



# In-Station Training

## TM 25-19 Strip Mall Fire



### Author

Chief Ed Hartin

### Purpose

It is essential that the IC clearly specify what strategy companies will be operating in; offensive or defensive. This is particularly important if a defensive strategy is established in the main fire occupancy and an offensive strategy is implemented in the exposures.

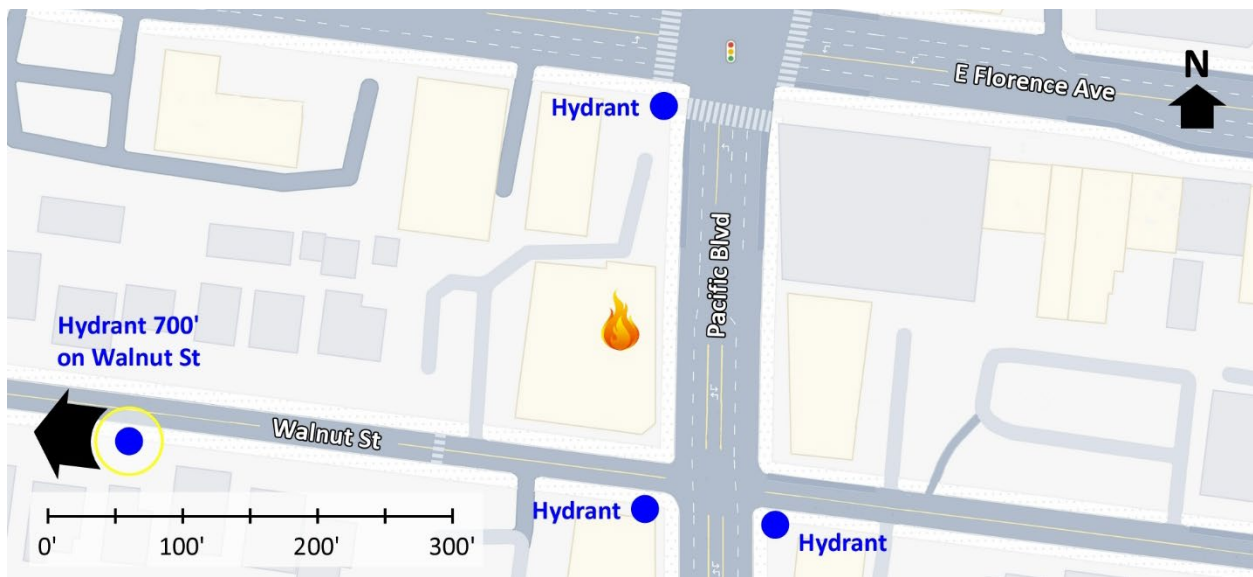
### Learning Outcomes

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 strip mall fire at 7213-7221 Pacific Boulevard in Huntington Park, California on Sunday, April 6, 2025, at 03:00 (OnScene TV, 2025 & Tac4 Fireground Archives, 2025). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-6) to gain an understanding of the building and area involved.

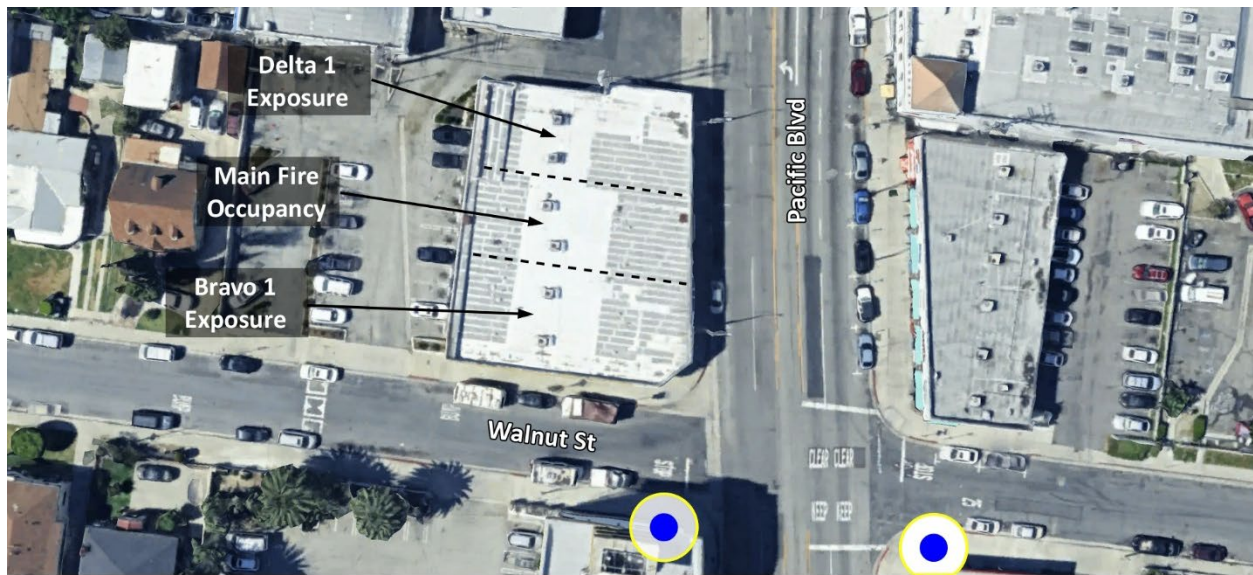
Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025a). [Map, 7213-7221 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA].

<https://bit.ly/3YDbZaU>.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025b). [Aerial view 7213-7221 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. <https://bit.ly/4it4BGe>.

The closest hydrants are at Pacific Boulevard and Walnut Street and additional hydrants are available in the area as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022a). [Street view 7213-7221 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. <https://bit.ly/4cfJe33>.

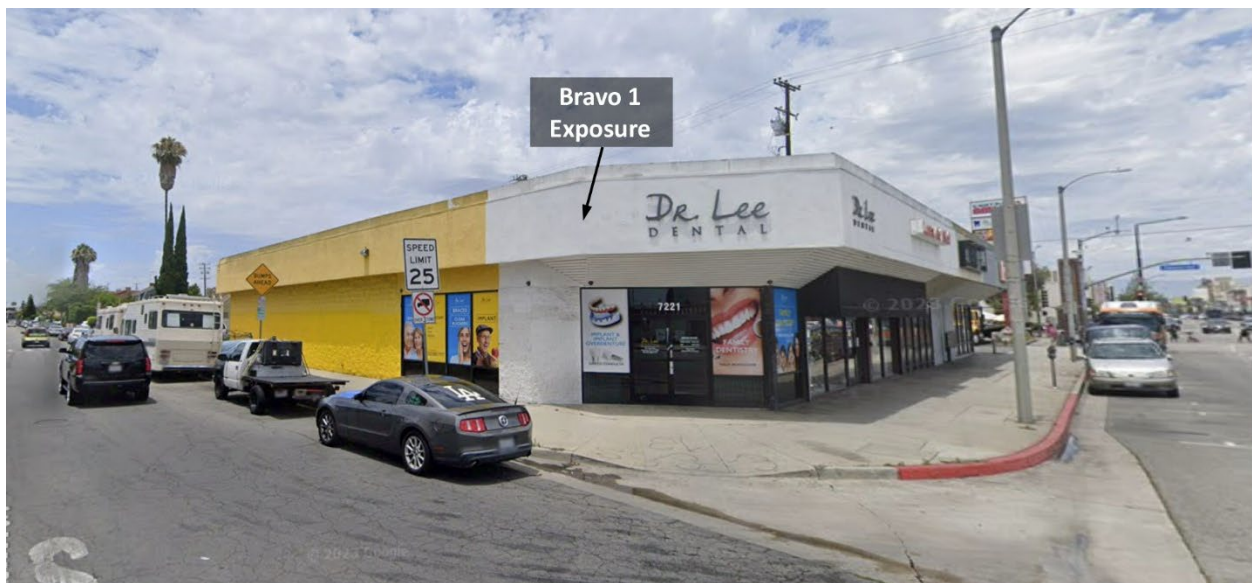


Figure 4. Side Alpha



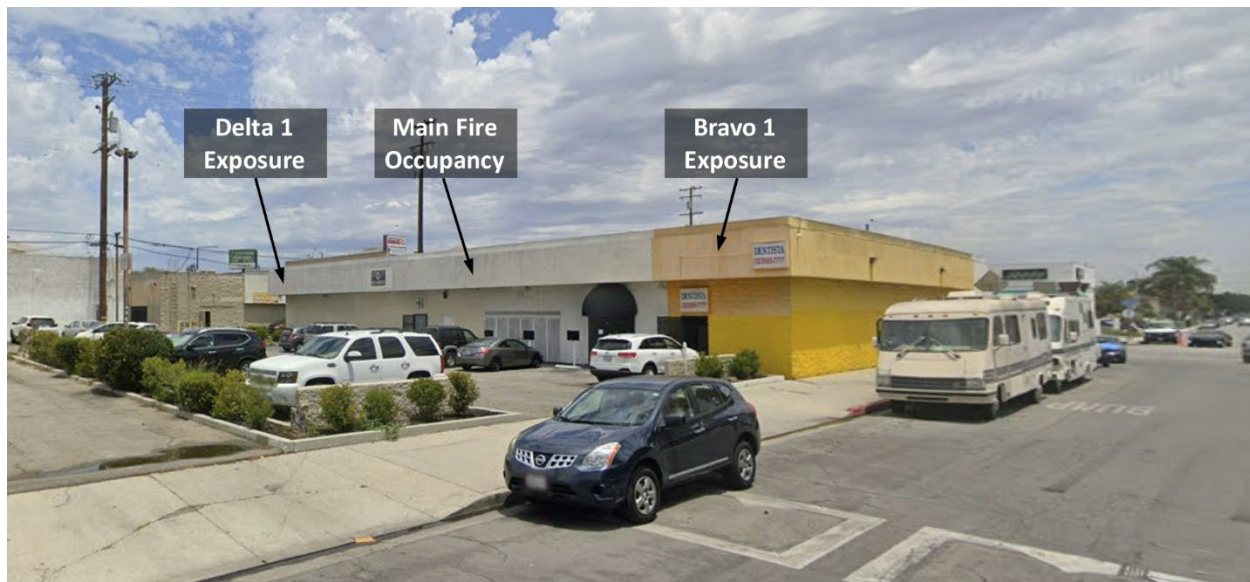
Note: Adapted from Google. (2022b). [Street view 7213-7221 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. <https://bit.ly/4jGv9on>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022c). [Street view 7213-7221 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. <https://bit.ly/449WOK5>.

Figure 6. Bravo/Charlie Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022d). [Street view 7213-7221 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. <https://bit.ly/3ExHdJS>.

The temperature is currently 55° F with no appreciable wind from the north (Weather Underground, 2025). **You are the company officer of an engine company.** It is Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, and you have been dispatched along with two other engines, a ladder company, medic unit, and command officer at 03:00 to the area of Pacific Boulevard and Walnut Street for a commercial fire. The engines and ladder have four-person staffing<sup>1</sup>.



Time starts now! Answer the first eight questions within the next 10 minutes. Decide and put your answers in the form of communication you would have with your crew, other companies, and the first arriving command officer. Save discussion for after answering the first eight questions.

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

You hear a command officer, two other engines, a ladder company, and an advanced life support ambulance go en route. You will arrive first, approaching from the north on Pacific Boulevard. The ladder company will arrive from the same direction shortly after you. The second engine will arrive from

---

<sup>1</sup> If your first alarm deployment is different, use your own resource assignment and staffing with the first and second arriving resources typical for your agency (e.g., two engines vs. engine and ladder).

the south shortly after the ladder company. The command officer will arrive after the second engine. All other units dispatched on the first alarm will arrive after the command officer.

While responding, dispatch advises that a caller reports smoke and flames from a commercial building near East Florence Avenue and Pacific Boulevard. Watch the [incident video](#) (OnScene TV, 2025) from 00:07 to 00:25 and examine Figure 7, illustrating conditions on arrival. You identify the actual incident address as 7219 Pacific Boulevard.

Figure 7. Conditions on Arrival



*Note:* Adapted from OnScene TV. (2025). *Fire destroys strip mall In Huntington Park, CA* [video]. <https://bit.ly/4ivSyla>.

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?

Smoke is pushing from the soffits and overhangs of Exposures Bravo 1 and Delta 1 on all sides of the building.

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. Ladder 1 advises that they are Level 1 on Pacific Boulevard at East Florence Avenue. 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 a hydrant at Pacific Boulevard at California Street (south of Walnut 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.



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

9. What was the problem?
10. What was getting in the way of achieving your tactical priorities?
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 was occupied?

13. Was there searchable space?

14. If you believed it was reasonable that the building was occupied and there was searchable space, what could you do about it?

Watch the [incident video](#) (OnScene TV, 2025) from 00:26 to 03:26 before answering the next several questions.

15. It appears that the ICs (#1 and #2) in this incident initially implemented an offensive strategy in the Main Fire Occupancy and Exposures Bravo 1 and Delta 1. Is this consistent with your initial incident action plan? What critical fireground factors influenced your choice of strategy in the Main Fire Occupancy and the exposures?

16. The first arriving engine stretched two 1 ¾" attack lines on Side Alpha for fire control (a 2 ½" attack line was deployed but not charged until later in the incident). Were these two attack lines effective? Why or why not?

17. Was deployment of two 1 ¾" attack lines consistent with your initial incident action plan? If so, why did you choose this tactical option for fire control? If not, how did you approach fire control (e.g., 2 ½" attack line, portable master stream)? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each of these three options?

Watch the [incident video](#) (OnScene TV, 2025) from 04:30 to 06:10 before answering the next question.

As observed in this video segment, as exterior operations continued on Side Alpha, firefighters accessed the roof of the Delta 1 Exposure via aerial ladder on Side Alpha and forced entry into the Main Fire Occupancy, Bravo 1 Exposure, and Delta 1 Exposure from Side Charlie for fire control.

18. What might have been the reason(s) for initiating interior operations from Side Charlie?

Watch the incident video from 06:17 to 06:31 and examine Figure 8 before answering the next question.



Figure 8. View from the Command Post



Note: Adapted from OnScene TV. (2025). *Fire destroys strip mall In Huntington Park, CA* [video]. <https://bit.ly/4ivSyla>.

19. What differences in the perception of incident conditions might companies operating on the exterior of Side Alpha, those working inside the Main Fire Occupancy and Exposures from Side Charlie, and IC #2 (Battalion 13) have based on their respective operating positions?

**Additional Learning:** The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) deployed a significant number of resources on the first alarm and sequentially increased the resource determination until the IC eventually balanced the response to a second alarm. The incident audio provides a great learning opportunity! Consider the following questions as you listen to the [incident audio](#) (Tac4 Fireground Archives, 2025). As you work through the questions, keep in mind that hindsight is 20/20 and there are many ways to approach incident management and communications (not simply one right way). Also keep in mind that the incident audio does not capture face to face communications between divisions and companies or operations and the divisions.

Identify the best things about communications during this incident (there were quite a few)!

Multiple companies arrived in quick succession. How did IC #1 (Engine 164) manage assignments to address critical tactical priorities? Was communication of tactical assignments effective? Were you able to track who was assigned where and what their tactical assignment was?

Battalion 13 arrived and quickly assumed command as IC #2 prior to communication with Engine 164 to confirm the position and function of assigned resources and receive a conditions, actions, and needs



report (referred to as a report on conditions (ROC) and needs by LACoFD). While in this incident, this method of command transfer appeared to work well, what are the potential pitfalls of not confirming position and function of resources and current conditions, actions, and needs prior to transfer of command?

The IC at times communicated with the “Roof Division” and at other times with the “Vent Group” (likely the same companies from the context of the communications). With two companies working together on the roof, what would be the most useful way to organize this work (separate companies, division, or group)? Think about supervision and coordination.

Company officers were (assigned or self-assigned) as Division Alpha, Charlie, and Roof Division supervisors and the Ventilation Group supervisor. Division Charlie was working inside with his crew while also maintaining responsibility as a division supervisor. The Roof Division/Ventilation Group Supervisor was working on the roof with his crew. How can working as part of a company impact the ability of a company officer to fulfill the tactical and safety roles of a division supervisor?

At 06:34 in the incident audio, Walnut IC (Battalion 13) calls Engine 164 and then changes to call “Fire Attack” and Engine 164 responds back as Division Alpha. While these variations in designation did not seem to negatively impact incident operations, what are the implied differences between the designation Engine 164, Fire Attack, and Division Alpha? How might this result in confusion?

At 07:39 in the incident audio there was a roof collapse in the center of the building towards Side Charlie (Tac4 Fireground Archives, 2025). How was this event communicated? How did the IC initiate a strategic shift to defense? Did IC #2 account for all companies that were operating inside the hazard zone as part of the strategic shift? What would you do differently? Why?

At 08:28 in the incident audio, command was transferred from Battalion 13 to Battalion 3 and Battalion 13 became “Operations”. How does this impact on the ICs span-of-control? What alternatives did IC (Battalion 13) have for use of the second chief officer to address the need for tactical supervision and command safety?

At 14:43, Division Alpha (Alpha/Delta) reported that companies had gained good access in Exposure Delta 1. Was it clear if companies were remaining defensive, or if they had made entry into Exposure Delta 1? What are the potential implications or consequences if this was a change in strategy in Exposure Delta 1?

At 15:53 Operations (Battalion 13) indicated companies were making entry into the Bravo Side. Was this change in strategy in the Bravo 1 Exposure clearly communicated? What are the potential implications or consequences to this change in strategy with elevated master streams operating defensively on the main body of fire?

A second collapse occurred at 19:07 in the incident audio (Tac4 Fireground Archives, 2025). How was this event communicated? Did IC #3 (Battalion 3) or operations (Battalion 13) account for all companies that were operating inside the hazard zone? What would you do differently? Why?

After the fire was knocked down, the IC ordered a LACoFD excavator to assist with overhaul. See the [incident video](#) (OnScene TV, 2025) from 11:05 to the end. This tactic significantly reduced the risk and potential injury to members operating at this incident. What options do you have to address post-defense overhaul of unstable structures?

## References

- Google. (2022a). [Street view 7213 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/4cFJe33>.
- Google. (2022b). [Street view 7213 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/4jGv9on>.
- Google. (2022c). [Street view 7213 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/449WOK5>.
- Google. (2022d). [Street view 7213 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3ExHdJS>.
- Google. (2025a). [Map, 7213 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3YDbZaU>.
- Google. (2025b). [Aerial view 7213 Pacific Boulevard, Huntington Park, CA]. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/4it4BGe>.
- OnScene TV. (2025). *Fire destroys strip mall In Huntington Park, CA* [video]. Retrieved April 23, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/4ivSyla>.
- Tac4 Fireground Archives. (2025). *Huntington Park, CA 2nd alarm fireground audio 4/6/25* [audio]. Retrieved April 23, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/4cLuqA8>.
- Weather Underground (2025). *Hawthorne, CA weather history* [historical weather April 6, 2025]. Retrieved April 23, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3GIOL2S>.