LAKEWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT

SOG NUMBER: 301.04	OPERATING PROCEDURE
DATE IMPLEMENTED: MAY 8, 2017 DATE REVISED: JANUARY 1, 2024	TITLE: FIREGROUND ACCOUNTIBILITY

PURPOSE:

These provisions have been promulgated to provide guidelines on the proper and expected use of the APX Personnel Accountability Application (APAA). The provisions noted herein shall be followed whenever personnel are required to work in an IDLH environment, where personnel may become lost, trapped, or injured by the environment, or whenever an IC determines the need for it.

SCOPE:

This guideline pertains to all Lakewood Fire Department personnel operating on Emergency Scenes.

BACKGROUND:

The APX Personnel Accountability Application (APAA) is designed to improve the accountability of members at all operations. APAA is installed on the MDT of Chief's vehicles and in a mobile case carried by the Chiefs. It meets the intent of the **NEW JERSEY PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM (NJPAS)** in the NJ firefighter Addendum and therefore will be the primary personnel accountability system use by the Lakewood Fire Department.

APAA works in the following ways to improve fireground accountability and mayday procedures:

- Immediately identifying any member(s) activating the Emergency Alert Button on their portable radio by displaying their company and assigned position.
- Manually identifying any member(s) transmitting a verbal Mayday message via portable radio.
- Quickly and efficiently conduct an emergency electronic PAR.
- Create company assignments/divisions/groups to help manage the incident.
- The ability to send out 16 Tactical Alert Messages

DEFINITIONS:

Hazardous Area – means any location(s) that may pose safety and/or health risk to firefighters due to, but not limited to, the presence of products of combustion, hazardous or otherwise oxygen deficient or oxygen enriched atmosphere or the potential for any IDLH atmosphere, hazardous equipment or operations or the potential for any of these situations to exist. Additionally, this shall include any area or location that predisposes a firefighter to become lost, disoriented or trapped, including any confined space and wild land areas shall also be considered a hazardous area for the purposes of this guideline.

IDLH – means immediately dangerous to life and health.

PAS – personnel accountability system

PAT – personnel accountability tag

Personnel Accountability Officer – means the person designated by the Incident Commander (IC) to monitor entry into and exit out of hazardous areas and/or structures for the purpose of ensuring accountability of all personnel in the hazardous area or structure.

Personnel Accountability Report/Roll Call (PAR) – means the result of an accounting of all personnel on the emergency incident scene to the Incident Commander.

Tactical Alert – a prerecorded message installed into the portable radio. The following tactical alerts are currently installed in the portable

TACTICAL ALERTS	
1. EMERGENCY BEACON	9. C.A.N. REPORT REQUESTED
2. EVACUATION	10. REPORT TO REHAB
3. EMERGENCY RECEIVED	11. SWITCH TO OPS 1
4. MAYDAY ALERT	12. SWITCH TO OPS 2
5. MAYDAY RECEIVED	13. SWITCH TO OPS 3
6. ROLL CALL REQUESTED	14. SWITCH TO OPS 4
7. URGENT TRAFFIC	15. REPORT TO COMMAND
8. DEFENSIVE MODE	16. INCIDENT TERMINATED

GENERAL OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- **APAA** is to be used whenever an incident reaches the Working structure fire, anytime personnel must enter an IDLH atmosphere, or whenever an IC determines the need for it.

- When assigning a Fire OPS channel the IC shall send out a tactical alert for the corresponding OPS channel. This will ensure all firefighters operating at the scene are notified of the change.

- Firefighters arriving at an incident, after their officers have transmitted on scene, must key their portable radio remote microphone only once to "check in" with the APAA. **Keying the portable radio remote microphone will have members of the unit immediately recognized by the APAA.**

- On large scale incidents using multiple tactical channels, the IC/Accountability officer should assign additional member(s) to monitor an APAA-equipped computer for each channel.

- **Tactical Alert Messages given by the IC/Accountability officer through the APAA shall be treated as direct orders from the Command Post.**

- Emergency messages not responded to should be repeated until acknowledged.

PROCEDURE:

1. The Portable Radio and a member's Name Tag will be the Accountability Tag assigned to the seating position and firefighter assigned to that position.

2. All personnel assigned to emergency response shall utilize the Portable Radio assigned to their seat position on the apparatus they are assigned.

3. Personnel, when reporting for duty (career) or when mounting an apparatus in preparation for responding to an incident (volunteer) will place their name tag on the apparatus accountability ring for their assigned seating position and secure the Portable Radio for same and place it on their person. (In a radio strap on the inside of their turnout coat).

(Apparatus Accountability Ring)

(Name Tag)

4. All personnel, upon entry to a hazardous area or structure, shall only do so with the radio assigned to their seating position **(No member shall enter an IDLH atmosphere without a portable radio)**.

5. Personnel arriving to an incident not on an apparatus shall report to their assigned apparatus, place their name tag on the apparatus accountability ring for their assigned seating position and secure the Portable Radio for same. Then contact the Officer/ Acting Officer from the apparatus to obtain orders or the location of the apparatus crew **(No member shall enter an IDLH atmosphere without a portable radio)**.

6. A key element of personnel accountability is crew integrity. It is the responsibility of all personnel to ensure that crew integrity is maintained. All crews must enter together, stay together, and exit together. Crews shall remain within either sight, voice, or tactile distance of each other while they are within the environment. No crew member shall be left alone.

7. If the need arises to evacuate a hazardous area or an **EVACUATION** is issued, all personnel shall immediately exit the hazardous area or structure and acknowledge the tactical alert upon exiting.

8. Any time a crew or personnel assignment, location or status changes, the change must be immediately communicated to the IC.

9. Should the need arise for the IC to know to whom a specific radio is assigned, the IC will check the apparatus accountability ring.

SET UP FOR IC/ACCOUNTIBILITY OFFICER

- To begin using the system just select the "SDI" icon at bottom of task bar.
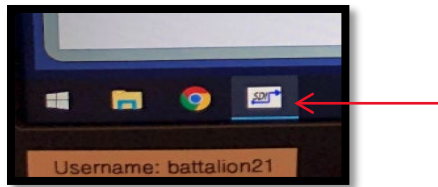
- Clear system data from previous incidents by clicking the "Clear" garbage can icon and following prompts.
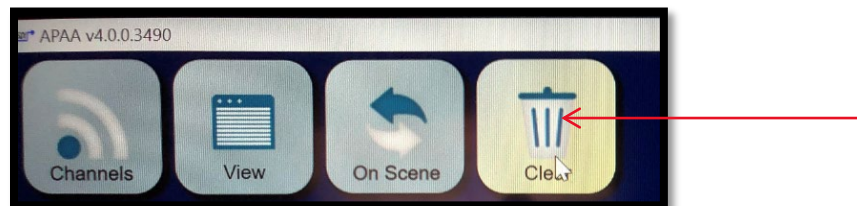
- APAA defaults to Dispatch Direct; however, it has the capability of monitoring any tactical fireground operations radio channel. Ensure the correct tactical fireground channel is selected and the Modem box is **GREEN**. **If the Modem Box is yellow or red the system is NOT connected.**
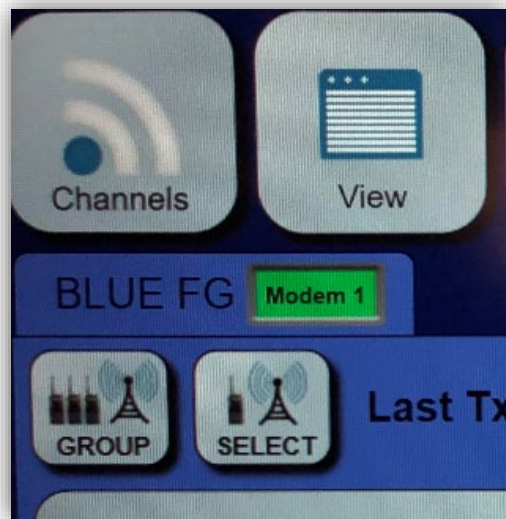
MAYDAY

- When transmitting a MAYDAY message, the member shall begin by depressing their Emergency Activation Button (EAB) (located on the radio or remote mic) for approximately **1 second**.

- When a member activates their Emergency Alert Button (EAB), their identity box/line in APAA will automatically be highlighted **RED** along with an alert tone. Their company and position will be listed in red in their ID Box and both the "RADIO STATUS" and "ALERTS" areas.

- In the event of an inadvertent activation, the member must immediately notify the Incident Commander of such, and then reset their Emergency Alert Button. It can be deactivated and reset by depressing and holding the Emergency Alert Button for approximately 2 seconds until a reset tone is heard, or by turning the radio off and then back on.

- If a member transmits a MAYDAY message on their portable radio, and does not activate their Emergency Alert Button, the member monitoring APAA shall highlight that member by utilizing the computer touch screen and manually assigning them a MAYDAY.

  o Select the member's name. A dialog box will appear for that member. The last person to transmit is always the top line in the "RADIO STATUS" area.

  o Select the "ASSIGN MAYDAY" button. This will highlight the member's company, position, and name, in red, in both the "RADIO STATUS" and "ALERTS" area.

  o IC/Plans should then issue a. "MAY DAY - HOLD YOUR TRAFFIC" Tactical Alert to notify all members on the incident scene.

- In the event a member transmits a MAYDAY for another member (e.g., unconscious member), the transmitting member shall:

  o Depress the Emergency Alert button (EAB) on **their own** portable radio. This will identify the member transmitting the MAYDAY on the APAA.

  o After the Emergency Alert activation, provide the Incident Commander with the information required for the MAYDAY transmission.

  o **If possible, then depress the EAB of the member in distress**. The activation of the distressed member's EAB will identify them on APAA. Notify the IC via portable radio prior to EAB activation of the distressed member.

  o **Transmitting member shall reset (cancel) their own portable radio Emergency Alert** by depressing and holding the Emergency Alert button of their remote microphone for approximately 2 seconds. **The distressed member's Emergency Alert shall remain activated until determined it is no longer required**.

  o **When a Mayday is received the Tactical alert "Mayday Received switch to OPS 5" is to be sent over the ops channel. All Firefighters operating on the fire are to switch to Ops 5 except for the Mayday FF, IC and RIT team assigned.** This will simplify communications between the MADAY FF and IC as well as the RIT team Assigned to the MAYDAY.

MAYDAY RESOLVED

- Select the member assignment. A dialog box will appear for that member.
- Select the "MANUALLY ACCOUNT" button. Once cleared, the member's highlighted identity line will change from red (active) back to white in the "RADIO STATUS" area. The member's highlighted identity line will change from red (active) to yellow (cleared) and will remain in the "ALERTS" area.

PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (PAR):

1. An initial Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) shall be conducted every Fifteen (15) minutes during an incident.

   The IC will conduct an **ELECTRONIC PAR** by the following procedure.

   - Select the TACTICAL Button on the left side of the screen.
   - This will bring up the "Tactical Alert type" screen.
   - Select the Group Alert button.
   - Select and highlight the "ROLLCALL" button.
   - Select the CONFIRM button. A Tactical Alert will then be issued.

2. When a **PAR (ROLL CALL)** tactical alert is initiated

   a. Members key their remote microphone one time.

   b. Their assignment box or line will change from yellow to green indicating they acknowledged the tactical alert.

   c. If a member does not key their portable radio remote microphone, they will remain on the yellow.

   d. If a member is confirmed accounted for but they do not have ability to click their portable radio remote microphone, you can manually account for the member. Select the member's assignment and select the "MANUALLY ACCOUNT" button.

   e. When the PAR is complete, select the "END ALERT" button located at the top left of the APAA screen. A dialog box will appear "Are you sure you wish to end the current Tactical Alert?" select the "YES" button.

   f. If there are units that did not acknowledge the alert, select the "RESEND ALERT" button.

   g. Select 'RESEND SAME" button.

   h. Acknowledge the Alert and it will only be sent to the portable radios that did not respond to the initial alert.

   i. Any radio not checking in after 2 attempts must be contacted via voice or through other means.

3. Once the PAR is complete, the IC will include in their progress report to Dispatch.
    a. "All members are accounted for" or list the members unaccounted for and activate a MAYDAY for the missing members

4. The IC will call for a PAR using the procedures listed above:
    a. If there is a report of a firefighter down or missing.
    b. When an emergency evacuation order is ordered.
    c. When the incident is declared under control.
    d. When changing attack modes (i.e., offensive to defensive).
    e. Anytime the IC feels it is necessary to conduct a PAR.