



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

As to the oral communication component, the assessors noted a weakness in rate of speech. Specifically, they indicated that the appellant took a long pause. On appeal, the appellant argues that he said he would take a minute to look to at his notes, and then concluded his response.

In reply, a factor in oral communication is inflection/modulation/rate/volume. A weakness in this factor is defined as failing to speak at an appropriate rate (pauses), failing to maintain appropriate pitch and volume, and failure to properly

use pitch to convey meaning or emphasis. A review of the appellant's presentation indicates that he maintained appropriate pitch, volume and rate throughout the presentation. At the end, he asked once for a minute to review his notes. After 15 seconds, he added a response to question 1. He was thinking of another response but stopped in midsentence. Ten seconds later, time was called. A review of this situation reveals that this pause had been requested by the appellant, there was only one pause, and it was not distracting. Accordingly, the appellant's score for this component should be changed from 4 to 5.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be granted, and the appellant's score for the oral communication component of the evolving scenario be changed from 4 to 5.

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 19<sup>th</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2016



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