

respond to each. For the Arrival 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 in the technical component for some scenarios, 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.

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 scenarios, and for oral communication, the requirements for each score were defined. For the Evolving scenario, the appellant scored a 2 for the technical component and a 4 for the oral communication component. For the Administration scenario, the appellant scored a 4 for the technical component and a 4 for the oral communication component. For the Arrival scenario, the appellant scored a 1 for the technical component and a 4 for the oral communication component.

The appellant challenges his scores for the technical components of each scenario. As a result, the appellant's test material, audiotape, and a listing of possible courses of action for the scenarios were reviewed.

The Evolving scenario concerned a report of smoke coming from a two-story, wood-frame home built in the 1970s. It is 8:00 AM on a Sunday in October, the temperature is 45° F, and there is wind blowing from north to south at 9 miles per hour. The candidate is the company officer of a ladder company and is assigned via radio as division two supervisor and he has his ladder company and both engine companies to begin operations. A second alarm is struck. Upon arrival, smoke is seen coming from the second floor on the A/B corner. A neighbor informs the candidate that the owner's car is parked in front of the home. Question 1 asked for initial actions both en route and upon arrival has the division two supervisor. Question 2 contains the evolution. It indicates that as the companies are performing their designated assignments on division two, a fire fighter reports he cannot find his partner on the second floor and he is not responding via radio. The question asked for actions to be taken and requests to be made to the incident commander (IC) to address the situation.

The assessor noted that the appellant failed to keep the IC informed of rescue efforts and fire control, which was a mandatory response to question 2. It was also noted that he missed the opportunity to research in the CADS¹ building preplans, and to notify dispatch he is on scene, which were additional responses to question 1. On appeal, the appellant argues that he requested a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) and progress reports from all units.

First, 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, 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.

A review of the appellant's presentation and related documentation indicates that, en route to the scene, he did not research the building preplans in CADS. He also did not notify dispatch that he was on-scene. This was a formal examination setting and candidates were required to verbalize their responses. Credit was not given for information that was implied or assumed. At the end of question 1, the appellant stated that all units will give him a progress report and conduct a PAR. In response to question 2, the appellant said, "We're going to conduct a PAR to find out if anybody else is missing." This was a separate mandatory response for which the appellant received credit. However, the appellant did not keep the IC informed of rescue efforts and fire control (progress reports) in response to the evolution of the scene. If the appellant meant to do so, he needed to have stated that action. The appellant missed a mandatory response to question 2, and his score for this component is correct.

The Administration scenario indicated that the Chief asked that the newly appointed second level fire supervisor take his company and attend a portion of the local high school's job fair representing the Fire Department. The company spends an uneventful hour and half at the job fair. Later that night, back at the firehouse, a 19-year-old probationary firefighter, Firefighter Mac, is the talk of dinner. He was seen talking to a female student while at the high school, and is now bragging about texting with her on his personal cellular phone. The candidate later finds out that the female he is communicating with turns 16-years-old in two months. Question 1 asked for actions to take to fully address the situation. Question 2 indicated that, a month later the Chief calls the candidate into his office says that the girl's father was in his office threatening legal action. The father stated that,

¹ Computer Aided Dispatch System

"your firefighter has gone on a date with my 15-year-old daughter!" This question asked for additional actions that should now be taken.

The assessor indicated that the appellant missed the opportunity to advise Firefighter Mac of his right to union representation, which was an additional response to question 2. The appellant argues that he offered the right to appeal and due process, and that in his department the union delegate is automatically involved.

In reply, for question 2, the appellant stated, "He would be offered appeals and due process." This response does not indicate that the appellant advised Firefighter Mac of his right to union representation. This was an action that needed to be taken and if the appellant thought that it would be automatically done, he needed to have articulated that thought. He missed the opportunity noted by the assessor and his score is correct.

The Arrival scenario concerned the report of smoke coming from inside a theater on main street during a sold-out Wednesday matinee production of Grease. It is 1:45 PM on a Wednesday in September, the temperature is 84° F, and there is wind blowing from south to north at 14 MPH. The candidate is the company officer of the first arriving ladder company and the highest ranking officer on-scene. Engines 1 and 2 are less than a minute away. The fire building was built in 1954 and houses a production company that puts on live plays. The scenario indicates that, upon arrival, the candidate sees no visible smoke. He is met by the manager of the production company who states that he thinks the building is evacuated, but he does not have a confirmed head count on the people who were inside. He informs the candidate that there are several large cylindrical containers of various types of paints, cleaners, adhesives, solvents, etc. that are used when building and preparing the set, in the center of the building near the side C wall. He also dropped the stage curtain before he left the building. As the candidate steps away from the manager, conditions begin to change rapidly, and he sees fire beginning to roll over. Question 1 asked for actions to take to fully address the incident.

The assessor noted that the appellant failed to establish a water supply, stretch a 2½ inch attack line, and perform horizontal ventilation, which were mandatory responses. On appeal, the appellant argues that he ordered a primary search and then went to defensive operations due to lack of life hazard, the poor condition of the building and the possibility of hazardous materials. He states he ordered master streams, which are supplied by a 2½ inch lines, to protect exposures, confine and extinguish the fire, and keep firefighters away from the collapse zone. He states that venting in the collapse zone was not worth the risk of operating in the collapse zone.

In his response, the appellant established command, and give a size-up, then assigned officers and called for resources. Thereafter, he stated, "I'm also, now that fire has escalated, gonna isolate the area. I'm gonna have a warm, a hot zone which would be the building, a warm zone which would include all the exposures especially downwind, and a cool zone we're going to remove the vehicles to, um, to the outside of the area." He then called for more resources. He then stated, "We were informed that everybody is out of the building., I want to have the truck team take a quick search and to confirm that they're out of the building and maintain the defensive posture. The ladder will be, ah, the engine one will cover exposure ah B and engine 2 cover exposure D with master streams." In this response, the appellant ordered a truck company team into the building without establishing a water supply and stretching a 2½ inch attack line. A search team should always be under the protection of a hose line. In the scenario, the truck team entered the building, in which there was just a rollover and which contained hazmat materials, with no hose stream protection. Further, there was a large rollup door on the middle of side C which could have been opened for horizontal ventilation, and that action was not taken. Essentially, the appellant put his truck team in a very dangerous life-threatening situation, and doomed any individuals still in the theater. He missed three mandatory responses and his score of 1 is correct.

CONCLUSION

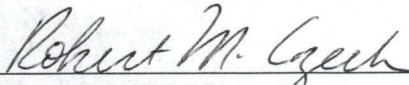
A thorough review of the appellant's submissions and the test materials indicates that the decision below is amply supported by the record, and the appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof in this matter.

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 ON
THE 17th DAY OF MAY, 2017



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