



In-Station Training

TM 24-18a Commercial Fire-Auto Parts Store



Author

Chief Ed Hartin

Purpose

The IC must use the same critical factor based strategic decision-making model and command system to manage a mayday that is used to manage all our other IDLH hazard zone activity. Review [Standard Operating Guideline \(SOG\) 4.3.2 Rapid Intervention and Firefighter Rescue](#) (ECFR, 2024) prior to completing this 10-Minute Training.

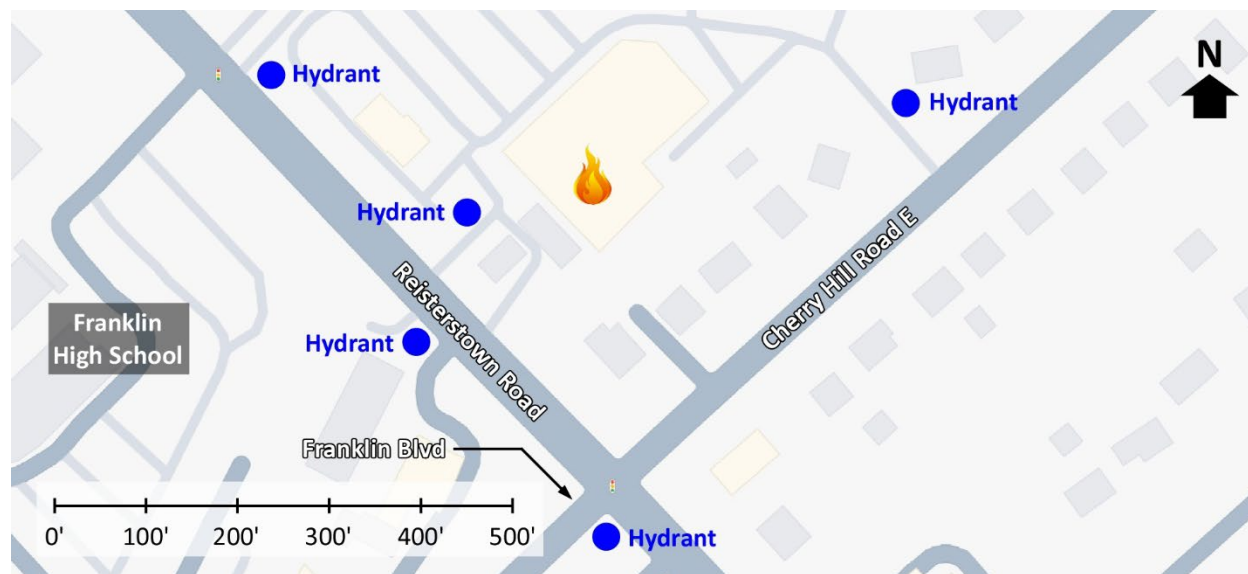
Learning Outcomes

Command officers perform effective ongoing size-up; select an appropriate strategy, and implement tactics based on the strategic decision-making model. When serving as the incident commander, command officers recognize, communicate, and respond appropriately to fireground maydays.

Conducting the Drill

This incident involved a commercial fire at Advance Auto Parts, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, Maryland on July 18, 2023, at 21:37 (Baltimore County Fire Department (2024a, 2024b, CBS Baltimore, 2023)). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-8) to gain an understanding of the area and building.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024a). [Map, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD].
<https://bit.ly/3TRSWS4>.

Figure 2. Aerial/Preplan View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024b). [Aerial view 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. <https://bit.ly/4at9eMH>. This aerial view was edited to approximate the original roof and location of the stairs on Side Charlie.

The closest hydrants are in the parking lot adjacent to the Alpha/Delta corner of the main fire occupancy and on the entrance to the shopping complex off Cherry Hill Road as shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2012a). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. <https://bit.ly/4cpZhSb>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2012b). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD].
<https://bit.ly/4a6CSi7>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2012c). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD].
<https://bit.ly/3VuRHjY>.

Figure 6. Side Bravo



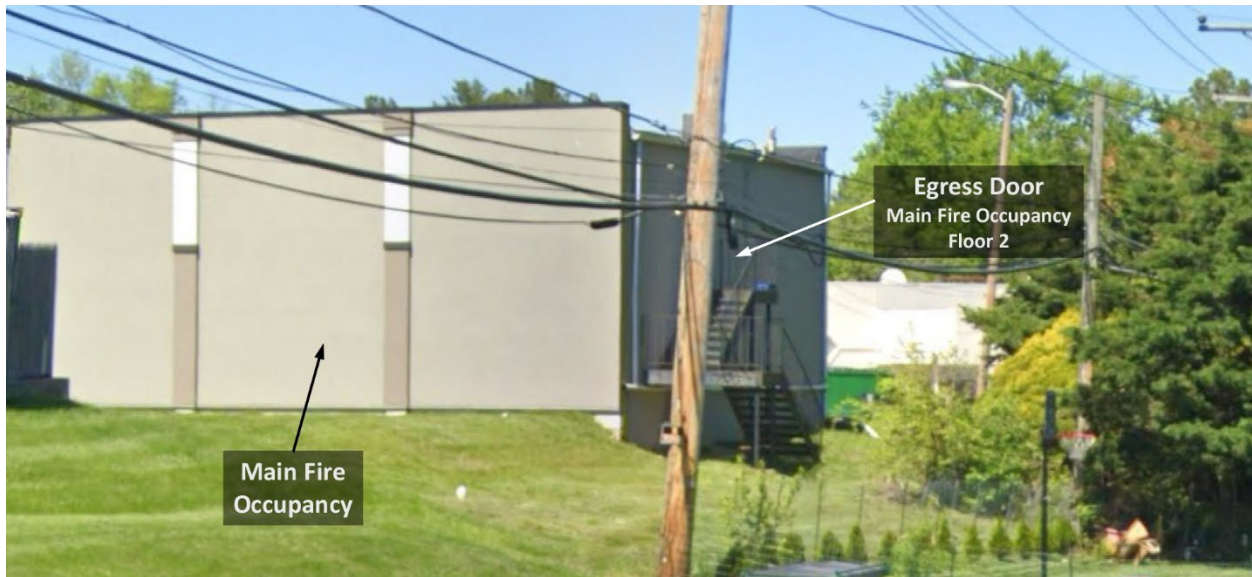
Note: Adapted from Google. (2012d). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD].
<https://bit.ly/3PyESQV>.

Figure 7. Bravo/Charlie Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2012e). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD].
<https://bit.ly/3PyESQV>.

Figure 8. Charlie/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2012f). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. <https://bit.ly/4cpZhSb>.

Important! This 10-Minute Training is based on the incident that occurred at Advance Auto Parts, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, Maryland on July 18, 2023. However, the resource assignment and communications identified in this training have been designed to provide a specific learning context and may not fully match the events that occurred during this incident. The additional learning in 10-Minute Training 24-18 (for IC #1) and 24-18a (for IC #2) provide the opportunity and resources to examine the building, conditions, and circumstances of the Reisterstown incident in greater detail.

You have been dispatched to Advance Auto Parts, 11909 Reisterstown Road for a commercial fire at 21:37. You are responding to this incident as the first arriving command officer. The temperature is currently 81° F with no appreciable wind from the north (BCoFD, 2024b & Weather Underground, 2024). While responding you hear four engines, an advanced life support (ALS) ambulance, and a second command officer enroute. The engines have staffing typical of your agency.

Due to multiple other calls being dispatched, you do not receive any update report or detail beyond a report of a commercial fire at Advance Auto Parts. The first engine will arrive from the northwest on Reisterstown Road. The second engine will arrive from the same direction approximately four minutes after the first. The third engine will arrive from the southeast on Reisterstown Road immediately after the second engine. Make a note of your resource and staffing assumptions prior to continuing with this 10-Minute Training. **You will arrive after the third engine.** Additional resources on the first alarm will arrive after you.

1. What critical factors would you consider when dispatched and during response?

As you were responding Engine 1 provided the following initial radio report:

On-scene of a medium one-story commercial complex with a working fire, smoke from Alpha, stretching an attack line on Alpha for fire control, in the offensive strategy, give me a second alarm with Level 2 Staging at Franklin High School, establishing Advance Command.

Franklin High School is directly across Reisterstown Road from the incident location, between Reisterstown Road and Franklin Boulevard. Advance Command provides the following update report:

No 360 due to size, per preplan, this is a non-sprinklered building, two stories on the Charlie/Delta corner, no basement, no smoke in the attached Bravo 1 exposure, continuing offensive, Engine 1 is accountability on Alpha, continuing offensive.

Engine 2 reports Level 1 on Reisterstown Road outside the complex. Advance Command provides the following order to Engine 2.

Forward lay from the hydrant in the parking lot adjacent to the Alpha/Delta corner of the main fire occupancy into Engine 1 and integrate with Engine 1 on Alpha for fire control and primary search.

Engine 3 reports Level 1 on Reisterstown Road and Cherry Hill Road East. Advance Command provides the following order to Engine 3.

Park out of the way, pull a second attack line off Engine 1, go on deck Alpha. Engine 1 and Engine 2 are stretching through Alpha for fire control and primary search.

2. You have the choice of entering the complex from several entrances off Reisterstown Road or the entrance off Cherry Hill Road East. Will you enter the complex from Reisterstown Road or Cherry Hill Road East?

Examine Figure 9 illustrating conditions on your arrival. You observe that Engine 3 has deployed a second attack line off Engine 1 and is in position near the entry point. Engine 3 has also deployed a tarp with spare cylinders, and rescue air supply (RIT Pack) adjacent to their position.

Figure 9. Conditions on Arrival of Chief 1



Note: Adapted from Hartin, E. (2024) *Reisterstown Advance Auto Parts simulation* [Fire Studio 7 digital simulation]. Camas, WA: East County Fire and Rescue.

3. What actions will you take prior to contacting IC #1 (Engine 1) to begin command transfer?
4. State your command transfer communication after IC #1 acknowledges your radio contact (exactly as you would transmit it).

Following your confirmation of the location and assignment of Engines 1, 2, and 3 and request for a conditions, actions, and needs (CAN) report, IC #1 provides the following CAN:

That is correct. We are about 60' with low temperature and zero visibility, working towards Charlie to locate the fire, air status ¾, no needs.

5. State the communication you would have with IC #1 and dispatch to complete the command transfer (exactly as you would transmit it).

6. What action would you take based on the CAN from Engine 1 (IC #1). State the communications you would have with the operating companies exactly as you would transmit them.

Chief 2 arrives and reports they are Level 1 on Reisterstown Road.

7. State the tactical assignment that you will give Chief 2 exactly as you would transmit it.

Engine 4 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant at Reisterstown Road and Franklin Boulevard.

8. State the tactical assignment that you will give Engine 4 exactly as you would transmit it.

Dispatch advises that the burn timer is at 10 minutes. You ask Engine 1 for a CAN, and they provide the following:

We are approximately 100' in with moderate temperature and zero visibility, can't find the fire, air status just above ½, need a company to see if they can access the fire from Charlie.

9. State the actions you would take and communications you would have (and with whom) based on the CAN from Engine 1. State the radio communications exactly as you would transmit them.

Shortly after the CAN from Engine 1, you hear the following radio transmission with the vibralert (self-contained breathing apparatus low air alarm) sounding in the background:

MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, Engine 1, something just fell on me, I am separated from my crew, just over 100' in and off Engine 1's hoseline, air status below 33%, need a company to locate me and bring the RIT pack.

10. State the communications you would have with Engine 1 and Engine 2 (who was integrated with Engine 1) based on this Mayday communication.

11. What communication would you have with the other companies operating at the incident, dispatch, and Chief 2? State these communications exactly as you would transmit them.

Companies on the second alarm requested by IC #1 are arriving in Level 2 Staging. Engine 5 reports that Engine 5, Engine 6, and Truck 1 are Level 2. Engines 7 and 8 and Chief 3 are still enroute.

12. Assuming you assigned Chief 2 as Division Alpha (prior to or after Engine 1 declared their mayday), what additional resources do you anticipate that Alpha will need to complete the firefighter rescue?

13. How will you approach continuation of fire control operations during the firefighter rescue? Identify the tactical and organizational assignments that you would make.

Additional Learning: May is mayday month! As such, there are multiple opportunities to extend the learning in this 10-Minute Training (and in 10-Minute Training 24-18a for IC #1).

Important! Keep the following in mind as you engage with these additional learning activities.

- Firefighters and officers all want to do good work (no one wants to do a bad job, to be injured, or to die during incident operations).
- Firefighters and officers generally perform the way that they are trained and/or consistent with the (stated or unstated) expectations of their organization.
- There are many ways to go about the business of firefighting. Many are “right” and some are “wrong”, but be careful not to assume that different is incorrect just because it is different.
- In any after action report or investigation or a serious injury or fatality there is always more to the story.
- The purpose of this additional learning is not to identify what others did “wrong”, but to make sense of what happened and how this knowledge can improve our safety and effectiveness.

Watch the Baltimore County Fire Department [After Action Report-Advance Auto Parts Fire-July 18, 2023](#), (BCoFD, 2024a) and read the [After Action Review Report Commercial Building Fire with Mayday](#).

After watching the Baltimore County Fire Department video and reading the after-action report, consider the following questions:

- Did you identify any key considerations or potential lessons that were not identified in the video or report? If so, what were they? Remember that everyone examines events and data from a different perspective and may draw somewhat different conclusions based on their frame of reference.
- Maydays are often the result of multiple contributing and causal factors. What do you think were the major factors that contributed to the two (one declared and one undeclared) maydays in this incident?
- It is likely that the companies operating on Side Charlie that accessed main fire occupancy through the exterior door on Floor 2 believed that the building was a single story on all sides and that the stairway accessing the door was due to a change in grade on the Charlie/Delta corner of the building. Other than a preplan, how could companies operating on Side Charlie have improved their situational awareness and what communication should companies have with command if they observed the location of the doors illustrated in Figure 7 and 8 of this 10-Minute Training. What communication would you (as IC #2) have with operating companies if potential for a second floor on Side Charlie was reported by operating companies?

- In the Advance Auto Parts incident, companies operating on Side Charlie accessed the main fire occupancy at the second-floor level but were unable to advance into the building due to fire conditions. What factors influenced the fire conditions they encountered? What alternatives may have proved more successful in gaining access to and controlling the fire?
- What lessons do you take away from this incident and how will they inform your work as a firefighter or fire officer?

References

- Baltimore County Fire Department (BCoFD). (2024a). *After action review report -- Advance Auto fire-- July 18, 2023* [video]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3IS2U5Y>.
- Baltimore County Fire Department (BCoFD). (2024b). *After action review report commercial building fire with mayday*. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3TLyp1B>.
- CBS Baltimore (2023). *19-year-old charged with setting massive fire to Reisterstown Advance Auto Parts*. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://cbsn.ws/4aJPwMZ>.
- East County Fire and Rescue (ECFR). (2024). *Standard operating guideline (SOG) 4.3.2 rapid intervention and firefighter rescue*. Retrieved April 12, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/4iy8MBC>.
- Google. (2012a). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/4cpZhSb>.
- Google. (2012b). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/4a6CSl7>.
- Google. (2012c). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3VuRHlY>.
- Google. (2012d). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3PyESQV>.
- Google. (2012e). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3VqUj1x>.
- Google. (2012f). [Street view, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/4cpZhSb>.
- Google. (2024a). [Map, 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3TRSwS4>.
- Google. (2024b). [Aerial view 11909 Reisterstown Road, Reisterstown, MD]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/4at9eMH>.

Hartin, E. (2024) *Reisterstown Advance Auto Parts simulation* [Fire Studio 7 digital simulation]. Camas, WA: East County Fire and Rescue.

Weather Underground (2024). *Glen Burnie, MD weather history* [historical weather July 18, 2023]. Retrieved April 6, 2024, from <https://bit.ly/3xnA4Yp>.