MSA Accountability System **Q&A**

Incident command's ability to view the situation within a working fire is now reality. The capacity to monitor and provide instructions during an emergency is critical. MSA has worked tirelessly to ensure that the information you need is at your fingertips, as we provide the means to monitor each firefighter's status and environment.

MSA Accountability System offers a simple, reliable method to enhance firefighter safety and accountability on the fire scene by monitoring firefighters' PASS devices remotely from incident command using MSA A2 Software. MSA A2 Software provides more information than ever before. Using Bluetooth communication, the MSA G1 SCBA links to portable gas detection to transmit environmental readings to incident command, an industry first.

Why did MSA choose the 900 MHz, license-free radio frequency to transmit information between the HUB and the MSA SCBA with telemetry?

MSA chose 900 MHz for several reasons. First, it's license-free, therefore a higher power signal can be used without a license. The second reason is because 900 MHz has a good combination of reflective and penetrative RF characteristics for optimal range performance within building structures. Lower frequencies penetrate well over short distances, but don't reflect or travel well through small openings that might be needed for longer distances indoors. Higher frequencies above 900 MHz don't penetrate building materials as well; however, they disseminate more efficiently through small openings. The 900 MHz band has a good combination of reflection and penetration for this application.

HUB device

How many firefighters can the system monitor at the same time?

The MSA Accountability System is capable of monitoring 50 firefighters per HUB. It is possible to connect two HUBs to a single laptop for up to 100 firefighters.

What components are necessary to make the MSA Accountability System functional?

The system requires the following components: MSA SCBA equipped with telemetry module, ID tags (for firefighter or team identification), a Reader/ID Tag Writer, a HUB Kit, and a device such as laptop computer (not supplied by MSA).

A2 Reader/ID Tag Writer   *G1 Control Module*

How is a firefighter's name assigned to the SCBA with telemetry?

Each firefighter is given an ID tag programmed with his or her name. At the beginning of each shift during SCBA inspection, the firefighter presses the mode button of the SCBA control module and scans the ID tag, transferring the user information electronically. The SCBA ID tags can only be used with SCBA equipped with telemetry and a Reader/ID Tag Writer.

What if a firefighter forgets to "tag in"?

The SCBA control module stores a firefighter's name in its memory for 24 hours. After that time, the unit resorts to the serial number. If a firefighter forgets to "tag in", the serial number will be seen by incident command; the firefighter will still be accounted for.
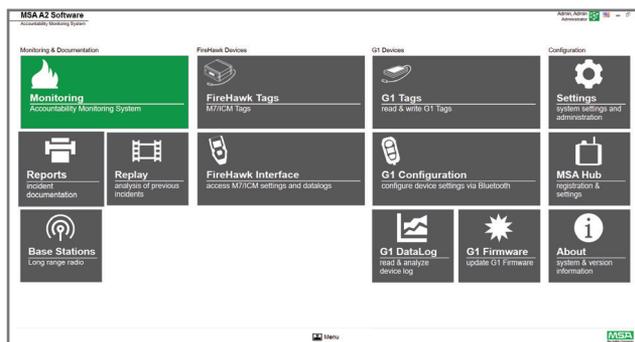
Will the system work if our department does not want to issue ID tags to each firefighter?

Yes. MSA designed our system to be customized to your needs. You can permanently name the SCBA control module by apparatus number and seat position (such as Engine 9, seat 2). This will automatically create a team on the HUB's software (Engine 9) and place that firefighter in the second position.

WHEN YOU GO IN, WE GO IN WITH YOU.

How will incident command (IC) know when critical events occur on the fireground?

When critical events occur, such as the sounding of PASS devices or low-pressure alarms, it is important to keep IC informed. The HUB automatically recognizes these events and that critical information is announced on the laptop screen via pop-up windows. The event type and firefighter name are included in the message. As IC has many responsibilities and may not be constantly watching the computer screen, audible alarms also alert IC of critical events. When a PASS alarm occurs, the laptop computer alarms, using the same tones as the integrated PASS device. When a low-pressure alarm activates, the laptop sounds the distinctive Audible Alarm ring. Other events, such as thermal alarms, low battery conditions, and radio contact, can also be set up to inform IC on the laptop screen.

A2 Software Main Menu

How will IC and the firefighter know if radio contact is out of range?

IC is alerted that a firefighter is out of range from the HUB when an "X" appears over the radio signal icon. The firefighter will be alerted by the SCBA control module's blinking radio icon.

What information is displayed for IC?

IC can see on air vital statistics for each firefighter at the fireground such as air pressure, time remaining, radio contact, and evacuation acknowledgement. Also visible are team assignments and tasks assigned to each team. The software also has an integrated PAR (personnel accountability report) timer that can bet set for any departmental time interval used to conduct PAR.

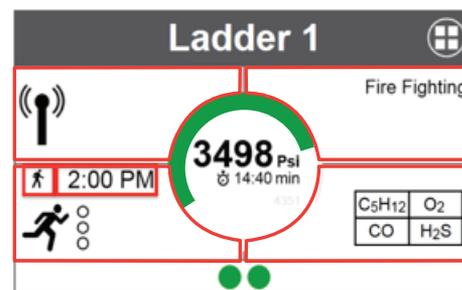## How does the MSA Accountability System aid in firefighter evacuations?

Incident Command can evacuate a single firefighter, a team of firefighters, or all firefighters on the scene with a single button click. When IC presses the Evacuate button, the button turns red, confirming that the message has been sent. When the firefighter receives the message, the Evacuation button turns yellow; IC knows that the firefighter has received the message. The firefighter recognizes the evacuation message by double-clicking the SCBA control module's side button, sending back to IC that the evacuation signal has been acknowledged. The Evacuation button is now green.

What happens if a fire requires mutual aid? Will the system keep track of only firefighters in my department?

No. If the mutual aid department also uses an MSA Accountability System, with an MSA telemetry-enabled SCBA, their units will appear on the laptop. If the mutual aid department is not an MSA Accountability System user, IC can manually add those firefighters to the system to keep track of all firefighters on the scene.

Can the MSA Accountability System generate incident reports?

Yes. The software captures all of the information from each incident. The downloaded information can then be viewed in various reports when needed.

Menu displaying alarm (upper left), time on scene, incident status (lower left), task (upper right), and gasses being monitored (lower right)

Note: This Bulletin contains only a general description of the products shown. While product uses and performance capabilities are generally described, the products shall not, under any circumstances, be used by untrained or unqualified individuals. The products shall not be used until the product instructions/user manual, which contains detailed information concerning the proper use and care of the products, including any warnings or cautions, have been thoroughly read and understood. Specifications are subject to change without prior notice.

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