



In-Station Training

TM 26-06 Apartment Fire



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Purpose

Effective incident operations require clear and concise communication. This is particularly important when the pace of incident operations quickens due to multiple priorities.

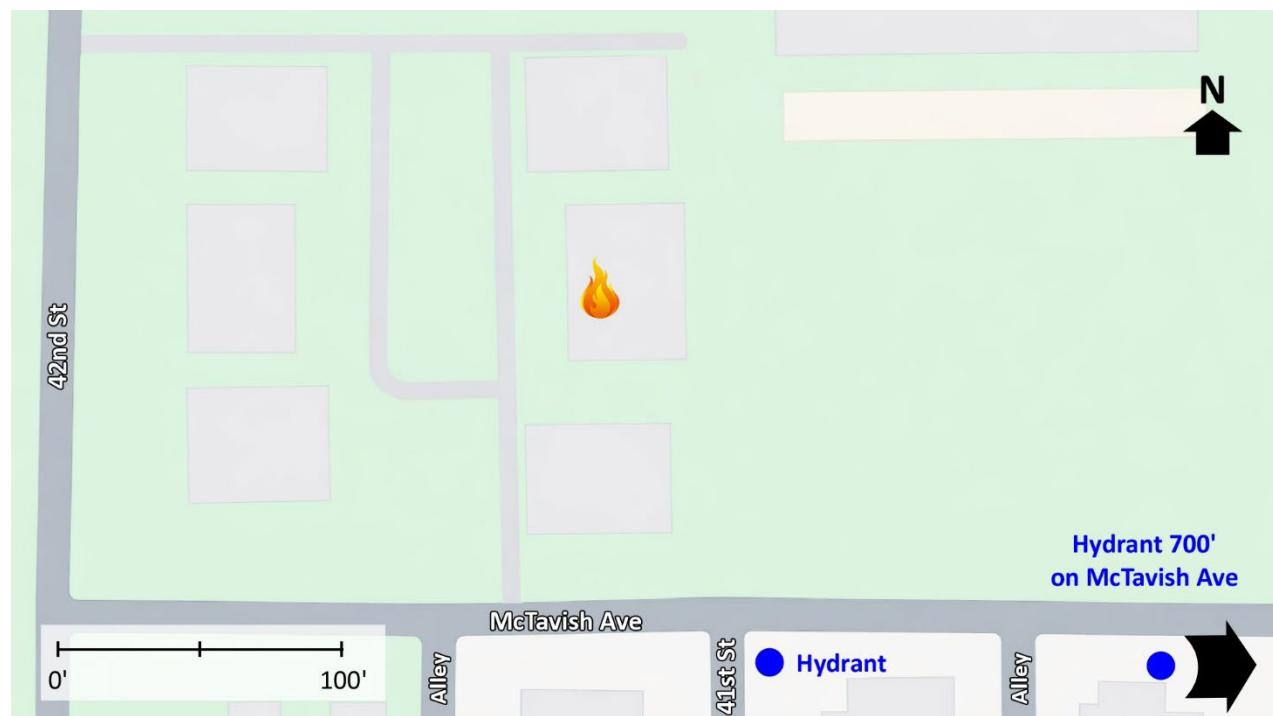
Learning Outcomes

Initial incident commanders perform an effective size-up, select an appropriate strategy, and implement tactics based on the strategic decision-making model.

Conducting the Drill

This incident involved an apartment fire at Van Hull Apartments, 4151 McTavish Avenue, Brandon, MB, Canada on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 20:47 (Manuliak, & Patterson, 2025 & bdnmb.ca, 2025). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-5) to gain an understanding of the buildings and area involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026a). [Map, 4151 McTavish Avenue, Brandon, MB, Canada]. Map data ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4c2EhDa>.

The closest hydrant is on 41s Street at McTavish Avenue with an additional hydrant 700' to the east on McTavish Avenue as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 4151 McTavish Avenue, Brandon, MB, Canada]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/4k9wWDT>.

No street view images of the apartment complex and building involved are available. ChatGPT 5.1 was used to create images of an apartment building with the same configuration as the building involved in this incident. However, the adjacent apartment buildings are not visible in Figures 3 and 5, providing a clear view of the configuration of building features on these two sides of the building. Side Charlie is a mirror image of Side Alpha and is not shown.

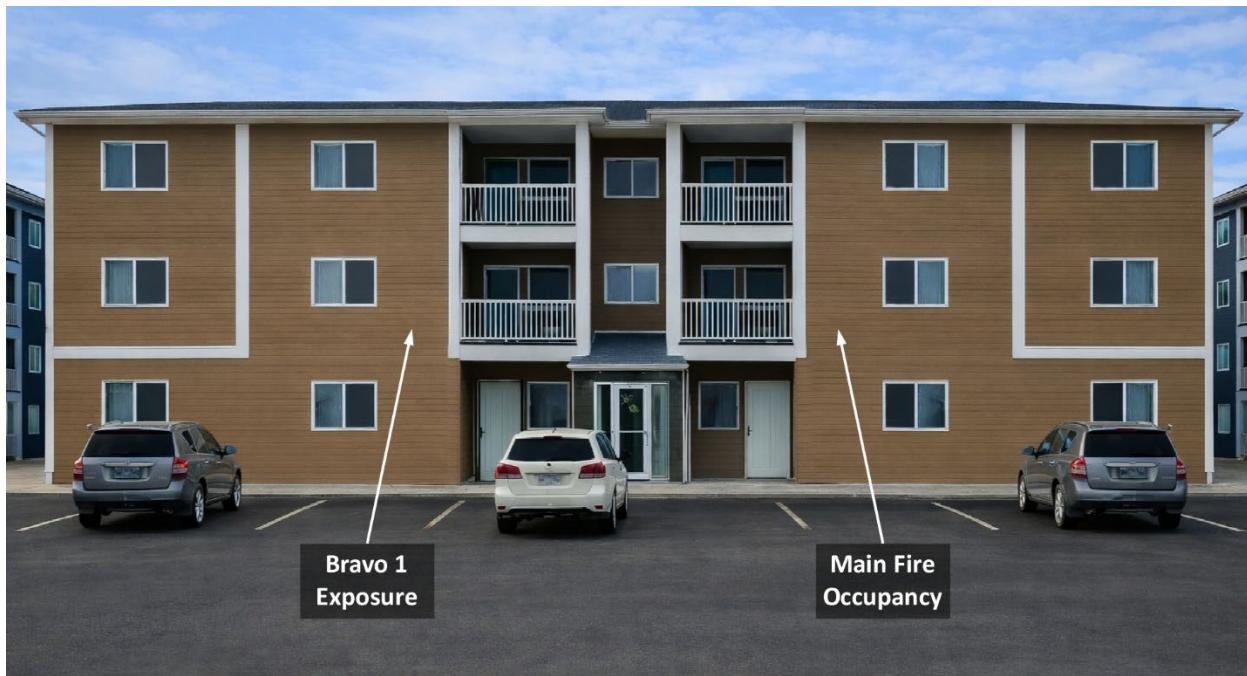
This apartment complex is of center corridor design with the hallway extending from the main entrance on Side Alpha to a second egress door on Side Charlie, with the same corridor configuration on all floors. This building contains 12 units.

Figure 3. Side Delta



Note: Image created with Open AI, (2026) ChatGPT 5.2. [Large language model].

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Image created with Open AI, (2026) ChatGPT 5.2. [Large language model].

Figure 5. Side Bravo



Note: Image created with Open AI, (2026) ChatGPT 5.2. [Large language model].

This neighborhood is an urban residential area with a mix of low rise apartments and single-family homes. Most of the buildings in this neighborhood are wood frame construction and were built within the last 20 years. Approximately 61% of the homes in this neighborhood are owner-occupied with low short term turnover. Rental properties comprise the remainder of the housing stock. Median age is in the late-30s, and median income is slightly lower than the average for the Province of Manitoba. (Open AI, 2026). The frequency of fire and emergency medical incidents in this area is typical of other residential neighborhoods in the city.

The temperature is currently 21° F with wind from the northeast at 5 mph. (Weather Underground, 2026). **You are the officer of the first arriving engine company.** It is Wednesday, March 12th and you are dispatched to an apartment fire at 4151 McTavish Avenue along with four other engines, two ladder companies, medic unit, and two command officers at 20:47. The engines and ladder have four-person staffing¹.



Time starts now! Answer the first eight questions within the next 10 minutes. Save discussion for after answering these questions.

¹ If your first alarm deployment is different, use your own resource assignment and staffing.

While responding, you hear the other engines, ladders, medic unit, and command officers go enroute and dispatch provides an update that they are receiving multiple calls reporting flames from the second floor.

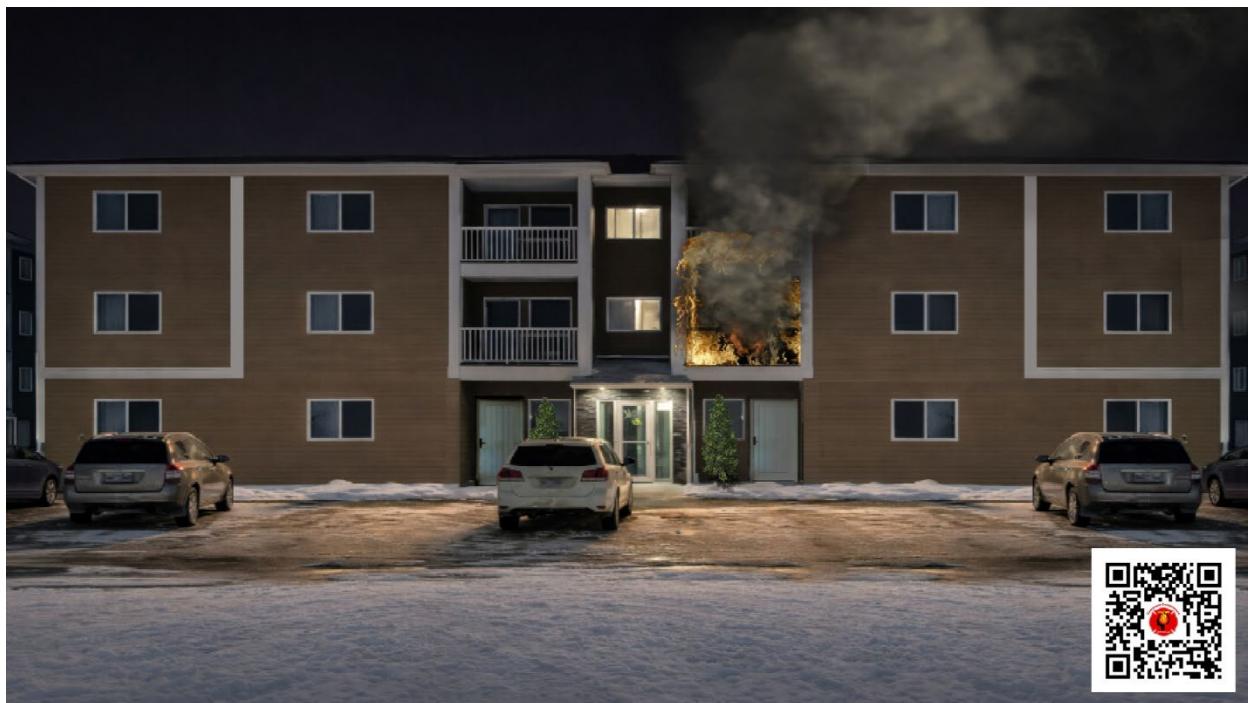
1. What critical factors would you consider when dispatched and during response? What conversations would you have with your crew during response?



Important! Answer questions two through eight in the form of communication you would have with your crew, dispatch, other companies, and the first arriving command officer. State the communications exactly as you would say them face-to-face or over the radio. Save explanation or discussion until after you have completed these questions.

You anticipate the ladder company will arrive shortly after you, followed by the second arriving engine several minutes later followed by the command officer. All other first alarm resources will arrive after the command officer. Watch the first 00:30 of the [incident simulation video](#) (Hartin, 2026) and examine Figure 6 illustrating conditions on arrival. Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the video.

Figure 6. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from Hartin, E. (2026) 10-minute training 26-06 incident simulation [Fire Studio 7 video]. <https://bit.ly/4kfGDRI>.

2. State your initial radio report (IRR) exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.
3. What specific actions would you take (as the company officer) immediately upon arrival and exiting the apparatus and what task orders would you give your crew?

No smoke is visible from Sides Bravo or Charlie, and a small volume of smoke is issuing from a window on Side Delta, Floor 2 at low velocity. The fire alarm is sounding and occupants of the units on Floor 1 and the Floor 3 Delta 1 unit report that everyone is out of those units, but they do not know the status of the occupants of the Main Fire Occupancy or the other units. You observe light smoke in the stairwell and hallways on Floors 2 and 3 through the windows on Side Alpha.

4. Would you change the action you are taking or modify the assignments given to your crew? If so, what task orders would you provide?
5. State your follow up report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.
6. Ladder 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on McTavish Avenue at the entrance to the complex. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
7. Engine 2 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on the hydrant at 41st Street and McTavish Avenue. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
8. Based on anticipated effectiveness of your tactical operations, state your conditions, actions, and needs (CAN) report that you would provide to the first arriving command officer as part of command transfer to IC #2.



Reflect on your strategic decision-making and responses to questions one through eight before answering the next six questions. Think about what cues, patterns, or anomalies (differences from conditions that you would anticipate) informed your answers.

9. What was the problem?
10. What were your tactical priorities and what was getting in the way of achieving them?
11. Was there anything in this incident that could have hurt or killed you (right now)?
12. Was it reasonable to believe that the Main Fire Occupancy and Alpha 1 Exposure were occupied?
13. Was there searchable space?
14. If you believed it was reasonable that there was searchable space, what could you do about it?

Watch the [incident video](#) (Manuliak & Patterson, 2025) from 00:03 to 02:00 illustrating actual incident conditions before answering the next several questions. This video is comprised of three segments recorded at different times during the incident, pre-arrival, arrival, and post-knockdown. Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the video.



15. Was your initial fire control action to make a quick hit from the exterior on Side Alpha or to initially stretch up the stairs to Floor 2 to make an interior attack? What factors influenced your decision?
16. What was your priority sequence for primary search (e.g. which units, in what order). How did you address this in the tactical order provided to the company assigned to primary search (or did you simply assign “primary search”)? What factors influenced the way that you made this assignment? If not specified, how could you maintain accountability for the company performing this tactical assignment (you can, but how)?

Additional Learning: Solid communications practices are essential to effective fireground operations. Use of the order model and a preface (a “ticket” to communicate) helps to prioritize communications. Listen to the B Shifter Podcast episode [Tickets to Transmit](#) (B Shifter/Blue Card, 2025).



Work with the members of your company to improve your incident communications skills. Using the incident presented in this 10-Minute Training how would you communicate each of the following using “tickets”?

1. Initial radio report (IC #1 to dispatch)
2. Follow-up report (IC #1 to dispatch)
3. Water on the fire (IC #1 to dispatch)
4. Command transfer (IC #2 to IC #1)
5. Primary search all clear, Floor 3 in the unit directly above the main fire occupancy, moving to Floor 3 Charlie 1 exposure for primary search.
6. Fire knocked down in the main fire occupancy, we have a victim in a bedroom on Side Delta, need a ladder to the open window on Floor 2 Side Delta for rescue, and EMS to Side Delta, air status 75%.
7. Primary search all clear, all units, Floor 3, air status 50%, need to recycle.

This is not “one and done”, repeat making these communications working on improving clarity, conciseness, and fluency. Rotate responsibility for each communication among the members of your company.

References

B Shifter/Blue Card (2025). Tickets to transmit [video podcast]. Retrieved January 31, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4acAkJK>.

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