehicle accident, grass fire, structure fire, etc) T-Cards shall be utilized for the Level 1 accountability.

Upon arrival at an incident, the first-in engine company shall perform emergency operations according to established policies and procedures leaving their T-Card in the plastic holder. All subsequent company officers arriving on scene shall hand their T-Card to the IC when established or shall place their card in the T-Card holder of the first-in engine if the IC is not accessible.

When it is not practical for the company officer to bring their T-Card to the command post or first-in apparatus because of assignment to a different location (C side of a building, flank of a grass fire, etc) the T-Card shall be left in the holder on the apparatus. The IC shall retrieve the cards from the apparatus or shall make arrangements to have the cards picked up as soon as possible and brought back to the command post. The T-Cards shall be used as the basis for tracking personnel and equipment throughout the incident.

When additional resources are assigned to an established staging area, the T-Cards shall be brought to the Staging Manager (if one is assigned) who shall track and note date and time the resources arrive in the appropriate box on the T-Card.

On all multi-alarm incidents the IC shall appoint an individual to Planning who shall use the T-Card sorter to track the resources that are on scene. This person shall individually note in the appropriate box the incident location, time and where the resource is assigned. There are only three status categories recognized by ICS. Resources are either "Assigned" (working), "Available" (ready to be assigned) "Out of Service (unavailable for assignment). Once the status box is checked, time is recorded and any pertinent information noted, the card will be filed in the T-Card sorter under the header of the location it is assigned. (Division 1, Division C, etc)

Any changes to the status of the resource or personnel assigned to that resource will be noted on the T-Card and then filed under the new location assigned. Each T-Card has room for four status changes on the back of the card. The IC or their designee shall initiate a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) as needed or anytime there is a change in the fire ground operations such as going to a defensive attack or a declared fire ground emergency.

Level 2 Accountability

Level 2 accountability is the secondary system of incident site tracking of personnel to provide enhanced safety of those involved in the incident. The purpose is to provide an improved method to track and account for all personnel at any given time within a small geographic area in the "Hazard Zone" of an incident. Examples of a "Hazard Zone" would be any IDLH (immediate death or life hazard) area or any area in which a firefighter is at risk of becoming lost, trapped or injured by the environment. T-Cards or PAT's shall be used for the Level 2 accountability.

The IC shall have the ultimate responsibility of insuring that personnel are accounted for appropriately prior to any entry into a "Hazard Zone". The IC or their accountability designee shall track those crews entering the Hazard Zone using their T-Card or PAT's noting the time and location of entry and filing the card under the proper heading for the assignment. The IC or their designee shall insure that periodically a PAR is performed with all crews in the Hazard Zone as well as those assigned outside.

The Point of Entry control shall be maintained either by the Division or Group Supervisor, RIC team supervisor, Accountability officer, or an established two-out team in the initial phases of an emergency. The officer of any entry team shall make contact with either the IC, Operations or the area supervisor prior to entry and obtain

acknowledgment on their entry including their PAR and air supply. Example: IC, E71 is making entry on the B side structure on the first floor with a PAR of 2 and full bottles. The crew must insure that this information is acknowledged prior to making entry.

When exiting the Hazard Zone, the crews shall again make contact with the accountability personnel and insure that they acknowledge the crew has exited, provide a PAR and air supply status. An example would be: IC, E71 is exiting the first floor with a PAR of 2 and 1/4 air. The personnel tracking the crews shall note the time the crews are exiting and file their T-Card or PAT in the appropriate slot that designate their status such as out of service for rehab and air.

Level 2 accountability will be maintained through a report of "Under Control" at which time a PAR shall be obtained for all personnel on scene. The IC will determine at that time, based on the situation and risk, as whether to continue the monitoring. Level 2 accountability requires disciplined communications, attention to details and at all costs personnel must avoid "freelancing".

Upon being released from the scene, the Company Officer shall check out with the IC and shall retrieve their T-Card if available or their PAT. On larger scale incidents, the T-Card may have been used to track progress of the fire and will be kept to help complete the report. In either case, the Company Officer shall be responsible to insure that the card is replaced back on the apparatus prior to returning in service.