

April 2016

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## In APAA...

**APAA allows the Incident Commander to assign units to specific assignments. Assignments are defined within the APAA Configuration Utility. The Assignments pull-down list is used to designate a unit with a role/location at an incident.**

## Tips & Tricks

**Roster data can be refreshed to display the most current data by selecting the Refresh Roster button.**

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## Sizing Up an Accountability System

At SDI, we spend our time developing systems and approaches that provide fire departments with the ability to quickly and easily keep tabs on personnel on the fireground in real-time. We wanted to take advantage of this month's newsletter to talk about what exactly is an accountability system.

We define Fireground Accountability as the ability for fire departments to know who is on-scene, check in on them periodically, detect distress situations, and evacuate personnel, if necessary. This helps to ensure that everyone gets home safely when the job is done.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)'s "Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program" (1500, 2013 Edition) provides top-level guidelines for accountability systems, without spelling out specific solutions:

- "The incident commander shall maintain an awareness of the location and function of all companies or crews at the scene of the incident," and "Company officers shall maintain an ongoing awareness of the location and condition of all company members."
- "Members shall be responsible for following personnel accountability system procedures."
- "The personnel accountability system shall be used at all incidents."
- "The fire department shall develop, implement, and utilize the system components required to make the personnel accountability system effective."

SDI's patented approach for fireground accountability leverages radio information (e.g., PTT data, emergency alerts), Department unit and personnel data, and other sensor data available to assist accountability.

Our basic solutions implement two software applications (the EasyStaff® web-based application and the APX™ Personnel Accountability Application (APAA)) that work together to provide the main software building blocks of our accountability solutions. However, these software resources form only a part of what is needed for a comprehensive accountability solution. Other critical resources and capabilities can include radio system assets, broadband network availability, and Department personnel resources.

At SDI, we receive numerous requests for information, demonstrations, and price quotes. It would be fantastic if we could deliver a shrink-wrapped, one-size-fits-all accountability solution. However, no two Departments operate in the same way or maintain the same resources and capabilities. To address this variation, we've developed a questionnaire to help us understand a Department's available resources. This questionnaire asks many questions about a Department's organization, its radios, its computer systems, and how it operates.



The answers to these questions enable us to come up with a solution and configuration tailored for a Department's specific needs. The accountability questionnaire requests the following types of information:

<p><b>Department Information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name, Location, Type of Department</li> <li>• Structure, Resources, Units</li> <li>• Personnel Tour Assignments &amp; Tour Types</li> <li>• Dispatching, Dispatch Incident Monitoring</li> <li>• Incident/Dispatch Data Handling</li> <li>• Multiple Simultaneous Incident Handling</li> <li>• Environment/Local Structures</li> <li>• Fireground Accountability Procedures</li> <li>• Mutual Aid Assistance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Radio Information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio System Type</li> <li>• Trunked/Conventional Radio System</li> <li>• Radio Types</li> <li>• Portable Radio Assignments</li> <li>• Channels/Talkgroups</li> <li>• Radio System Configuration and Maintenance Details</li> </ul>
<p><b>Computer Information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile Data Terminal</li> <li>• Mobile Data Connectivity</li> <li>• Network and Information Technology Configuration and Maintenance</li> <li>• Training Needs</li> </ul>

So, how do we take that questionnaire and implement an accountability system for a specific Department? We look at various aspects of a Department and its existing resources. Who will be responding to incidents? Where will mobile terminals be used? What types of radios does the Department currently use or what radios will they be upgrading to? Is the current radio system trunked or conventional? Is the Department a single entity, or is it part of a regional consortium of fire departments?

All of these questions, when answered, provide us with a good picture of what a particular accountability system and its subsequent implementation will look like. Go to <http://www.firegroundaccountability.com/apaa.html> to download this questionnaire.

## SDI on Display at FDIC April 21-23

Come visit SDI at the 2016 Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) International Show, which will be held at the Indiana Convention Center Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, IN from April 21-23.

As a small business partner to Motorola, we'll be exhibiting our innovative **Untethered Turnkey Accountability Solution** in their booth (#325). This solution lets users run APAA on a tablet PC connected to an APX radio configured as an RF-modem. We will be available to answer all your questions and hope to see you there!



## Did You Know?

- EasyStaff® data is easily and constantly available to users in the cloud – no need to be onsite at a fire house to change roster or staffing information. Just open any web browser from your Android phone or tablet computer to make rapid updates via the EasyStaff® application.
- User guides, quick start guides, FAQs, videos and the latest news from SDI are all available on our website at [www.firegroundaccountability.com](http://www.firegroundaccountability.com) – visit us today!
- SDI is on Twitter (@systemsdef). Follow us for our fireground accountability activities.