Fire Assessment Centers

San Diego Fire-Rescue Department

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What to expect from this class:

- Strategies and tactics that can serve as a foundation for real-life situations
- Guidelines for actions during a fire simulator exam to improve scores

What this class *IS NOT:*

- Cheating - (you must know stuff to pass)
- The only method to use

Why Us?

- Taken promotional exams
- Have been successful in the process
- Have functioned in the position
- Developed exams
- Have evaluated exams
- Helped others be successful

The Exam Process

- Exam Development is based on:
  - Input from Chief Officers
  - Recent incidents (good and bad)
  - Recent training
  - Current Fire Service events

Understanding the Grading Process

- Seeks to reduce or eliminate subjectivity
- Raters will likely be from outside
- Raters will need some tool to utilize
  - Grading sheets (“check box” concept)
  - Fail points
  - Identified qualities to be tested
  - Point or value system to use

No “secrets” to success

- Must know:
  - Tactics and strategies
  - P&P’s
  - SOP’s
  - SOG’s
  - Terminology
- Must understand:
  - Fire behavior
  - Building construction
  - Firefighting
    - Equipment
    - Apparatus
    - Personnel
    - Tasks

Can I maximize my score and be effective on the fire ground?

- YES
- You must protect against failures first
- Build on that

Be the position

- You must see yourself as already filling the role.
- Speak, look and perform as the position you aspire to

Command Presence

- Difficult to put into words
- Those that possess it are easily identified
- Usually established early (first impressions)

Don’t second guess the test

- Take actions on what you see, hear and know
- Don’t try to do what you think “they want”
- Most importantly take actions you can defend
- No “cowboy” tactics

Preparation prior to the simulator

- Check exam materials
- Check references provided
- READ THE INSTRUCTIONS
- Look for clues
  - Time of day
  - Alarm assignment make up

Once it begins

- Look at the picture
- Know what you are seeing before you begin
  - Building construction & occupancy type
  - Smoke and fire conditions
- Think before you act, but act quickly

It has begun

- First to arrive:
  - Can evaluate and place companies
  - Easiest way (therefore not usually done)
- Companies arrive first:
  - Usually the case
  - Someone MAY be doing something wrong
  - Pay attention to initial actions and reports

Upon Arrival, Take **Command**

- Remember it is a test of command ability
  - Transfer of command
    - Face-to-face or radio transfer
      - What's been done
      - What needs done
      - What you'll need
    - Announce the transfer
      - Provide an updated size-up
      - Name
      - Location
      - Resource request

Requesting resources

- Call them early (Engines, trucks, ambulances)
- Call for enough
  - Single resources vs. additional alarms (trigger points)
  - Don’t piece meal resources

Resources, Continued

- Provide a staging location
- Identify and request specialized resources
- Wait until emergency actions are taken to request non-essential resources.

Water supply

- You must ensure there is adequate water:
  - On arrival of 1st due engine (easy method)
  - Assign to second engine
  - Supply standpipes and sprinklers
  - Provide back-up supply: (don't come to the party without bringing water)
    - Only when needed or required
      - Multiple lines
      - Multiple floors

Hose Lines-Part I

- Initial line placement:
  - What's the strategy
  - Where to enter?
  - Goes towards the fire
    - Between victims and fire
    - From the unburned to the burned
    - Protects stairwells and egress
    - Protects most valuable area
  - Confine, then extinguish
  - What about exposures?

Hose lines-Part II

- Second and/or third line
  - Driven by department policy and culture
    - Floor above
    - Exposure or Back-up the initial line

Hose line-Part III

- Which line to use?
  - What do you carry?
  - Dependent on:
    - Volume of fire
    - Available personnel

Making assignments

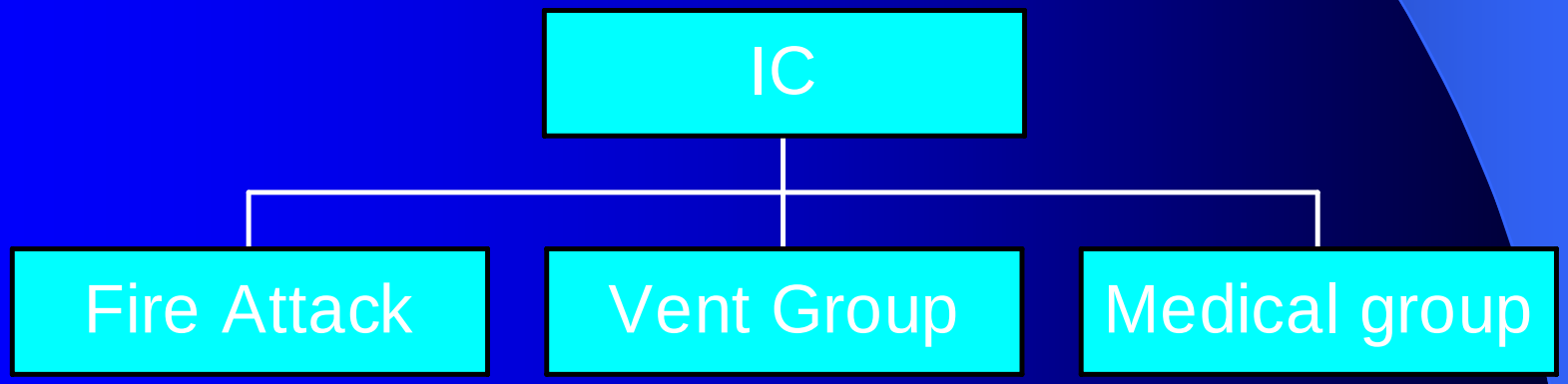
- Develop a template
- Do it the same way each time

Assignment “Templates”

- “Engine 13, lay a supply line, go to the second floor, You are Division 2, perform a primary search, confine and extinguish the fire”
- “Engine 7, report to Division 2, Engine 13’s officer”
- “Truck 11, secure utilities, perform vertical ventilation, You are the Ventilation Group”
- “Rescue 9, prepare to receive multiple patients, You are the Med Group”

Assigning and Naming Divisions and Groups

- When should I create divisions and groups?
- What should I call them?



First Due Engine

- Establish water supply
- Investigate/determine extent of incident
- Place initial line
- Start primary search

Second Due Engine

- Follow department policy and culture
  - Depends on actions of 1st due engine
  - Based on your incident needs
    - Consider building construction
    - Consider occupancy type
  - Same for third engine

First due truck

- Know your department policy and culture
- Horizontal vs. vertical ventilation
  - Rescue
  - Limit fire spread
  - Allow hose line advancement
  - Multi-story buildings

Rapid Intervention

- Must follow the “rules”
- Assignment must be realistic
- What if……

Now I Got Problems!

- No progress on the fire
  - Add more GPM
  - Ventilate
  - Abandon interior attack

An Even Bigger Problem: Firefighter Down

- Follow department policy
- Maintain scene control
- Determine location of victim
- Assign RIC and support
- Overhead broadcast of FF down?
- Assign EMS
- Request additional resources

Always know WHY you are taking an action

- Every action must support your strategy or address identified problems
- Be proactive rather than reactive
- Be prepared to discuss why
  - “I expect that…….”
  - “Based on……”

Specific buildings

- Apartments
  - Garden style versus Center hallway
- Strip malls
- Large commercial
- High-rise

Questions?