



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

 FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
 OF THE
 CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

 In the Matter of Brian Salmon, *et al.*,
 Fire Captain (PM2316C), Belleville

 CSC Docket Nos. 2022-1048
 2022-1041
 2022-1052

Examination Appeal

ISSUED: MAY 23, 2022 (RE)

Brian Salmon, Steven Salzer and William Tamburri appeals the correct answer to eight questions on the multiple choice examination for second level Fire Captain (PM2316C), Belleville. These appeals have been consolidated due to common issues.

It is noted for the record that this two-part examination consists of a written multiple-choice portion and an oral portion. The written portion of the examination included seven scenarios, each with a description and various accompanying diagrams, and candidates were required to answer questions pertaining to each scenario. The appellants challenge the correct responses to questions 8, 9, 33, 36, 40, 51, 65 and 72. It is noted that the results of this examination are not yet available.

Questions 8 and 9 pertained to the first scenario regarding a report of smoke coming from a two-story home. Question 7 indicated that the primary search crew had become disoriented. Question 8 asked candidates to finish the sentence, "Once the crew members are found they should be..." and the keyed response was option c, examined by EMS on-scene. Salzer selected option a, sent to rehab. In support of this response, he states that rehab will assess them, treat injuries, monitor them, and transport them if they require advanced medical care, as well as maintain personnel accountability, company integrity and place them under direct supervision of a Rehab Group Supervisor. He refers to the Fire Service Reference Booklet 12, Rapid Intervention Crew Training Guidelines. Specifically, on page 16 under the heading "Nance drill," it states that a rapid intervention crew consists of a minimum of four members; and on page 17 under the heading "Denver drill," it states that additional

RIC (rapid intervention crew) personnel are required at the exterior of the opening (of a window) to assist with the removal of the trapped fire fighter. In reply, candidates were to provide the **best** response to each of the questions. The appellant's references to Fire Service Reference Booklet 12 do not address the situation at hand. This was not a RIC team, but rather was a primary search team, and this did not involve a rescue through a window (Denver drill) or a rescue through a floor (Nance drill). While the purpose of rehab is to evaluate and assist personnel who may be suffering from the effects of continuous exertion at emergency incidents after sustained physical exertion or extended field operations under adverse conditions, the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) agree that EMS on scene takes priority over all other options. The keyed response will not be changed.

Question 9 indicated that the candidate instructs post control overhaul to begin and asked candidates to finish the sentence, "The following tools should be taken **EXCEPT...**" The keyed response was option a, uncharged hoseline. Tamburri selected option b, hearing protection. In support, he maintains that page 649 of *Firefighter's Handbook: Essentials of Firefighting and Emergency Response*, published by Thompson Delmar Learning, states that, during overhaul operations, "Firefighters can look for signs of hidden fire and utilize their senses...listening for sounds of items burning." In response, the complete sentence states, "Firefighters can look for obvious signs of hidden fire and utilize their senses by feeling the wall for heat, smelling around outlets and other opening for a scent of anything actively burning, and listening for sounds of items burning." This reference does not indicate that hearing protection should not be taken or does not need to be taken, but rather, that it does not need to be worn at all times. On the other hand, the hoseline that is brought to overhaul needs to be charged as there is no point in taking an uncharged hoseline. The keyed response is the best response.

Questions 33, 36 and 40 pertain to the fourth scenario, regarding a report of a smoke in a church. Question 33 asked what this church would best be described as, and the keyed response was option a, 1 story. Salzer selected option b, 1½ stories, and he argues that there is a basement, which by definition is 50% above grade, and the images show a staircase and a full-sized basement window. He argues that 1½ stories is more accurate as it allows members at the scene to be aware of another area to be considered for search and fire spread, and to be aware of floor collapse or working above a fire. In reply, a 1½ story would include a construction such as a dormer. However, a basement is not considered to be a ½ story. This church is a one story with a basement. The keyed response is correct.

Question 36 asked which is the **BEST** option for providing ladders at this incident, and asked candidates to finish the sentence, "Have Ladder 3 positioned on Side ..." They keyed response was option c, A with the aerial raised and ground ladders to the windows on Side B and Side D. Salmon selected option a, B with the aerial raised and ground ladders to the windows on Side B and Side D. In support, he states that there

are two electrical lines on side A running parallel to sides B and D of the church, which would make the use of the aerial impossible. He refers to page 139 of *Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills and Hazardous Materials Response, The New Jersey Skills Addendum*, 4th edition, published by Kean University, which states that, “If a bucket or an extension ladder needs to go over or near any power lines a minimum of 10 foot clearance from the energized lines is required.” He indicated that this is also stated in John Norman’s *Fire Officer’s Handbook of Tactics*, 5th Edition. Further, he cites page 123 of *Collapse of Burning Buildings*, 2nd edition, by Vincent Dunn which states, “when the steeple is located at the front of the structure, this exposure A wall must be considered a collapse danger.” In reply, a review of the diagrams for this scenario reveals that the electrical poles are on the opposite side of the street, and there is enough room for the aerial ladder to position itself in front of the church. Side A would allow the aerial to go to either side of the peak of the roof as necessary, staying 10 feet away from either line, and ground ladders would be on both sides. Option a, Side B, has an empty lot but limits aerial use to one side only (side B). The fire is at the back half of the church on side C, and is over 50 feet away from the steeple. The best use of the ladders at this incident is positioning the ladder truck on side A with the aerial raised and ground ladders to the windows on Side B and Side D. The keyed response will not be changed.

Question 40 asked candidates to complete the sentence, “You have a RIC team established on scene, this RIC team SHOULD be comprised of...” and the keyed response was option c, at least two firefighters. Salmon and Salzer selected option d, at least one officer and three firefighters. In support they argue that this option is the new standard for RIC teams. They reference page 5 of Reference Booklet 12, which states that a RIC team should be a minimum of four members, but have an optimum of six members. Salzer also references pages on the Nance drill and the Denver drill, and training, which are not applicable here. He also references page 51 of the New Jersey Skills Addendum which states that, “Although the State proactively adopted two firefighters as the minimum number of RIC members to comply with the PEOSHA regulations and NFPA standards when the current regulations were written, incident commanders looking to enhance the safety of their firefighters at emergency incidents, follow nationally recognized practices, and reduce potential liability in the event of a fireground injury or fatality should commit to the following minimum RIC staffing levels of (1) officer and three (3) firefighters identified in this most recent NFPA standard.”

In reply, *Norman* states on page 314 of the fourth edition states that “NFPA 1500 and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)’s respiratory protection standard (also known as the “2 In/2 Out” rule) each requires that at least a two-person RIT be available during the initial stages of serious fires.” This text goes on to say that a two-member team may be inadequate as the fire progresses and more members should be assigned. Nonetheless, the keyed response referred to the least number of members required. NFPA 1500 A8.8.2 states that an initial attack crew

should be four members, two in a hazardous area and two standby members outside the hazardous area available for assistance or rescue at emergency operations where entry into the danger area is required. NFPA 1500 A3.3.87 defines a RIC as a minimum of two fully equipped personnel on site, in a ready state, for immediate rescue of disoriented, injured, lost or trapped rescue personnel. Page 51 of the New Jersey Skills Addendum indicates that two firefighters as the minimum number of RIC members to comply with the PEOSHA regulations and NFPA standards, but that to enhance safety it should be four members. It is noted that page 5 of Booklet 12 refers to RIC awareness training guidelines standards, rather than regulations. The keyed response is correct.

Question 51 pertains to the fifth scenario, regarding a report of smoke and fire from a wood frame residential home. It indicated that an interior crew has been lost for roughly 40 seconds, and it asked which action should the officer of the crew take. The keyed response was option b, transmit emergency traffic. Tamburri selected option a, have the IC declare a Mayday. In support, he states that *Norman* provides protocols in Chapter 11 which indicate that a lost crew is a reason for a Mayday to be called, but that transmission of emergency traffic is used for other situations which are not life threatening. In reply, page 46 of the New Jersey Skills Addendum states (*N.J.A.C. 5:75-2.6(b)*) “When firefighters encounter conditions that pose a non-routine threat to their life or safety or that of others, they shall convey that situation via two-way radio to incident commanders and/or rescue crews utilizing clear text.” Transmitting emergency traffic must be taken first by the officer of the crew in order to have the IC declare a Mayday. The keyed response will not be changed.

Questions 65 and 72 pertain to the seventh scenario, a report of smoke from a retail shop in a strip mall. Question 65 asks where you should set up the command post at this incident, and the keyed response was option a, Snell Street side A. Salzer selected option c, Snell Street A/D corner. Salzer argues that this option is the best since side A needs to be saved for the engine and elevating platform tower master stream. He maintains that the parapet wall will make side A dangerous and expose anyone there to smoke, heat flames breaking glass or effects of a cockloft smoke explosion. He states that the A/D corner provides a vantage point to view working crews and the fire attack, and is out of the way of the apparatus. He refers to page 435 of *Norman*, which states to place the pumper with the deck gun directly in line with the store, and to leave room for the elevating platform. He states that *Norman* indicates that strip malls can have heat buildup in the cocklofts, and are subject to backdrafts, flashovers, or collapse. In reply, the overhead diagram associated with this scenario clearly shows that there is plenty of pavement on side A, a large parking lot, outside of the collapse zone and after allowing for placement of any apparatus. The A/D corner is where a hibachi restaurant is located. Side A is also upwind. The keyed response is the best response.

Question 72 indicated that the ladder crew is ordered to perform ventilation of the building, and it asked for the **BEST** method for ventilating this incident. The keyed response was option b, Horizontal ventilation on Side A. Salmon selected option c, Horizontal ventilation on Side C. In support, he states that the side was coming from side A, so side C is a better choice. In reply, the diagrams show that the fire is located inside running from side A to side C near side D, and there is shelving in the middle of the store. Bathrooms and a storage area are located on side C, and the storage area is separated from the main section by a wall. Thus, any horizontal ventilation on side C would not assist with removal of smoke, hot air and gases as the openings are separated from the main space by the bathrooms and storage area. The keyed response will not be changed.

CONCLUSION

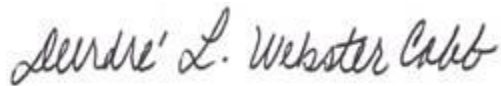
A thorough review of the record indicates that the determination of the Division of Test Development and Analytics was proper and consistent with Civil Service Commission regulations, and that appellants have not met their burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that these 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 18TH DAY OF MAY, 2022



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