

B-50



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Examination Appeal

In the Matter of
Edward Vincent, Fire Captain
(PM0054R), Camden

CSC Docket No. 2014-3061

ISSUED: SEP 18 2014

(RE)

Edward Vincent appeals his score for the oral portion of the promotional examination for Fire Captain (PM0054R), Camden. It is noted that the appellant passed the subject examination with a final score of 85.560 and his name appears as the 35th ranked eligible on the subject list.

It is noted for the record that this two-part examination consisted of a written multiple-choice portion and an oral portion. Candidates were required to pass the written portion of the examination, and then were ranked on their performance on both portions of the examination. The test was worth 80 percent of the final score and seniority was worth the remaining 20 percent. Of the test weights, 31.35% of the score was the written multiple-choice portion, 22.49% was the technical score for the evolving exercise, 7.53% was the supervision score for the evolving exercise, 4.28% was the oral communication score for the evolving exercise, 19.23% was the technical score for the arriving exercise, 7.53% was the supervision score for the arriving exercise, and 7.59% was the oral communication score for the arriving exercise.

The oral portion of the Fire Captain examination consisted of two scenarios: a fire scene simulation with questions designed to measure the knowledge of safe rescue tactics and procedures to safeguard citizens, supervision of fire fighters and the ability to assess fire conditions and hazards in an evolving incident on the fireground (evolving); and a fire scene simulation designed to measure the knowledge of safe rescue tactics and procedures to safeguard citizens, supervision of fire fighters and the ability to plan strategies and tactics based upon a building's

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, fire fighting 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 2 for the supervision component, and a 5 for the oral communication component. For the arriving scenario, the appellant scored a 3 for the technical component, a 2 for the supervision component, and a 5 for the oral communication component.

The appellant provides a list of actions taken for each scenario, but does not challenge his scores for any particular component for either scenario. The appellant's test material, audiotape, and a listing of PCAs for the scenarios were reviewed and it has been found that the appellant's scores are correct. In his appeal, the appellant lists actions he took, and these contributed to his score. However, he missed the actions noted by the assessors for those components for which he received less than a 5.

For the supervision component of the evolving scenario, the appellant's response was generalized and lacked specifics. For example, the only action taken on the fireground was to quiet the drivers down. He did not inform the driver of the

engine that the front of the building should be reserved for truck companies. He did not review departmental Standard Operating Procedures and policies of apparatus placement in his response to question 3. The appellant referred to positioning apparatus past the building, but this was given after he completed answering question 3 and was providing additional responses to question 1. In addition, he did not specify that the apparatus he was referring to was the engine or the truck, and the appellant cannot receive credit for information that is implied or assumed.

On the arriving scenario, for the technical component, the appellant did not provide the most important specifics of a proper size-up, which was a mandatory response. He also did not check the cockloft. For the supervision component, the appellant did not review or investigate previous similar incidents, review the overhaul crew's training records, or document any actions taken. The appellant's lists of actions do not support that he took the action listed by the assessors, and his scores will not be changed.

CONCLUSION

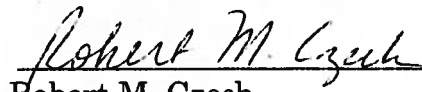
A thorough review of the appellant's submissions and the test materials indicates that the decision below is amply supported by the record, and the appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

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 17th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2014


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