

What are departments saying about In-Command Accountability Systems from Grace Industries?

Mt. Lebanon (PA) Fire Department:

The Mt. Lebanon Fire Department has been using the In Command Accountability system from Grace Industries since 2009. In 2018 the department decided to continue using the system and budgeted funds in order to completely upgrade the system in 2019. The Mt. Lebanon Fire Department is a small, combination department just outside of the City of Pittsburgh, Pa. We are staffed with 17 career firefighter and 50 volunteers. The department is an ISO 1 and Internationally Accredited Fire Department covering about 7 sq miles, mostly residential with a population around 37000. We respond to just under 2000 call per year and operate out of one central fire station.

We first started to use the In Command system in 2009. Every firefighter (career and volunteer) was issued two TAC3's (now called Tpass5's) for their on duty and off duty sets of PPE. Four of the apparatus had a watchdog receiver installed, so no matter how many calls or what apparatus responded we had a receiver that allowed us to use the system.

All firefighters are required to activate their Tpass5 upon arriving at our incidents. We have a time stamp built in that indicates 15 on scene. This is our critical staffing minimum for most incidents. It's a tool / reminder for the incident commander if that number is not met by a certain time frame. The department uses non-interior / non-structural firefighting members called support firefighters. The system allowed us to account for these members at incidents as well.

The In Command system is used in conjunction with and backs up our primary passport accountability system and SCBA Pass alarm systems. The evacuation alarms and PARR checks are also used to support our primary system of radio alerts and messages through the county 911 dispatch center. A huge benefit to the system is that it's a two-way communication system. Our command staff can always send messages but more importantly, every firefighter wearing a Tpass5 can manually send a distress signal to activate and alarm the system. This is why we consider it a critical back up to our other systems. To keep people familiar with the system, we use it during some training events. We will send PARR checks and evac messages during training. All of our career staff is trained on the software side of the system as well.

For this 2019 system upgrade we incorporated the use of the Super Cell pager. Because we operate under the Blue Card incident management system, we may not initially have an officer in the cab of the apparatus in front of the computer. The Super Cell pager has been assigned to our Chief and Assistant Chief's vehicle in a 12 volt charger. If a Tpass5 goes into alarm it will be received by the arriving Chief's Super Cell pager, indicating the firefighters name, versus going unnoticed on the apparatus computer. The Rescue truck's Super Cell is used for the RIT officer to monitor his crew while working out of town.

During the Accreditation process, the assessors took notice and commented on our use of the In Command System. I think we may have received additional credit for using the system.



As for set up, programing, usage and training of the system, I can tell you that is is very user friendly. Once it is up and running there is very little to maintain. Personnel updates are easy to do. The support from Grace Industries has been outstanding, no complaints. I recommend increasing your AA battery budget, the Tpass5's use this style battery.

Should you require additional information feel free to contact me.

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Sevierville (TN) Fire Department:

“Our department had an older Grace system before upgrading to the latest version of In-Command and TPASS 5. Prior to both Grace Accountability systems, we used engraved plastic tags for accounting of our personnel. Our accountability officer had a countdown timer that would alert them to conduct a PAR check via radio. Now with the In-Command system, our department has a complete list of all active firefighters at the scene. We can send automated PAR signaling. When the need for evacuation arises, we send an evacuate signal that is not lost in radio traffic. Finally, there is automatic data logging for post incident analysis.

We love that the new TPASS units can be worn in all disciplines of our department; wildland firefighting, technical rescue, structural firefighting, and could be worn by non-firefighting personnel such as myself in the event someone was to suffer a medical emergency on-scene.

Prior to purchasing the Grace In-Command system, we did consider another system offered with SCBA's from another manufacturer, but it couldn't compare to the features of In-Command. Initially, as with anything new it had to be proven to work for our situation, but now, we love it and couldn't imagine a fire scene without it. It has more than met our expectations and we would recommend Grace In-Command and TPASS 5 to other Fire Departments wanting to update their accountability systems. “

Fire Chief Matt L Henderson
Sevierville Fire Department

