



Table Top Training Drills

Tabletop Training Exercise- May 2010

Personnel fail to respond to PASS activation during fire from: Near Miss Report #10-277.

Coordination, staffing, accountability, and mayday operations can add to the complexity of any incident. Sometimes the incident commander has to assign, juggle and re-assign units as the incident progresses or winds down. In Near Miss report 10-277, place yourself at the scene of this fire and discuss the various learning opportunities that this department encountered. Use it as an opportunity to learn, adjust or review your department's policies and procedures.

Units responded to a reported residential fire. Size up indicated heavy smoke showing with confirmation of the residents being out of the structure. The residents also reported that the fire appeared to be in the basement laundry area, around the dryer. Entry was made into the structure simultaneously with some ventilation underway. Further ventilation operations were ordered following reports from inside.

The basement stairway was located next to the main floor kitchen, with the seat of the fire located directly below the kitchen in the basement. The incident progressed as expected through the first twenty-minute PAR. Water supply was established, utilities were ordered for disconnect, RIT team was established, and ventilation was well underway.

About thirty minutes into the incident, a request was made from interior crews for another 1 3/4" line to be brought in through the garage, to access the basement. The RIT team was assigned to perform this task and then stopped, as the garage was too packed full of stuff to even make their way inside. That crew was then outside the structure, but had not reassembled for RIT assignment (IC's call). The IC was making another 360 to check on a utility worker when dispatch notified IC of the forty-minute operational mark. During this PAR, command heard a PASS device activate and yelled in the direction of the activation, thinking that someone might have been standing still and it activate. The PPV fan was still operating so the noise level was elevated. Soon after hearing the PASS device, dispatch also reported the radio emergency alarm activation of a radio. IC was on Side "A" looking in the open front door of the structure and could see the faint blinking of the PASS strobe in the direction of the sounding PASS device.

Immediately, one of the personnel originally assigned to RIT was told face- to-face to get that person out of the building. At the time, IC was extremely unhappy, thinking that somebody had just let their PASS device activate and didn't bother to stop it. The RIT member followed the hose line in a short distance, approximately thirty feet, toward the strobe and dragged the downed firefighter out. Upon exiting the structure, he was helped to his feet, immediately assessed for injury, and then relocated to the ambulance for further evaluation. Subsequently, he was transported to the hospital, as a precaution, for further testing. In interviewing the [downed firefighter], he stated that he was with his

crew member in the basement on fire attack, along with another two-person crew. His low-air alarm had activated and he continued to work, thinking he had plenty of time. After a time, he told his partner that he was going to run outside and get another bottle. He then left his partner and headed out of the laundry area in the basement, following the hoseline around the corner and up the stairs. Part way up the stairs, he completely ran out of air. In a condition of "high motivation," he started to hurry. Staying low and following the hoseline, he became disoriented and ended up reversing his direction. He then fell back down the stairs, knocking his face piece off.

The conditions were still untenable. He repositioned his face piece so his Nomex hood would give him some filtering action. He then activated his PASS device and activated the emergency button on his radio. He stated that he was unable to speak due to the heavy smoke conditions.

As a side note, his partner thought he heard a PASS device activate, but he stopped hearing it (the captain went back up the stairs to attempt exit) so he assumed that it was an accidental activation. As the captain cleared the top of the stairs, he had to keep his face close to the floor. It was at this point that the RIT person located him and pulled him to the exit.

Discussion Checklists

- A. What is your department's policy on two in and two out?
 - 1. Is it a strict policy or soft policy?
 - 2. Is it different during firefighting operations and overhaul operations?

- B. Low-Air Alarms.
 - 1. Discuss the proper procedure when it is activated.
 - 2. What is the amount of air needed to exit the structure?
 - 3. Is it different depending on the activity of the user?

- C. RIT Team-
 - 1. Is it OK to re-assign the team after a certain bench mark is reached?
What are some considerations before re-assignment?
 - 2. Crew integrity and tool assignment.
 - 3. Radio communication procedure.

- D. Mayday procedures
 - 1. Location.
 - 2. Unit.
 - 3. Name.
 - 4. Assignment.
 - 5. Radio designation.