



# In-Station Training

## TM 24-06 Commercial Fire-Vacant Building



### Author

Chief Ed Hartin

### Purpose

This 10-Minute Training continues the vacant building theme from TM 24-05 to commercial structures. Selection of an offensive or defensive strategy is dependent on current and projected fire behavior, structural stability, and resource capability as impacted by time.

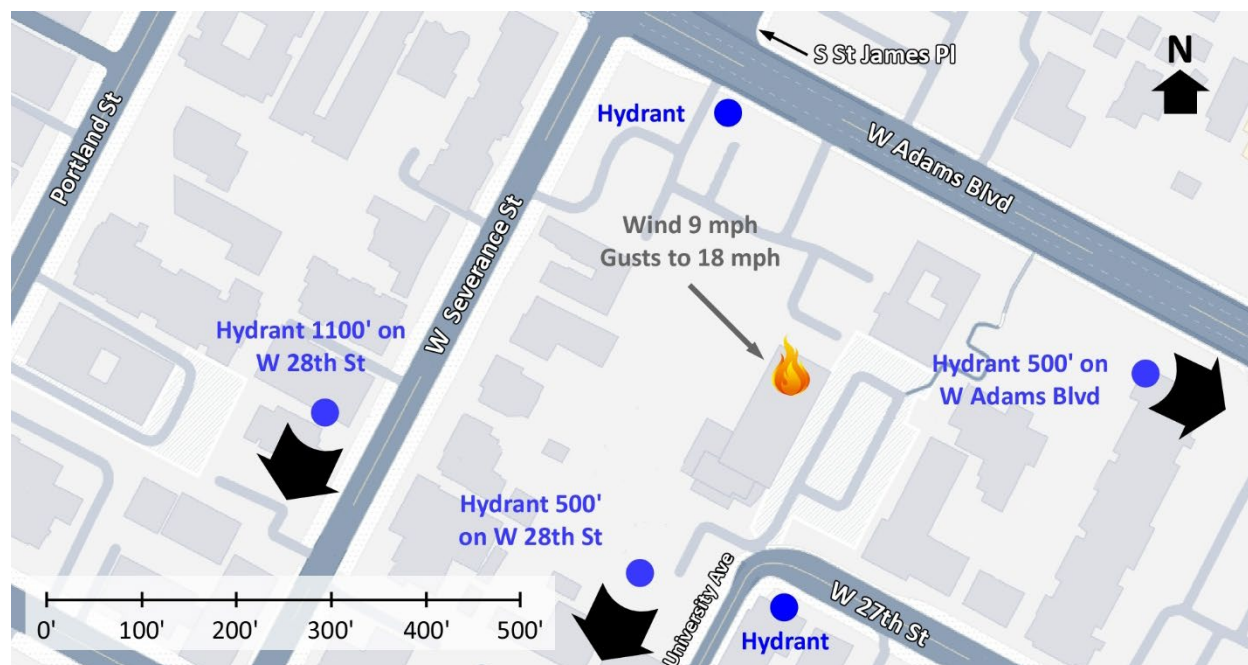
### Learning Outcomes

Firefighters and officers 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 a commercial fire in a vacant building at 806 West Adams Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA on January 4, 2023, at 02:30 (KeyNewsNetwork, 2024 & OnScene TV, 2024). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-6) to gain an understanding of the area and building involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023a). [Map, 806 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA]. <https://bit.ly/4aK4GTj>.



Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023b). [Aerial view 806 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA].  
<https://bit.ly/47wAHex>.

The closest hydrants are on West Adams Boulevard across from South Saint James Place and at the intersection of West 27<sup>th</sup> Street and University Avenue. Additional hydrants are in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 3. Side Alpha from West Adams Boulevard



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023c). [Street view, 806 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA].  
<https://bit.ly/4aKqLkB>.



Figure 4. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023d). [3d aerial view, 806 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA].  
<https://bit.ly/3TQITmH>.

Figure 5. Bravo/Charlie Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023e). [Street view, 806 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA].  
<https://bit.ly/47pxAW2>.



Figure 6. Charlie/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023f). [3d aerial view, 806 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA]. <https://bit.ly/3TK4b5E>.

The temperature is currently 51° F with wind from the north at 9 mph with gusts to 18 mph (Weather Underground, 2024). You have been dispatched to 806 W Adams Blvd for a report of a commercial fire at 02:30. You are the company officer or AIC of the first arriving engine and have a staffing level of three.

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

Dispatch provides an update indicating multiple callers reporting a fire in a vacant commercial building. You hear a command officer and two other engines with typical staffing for your agency go enroute. You will arrive from the northwest on West Adams Boulevard. The second engine will arrive from the opposite direction four minutes after you. The third engine will arrive six minutes after you from the northwest on West Adams Boulevard. The command officer will arrive shortly after the third engine. All other units dispatched on the first alarm will arrive after the command officer.

Watch the first 00:10 of the [first incident video](#) (KeyNewsNetwork, 2024) and examine Figure 6 illustrating conditions on arrival.



Figure 7. Conditions on Arrival



*Note:* Adapted from KeyNewsNetwork. (2024). *Blazing fire consumes commercial building in South Los Angeles* [video]. <https://bit.ly/4aK9dVQ>.

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 you would give your crew?

There is no significant smoke issuing from Side Delta (observed as you arrived). Smoke is pushing from along Side Bravo and flames are visible from multiple windows on Side Bravo near Side Alpha. Watch the [first incident video](#) (KeyNewsNetwork, 2024) from 00:35 to 01:35 and examine Figure 8.



Figure 8. Conditions Immediately After Arrival



*Note:* Adapted from KeyNewsNetwork. (2024). *Blazing fire consumes commercial building in South Los Angeles* [video]. <https://bit.ly/4aK9dVQ>.

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 update report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.
6. Engine 2 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant on West Adams Boulevard, east of the incident. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
7. Engine 3 arrives and reports they are Level 1 at West Adams Boulevard and Severance Street (which provides access to University Boulevard via 28<sup>th</sup> Street). State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.



8. Based on the 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.

Watch the [first incident video](#) (KeyNewsNetwork, 2024) from 02:25 to 04:15 and the [second incident video](#) (OnScene TV, 2024) from 03:15 to 04:15.

9. Was your initial strategy (as reported in the initial radio report (IRR) offensive or defensive? What factors influenced your strategic decision?
10. If your initial strategy (reported in the IRR) was offensive, did you change your strategy to defensive prior to the arrival of IC #2? If so, what factors influenced your decision?
11. Companies operating at this incident used a combination of master streams and large exterior hand lines during initial fire control operations. What are the advantages and disadvantages of master streams and exterior hand lines in this context?

Watch the [second incident video](#) from 07:00 to 08:40. Based on observation of operations in the two incident videos it appears that the companies operating at this incident were defensive in the section of the building most heavily involved in fire (towards Side Alpha) and offensive the remainder of the building. The Los Angeles Fire Department's greater alarm assignment for this incident included 4 battalion chiefs, 13 engines, 5 trucks, 4 rescue ambulances (medic units), and 11 other companies and overhead. This provided a total of 92 personnel (LAFD, 2024a, 2024b)

12. How does resource availability impact strategic decision-making, particularly the choice of an offensive versus defensive strategy?



**Additional Learning:** In this incident, a critically burned middle aged man was discovered post-knockdown. The victim was declared dead at the scene.

Primary search is a standard tactic in offensive operations at residential occupancies, but how should search be addressed during offensive operations in commercial occupancies (particularly in large buildings)? Discuss the following questions with the members of your crew:

1. Should primary search be a standard component of an offensive strategy in a large commercial occupancy?
2. If you think the answer to the previous question is yes, how would you approach this tactical assignment?
3. If you think that it isn't feasible to conduct primary search in large commercial occupancies, how should search be approached?
4. How do your answers to the preceding questions impact on assignment of a company to "fire control and primary search" when working in a commercial building? Remember that the tactic fire control and primary search is tasking to find the fire and kill it while not ignoring any victims that you locate on or near your path of travel to the fire.
5. Does your decision-making regarding search change based on reported victims? If so, how?

Take the time to review the following two National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports examining line of duty deaths during search of commercial occupancies and consider the lessons learned. Consider NIOSH's conclusions critically (do you agree or disagree and why). Also consider other lessons that were not identified in the reports.

- [NIOSH 99-F47 Worcester \(MA\) Cold Storage Fire](#)
- [NIOSH F2020-10 Porterville \(CA\) Library Fire](#)



## References

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- Weather Underground (2023). *Burbank, CA weather history* [historical weather January 4, 2023]. Retrieved January 10, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3vEnGSU>.