



TAILBOARD TRAINING

VFIS “Tailboard Training” is a bi-weekly loss prevention program for clients. The program is intended to provide information on current safety issues facing emergency responders in a format that will quickly and effectively communicate a safe practice to implement and relate directly to your organization. These are released every other Thursday by VFIS.

ACCOUNTABILITY EQUIPMENT

The purpose of an emergency scene accountability program is to *account* for all firefighters, at any time, within the most dangerous area of an incident. The use of a Personnel Accountability System may provide enhanced personnel safety for the individual firefighter and provide the incident command organization staff an improved means to track and account for personnel and their whereabouts within the danger area.

The danger area is defined as any area that requires an SCBA, charged hose line and special protective clothing. It may also be classified as an area where firefighters are at risk of becoming lost, trapped or injured by the environment or structure. This would include entering a structure reported to be on fire, operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior operations, brush/forest fire, confined space or trench rescue.

Accountability equipment is significant to effectively perform a task. Today, there are both manual and electronic systems to use with preference, cost or mandate often being the factor in which to choose. With any system, have a process in place and provide the right equipment for use of the accountability system.

The equipment (regardless of the system used) should have:

- An identifier device (a card, a tag or an electronic device, possibly color coded by level of member or credentials of performance).
- A method to collect the tags/info (either a manual system with rings or clips or a computer.)
- A status board to indicate who is involved in what process and where.

Of the incidents you responded to over the last six months, which of these incidents did you have a need for accountability? Was an accountability process established? Were these accountability practices effective?

The objective is to complete the training in 15 minutes or less with participants leaving the session with a better understanding of how to keep from getting hurt.

SCENARIO

1. Review any existing protocols, strategic approaches or SOGs on this topic prior to conducting the *Tailboard Training*.
2. Ask a member to review the last incident where this scenario may have existed.
3. Have the group discuss the actions that were taken.
4. Were they done in a safe manner?
5. Were there any actions taken that could have been done differently?

NOTE: Most “after action reviews” such as this develop a number of suggestions that actions should have been or should be done differently. The officers need to balance this immediate reaction to the reality of the situation. Was the outcome positive or negative? Would the outcome have changed if actions were done differently? Should any additional safety precautions have been taken? If so, how and what?

1. **Have you had any such incidents in your department or in nearby departments? If so, describe a type of injury, accident or incident that has occurred or could occur.**
2. **Commentary on how to better deal with this issue**
3. **Review of any related departmental standard operating guidelines that may apply**
4. **Have a short open dialogue on the subject with your personnel.**
5. **VFIS References:**

Emergency Responder Safety Course www.vfis.com

[NFPA 1500 Checklist](#)

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