

structure and condition (arriving). Knowledge of supervision was measured by questions in both scenarios, and was scored for each. For the evolving scenario, candidates were provided with a 15-minute preparation period, and candidates had 10 minutes to respond. For the arriving scenario, a five minute preparation period was given and candidates had 10 minutes to respond.

The candidates' responses were scored on technical knowledge and oral communication ability. Prior to the administration of the exam, a panel of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) determined the scoring criteria, using generally approved fire command practices, firefighting practices, and reference materials. Scoring decisions were based on SME-approved possible courses of action (PCAs) including those actions that must be taken to resolve the situation as presented. For a performance to be acceptable, a candidate needed to present the mandatory courses of action for that scenario. Only those oral responses that depicted relevant behaviors that were observable and could be quantified were assessed in the scoring process. Each performance was evaluated by two SMEs who currently are a first level supervisor or higher. If the SME scores differed by 1 point, the score was averaged. If they differed by more than 1 point, the SMEs were required to confer with each other until they agreed on a score. Scores were then converted to standardized scores.

Candidates were rated on a five-point scale, with 5 as the optimal response, 4 as a more than acceptable passing response, 3 as a minimally acceptable passing response, 2 as a less than acceptable response, and 1 as a much less than acceptable response. For each of the scenes, and for oral communication, the requirements for each score were defined.

For the evolving scenario, the appellant scored a 2 for the technical component, a 2 for the supervision component, and a 3.5 for the oral communication component. For the arriving scenario, the appellant scored a 5 for the technical component, a 4 for the supervision component, and a 3.5 for the oral communication component. The appellant challenges his scores for all components of the evolving scenario. As a result, the appellant's test material, video, and a listing of PCAs for the scenario were reviewed.

The evolving scenario involves a fire in a single-story, steel-frame building built in the early 1980s. The building is a Collision and Frame Straightening garage with three bays. It is 1:30 PM on a Monday in May and the temperature is 41° Fahrenheit with clear skies and a wind blowing from west to east at 7 miles per hour. Upon arrival, it is noticed that smoke is coming from garage bay doors on side A, and from the windows of the office area on sides A and D. Dispatch indicates that an employee says that a fire started in the reception area and quickly filled the area with smoke. He is unsure if all the employees and customers were

able to evacuate the building. The candidate is the commanding officer of the first arriving engine company and he establishes command. There were two technical questions. Question 1 asked for initial actions and specific orders at the incident upon arrival. Question 2 indicates that a drop-ceiling collapse occurs in the reception area and there is a report of a missing firefighter. The question asked what actions should now be taken, based on this new information. Question 3, the supervision question, indicates that, during fire operations, the nozzleman gets distracted and hits another firefighter with the hose stream, injuring him. This question asks what should be done at the scene and after returning to the firehouse. Instructions indicate that, in responding to the questions, the candidate should be as specific as possible in describing actions, and should not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to a score.

In regard to the technical component, the assessors noted that the appellant failed to call for a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR), which was a mandatory response to question 2, and he missed the opportunities to do a LUNAR¹ and to call for another alarm, which were additional actions for question 2. On appeal, the appellant states that he struck a second alarm.

In reply, a review of the appellant's video and related examination materials indicates that the appellant responded to question 1 for more than 7 minutes. In response to question 2, the appellant activated the Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC), and stated that they removed the firefighter and sent him to EMS. That was the sum of his response to question 2. This is an inadequate response that did not address the situation. The appellant received credit in question 1 for calling for a second alarm. However, he was expected to call for another alarm in response to the evolution of the scene in question 2, and he did not do so. All mandatory responses must be given in order for a performance to be acceptable, whether there is one mandatory response or five of them. Performances that include mandatory responses get a score of 3, and those without mandatory responses get a score of 1 or 2. The appellant missed a mandatory response to question 2, as well as additional actions, and his score of 2 for this component is correct.

In regard to the supervision component of the evolving scenario, the assessors noted that the appellant missed the opportunities to have the injured firefighter seen by EMS, and to interview the nozzle man, and to document any actions taken. On appeal, the appellant states that he said he would meet with all people involved and do reports, and that the Deputy Chiefs and Battalion Chiefs "receive all filled out reports and turned in."

¹ A LUNAR is an acronym used to help firefighters remember the important information that should be included in any Mayday call: L-Location; U-Unit; N-Name; A-Assignment and Air Supply; and R-Resources Needed.

A review of the appellant's video and related examination materials indicates that, in response to question 3, the appellant stated, "Number 3. A nozzleman is hurt. A nozzleman hurts another firefighter and he's immediately shut down all lines. Pull everybody back as safely as possible. And immediately initiate a staging unit which is two blocks away with the staging manager, accountability officer for firefighter accountability, and have them pick up after the injured firefighter is moved over to the rehab center. Have them pick up and continue with the two and half inch attack lines for peach, eh, for reach and penetration. As Captain of Engine 1, this is how I would answer question 1." After a 17 second pause, the appellant stated, "Returning to the firehouse, do all reports, meet with all people involved, make sure we train, finish training, and train some more. Battalion Chief and Deputy Chiefs will receive reports also. Fill out accident reports, and all reports returned in." As stated in the instructions, credit is not given for information that is implied or assumed. In this case, the assessors expected the candidates to document any actions taken. The appellant's response referred to reports, and he later mentioned accident reports. These are different from documentation of any actions taken. The appellant brought the injured firefighter to rehab, rather than EMS. He did not specify that he would interview the nozzleman, and he did not document any actions taken. He did not adequately address the supervisory problem, and his score of 2 for this component is correct.

For the oral communication component, the assessors noted that the appellant's presentation had two weaknesses, clarity and organization. For organization, they indicated that he repeated information, then assumed command well into the presentation, repeating it and water supply. They also indicated a weakness in clarity and that he made unclear statements in his presentation at 8:21. On appeal, the appellant states that at 8:21 he struck a second alarm and then protected the means of egress.

In reply, a weakness in organization is defined as failing to present ideas in a logical fashion, to state a topic, and to provide supporting arguments as well as a conclusion or summary. Candidates were required to focus their responses on the scenario and the question. That is, they were required to respond to the questions given the information provided. Another factor in oral communication is clarity/brevity, and a weakness in this factor is defined as failing to make comments that are clear and concise, and responses are brief or unclear.

A review of the appellant's video contains a weakness as noted by the assessors. The appellant's response was haphazard and information was not presented in a logical order. For example, the appellant stated, "Engine 1 will become division 1 supervisor." This was an incorrect statement, as the appellant was the commander of the first arriving unit and therefore was the Incident Commander (IC). The

appellant continued, stating, "We will initiate fire attack. Finding a credible water source closest to safest to the property. We'll coordinate with search and rescue, engine company will coordinate with search and rescue and ventilation teams. Search for multiple means of egress, feel doors for heat, check the structure for backdraft, flashover situations. Rapid intervention team are ready and available. We'll work in pairs of two or more so there's no freelancing. Stay in voice range. Two attack lines ready and in place to go in. We will do all tasks as safely as possible including parking, placing the apparatus. No manhole covers or overhead obstructions like power lines. Ensure that a, a continuous size-up is in effect and reported back to incident command, for any run offs, explosions, exposure protections." In this passage, the appellant is initiating a fire attack and getting water, as though he were a member of the engine team rather than the IC. Then, he indicates that a rapid intervention team is ready and available, which would be an IC's responsibility. Next, working in pairs means two people, but he works in pairs of two or more, and indicates that this means that there is no freelancing. Freelancing can easily be performed by two or more people as it can be with one. This passage also contains many errors in grammar which were not noted by the assessors. There are many words missing from sentences, which make them incomplete. It also does not make sense to report to the IC with a size-up continuously.

After indicating that firefighters would be rehabbed every 15 minutes and ensuring that a secondary search was in process, the appellant states, "Engine 1 arrives on scene, 26 Sparrow Street. Engine 1 will be Sparrow Street command. The structure steel frame building. Occupancy occupied open, open for business," and he continued giving size up factors. There was no logical order to the actions, and the appellant's communication had a major weakness in organization. After giving size-up factors, the appellant stated that engine one would obtain a water supply and stretch two 2½ inch attack lines, which was information that he had already given as division one supervisor. The appellant then had a ladder truck placed out of a collapse zone which he had not established. After calling for resources, he then stated, "Engine 1 arrives on scene, Sparrow ah, 26 Sparrows. Engine 1 will be Sparrow command. 100 by 60 single story, construction steel frame building. Occupants open."

The presentation lacked clarity and organization, and there was a weakness in grammar/word usage as well. After establishing water supply the second time, he stated, "They'll pick up the second 2½ inch hose that engine one left to back up engine one and protect primary res..., primary search and rescue crews and victims on the side by protecting the means of egress." In giving a list of resources, the appellant asked for, "rehabilitation center to replurbish firefighters who are tired," "red cross to replace burnt out victims if needed," "Employee Assistance Program for fire fighters with destructive injury and, and or death," and "Hazmat for hazmative

materials." The appellant's presentation contained weaknesses in clarity, organization and grammar/word usage. As the weakness of clarity was noted by only one assessor, the appellant received a score of 3.5. This review reveals that the presentation undoubtedly had a weakness in clarity/brevity, and a weakness in grammar/word usage. As such, the score for this component should be reduced from 3.5 to 2.

CONCLUSION

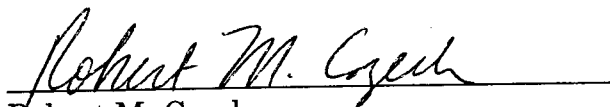
A thorough review of the appellant's submissions and the test materials indicates that the decision below is amply supported by the record, and the appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied, and the score for the oral communication component for the evolving scenario be reduced from 3.5 to 2.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
THE 19th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2016



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