

through optimum. The appellant received a score of 1 for the technical component for the Incident Command – Non-fire Incident scenario and for the technical component for the Incident Command – Fire Incident, and he challenges these scores. As a result, the appellant's test material, video, and a listing of PCAs for the scenario were reviewed.

The Incident Command- Non-fire scenario concerned a report of a building collapse with workers trapped inside. This building was built in the 1850s as a water-powered mill, and is predominantly wood and heavy timber with a patchwork of brick masonry exterior walls. The lower level below the ground floor contains flowing water. Question 1 asked for specific, initial actions to take upon arrival. Question 2 indicated that a Mayday is heard that a firefighter has fallen into the lower level and water is rising. It asked for specific actions that should be taken to address this new information.

The assessor noted that the appellant failed to search voids and to call USAR/Task Force 1/Heavy Rescue. These were two mandatory responses to question 1. It was noted that he also missed the opportunities to request/stage heavy equipment, in response to question 1, and to assign a supervisor to oversee Firefighter rescue operations, in response to question 2.

On appeal of this issue, the appellant argues that he increased supervision in the area and implemented a rescue branch to the incident. Also, he states that he set up a logistics branch to have equipment staged due to the large scale incident.

In reply, question 1 asked for immediate actions to take upon arrival. In this scenario, the SMEs determined that appropriate mandatory responses were to search voids and to call USAR/Task Force 1/Heavy Rescue, and the appellant did not take these actions. The appellant does not argue that he took these actions, but argues that he took the additional actions listed by the assessor. It is noted that certain responses to the situation presented in the scenario are mandatory. That is, mandatory responses are responses that are requirements for a performance to be acceptable (a score of 3). All mandatory responses must be given in order for a performance to be acceptable.

A review of the appellant's presentation indicates that he did not state that he would search voids or call USAR/Task Force 1/Heavy Rescue. Regardless of the additional responses, missing two mandatory responses indicates a score of 1.

Nevertheless, the appellant stated, "I'm also gonna request more Chiefs to the area. I'm want to increase the supervision. I'm gonna have an orderly withdrawal of nonessential personnel. This is a large scale incident, so we're gonna increase out Incident Management System." The appellant then described the branches of the IMS and officers he would assign. This response was given in

question 1, while the appellant was still calling for additional resources. In response to question 2, while the appellant requested fourth and fifth alarms, he did not assign a supervisor to oversee rescue operations of the Firefighter. Responses are not taken out of context. If the appellant meant to assign a supervisor to oversee Firefighter rescue operations, he needed to have said so in response to question 2. In his response to question 2, the appellant stated, "I'm gonna request additional Chiefs, have the additional Chiefs reporting back from different sectors." However, he does not assign a supervisor to oversee Firefighter rescue operations.

In his response, one of the IMS branches that the appellant mentioned was logistics. He stated, "Then I'll request a logistics officer. We're gonna need a lot of equipment here. Once we have everybody removed from the building, we're gonna have, ah, need equipment to the area." In the instructions listed after the questions, candidates were told that in responding to the questions to be as specific as possible. They were told to not assume or take for granted that general actions would contribute to their score. In the appellant's response, he assigned a logistics officer. This is not the same as requesting heavy equipment. The appellant the twice mentioned the need for equipment, but this not requesting heavy equipment nor staging heavy equipment. The appellant missed the actions listed by the assessor and his score for this component is correct.

The Incident Command-Fire scenario concerned heavy black smoke showing in the visible windows on all floors of a non-combustible, three-story self-storage building, and light smoke emanating from the roof HVACs. The scenario indicates that the building has a sprinkler system, currently out of service as the water main to the building is shut down. Question 1 asked for concerns and specific actions to take upon arrival. Question 2 indicated that all victims are accounted for, fire is spreading from unit to unit throughout the building, smoke is coming from under the doors of many units, flames are visible across the ceiling, and the heat is unbearable. It asked for actions that should be taken to address this new information.

The assessor noted that the appellant failed to connect to the dry sprinkler Fire Department Connection (FDC), which was a mandatory response to question 1. It was also indicated that the appellant missed the opportunity to establish a collapse zone, which was an additional response to question 2. The assessor assigned a score of 3 using the "flex rule."

On appeal, the appellant argues that the scenario did not indicate that the sprinkler system was a dry system, but only that it was out of service, and therefore, connecting to the FDC was a delay of time in fighting the fire and the connection would be to a out of service system.

Regarding the flex rule, sometimes, a candidate states many additional responses but does not give a mandatory response. The flex rule was designed to allow the SMEs to assign a score of 3 to candidates who fail to give a mandatory response but who provide many additional responses. However, the SMEs cannot provide a score higher than a 3 in those cases. All mandatory responses must be given in order for a performance to be acceptable, whether there is one mandatory response or five of them. It is not assumed that candidates receive a score of 5 which is then lowered for lack of responses. Performances that include mandatory responses get a score of 3, and those without mandatory responses get a score of 1 or 2. Additional responses only increase a score from 3 to 4 or 5.

In reply, in wet pipe systems, the overhead sprinkler piping connected is filled with water under pressure. Dry pipe fire sprinkler systems, on the other hand, do not have water in the direct non-heated sprinkler piping, but only pressurized air or nitrogen. The pressurized air holds back the water supply at a main dry pipe valve. In this case, the appellant is correct, this is not a dry pipe fire sprinkler system. However, he did not acknowledge that the reason the system was out of service was due to a shut down of the water main in the building. This is resolved by connecting to the FDC. In this case, the assessor note regarding the sprinkler being dry since the water main was shut down, and was not a reference to a dry pipe fire sprinkler system. However, this point is irrelevant. A review of the appellant's presentation reveals that he did not connect to the FDC, which would have resolved the issue with the sprinkler system. In fact, the SMEs determined that this was so important, it was mandatory response. Nevertheless, he addressed many other actions which warranted the use of the flex rule. The appellant missed the responses noted by the assessor and his score for this component is correct.

CONCLUSION

A thorough review of 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.

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 ON
THE 19th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2018



Deirdré L. Webster Cobb
Chairperson
Civil Service Commission

Inquiries
and
Correspondence

Christopher S. Myers
Director
Division of Appeals and Regulatory Affairs
Civil Service Commission
Written Record Appeals Unit
P. O. Box 312
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312

c: Sean Verdi
Michael Johnson
Joseph DeNardo
Records Center