



FIRE SERVICE EXAMINATIONS

INFORMATION TO CANDIDATES

SCENARIO TYPE QUESTIONS

A number of candidates have requested information on how scenario type questions may be framed in the written examinations from October 2000.

Accordingly, the following information is presented for the benefit of all candidates towards their understanding and preparation for the examination.

The information includes general guidance; an extract from Section 3 of the candidate handbook "Preparing for the Written Examination" and some examples of how questions **may** appear.

(a) General Guidance

Scenario based questions are not new and have been used in Fire Service and other examinations for many years.

However, the number of scenario based questions in Fire Service Examinations have not formed the majority of the questions in past examinations.

It is now recognised that candidates who understand the circumstances in which a question is being asked in an examination (i.e. the scenario) have a greater chance of answering the right question than where a candidate is asked a question without being aware of the circumstances in which it is asked.

In view of this, Assessors preparing questions for Fire Service Examinations will, wherever possible, frame a question around a scenario in order to assist the candidate better identify the question that is being asked of the candidate.

The candidate response to the question will be as now, that is, dependent upon how the Assessor has asked for the answer to be presented in the second part of the question.

E.g. Describe the principal features..... or
What action is required, and why?

(b) Extract from Section 3 of the Candidate Handbook

With the exception of a number of questions in paper four, all the questions in the examination are subjective. This means that they are based on a main theme or topic from a book or other reference material.

Subjective questions can have different layouts and increasingly Assessors use a layout referred to as “a scenario question”. These questions are designed to assist the candidate to more fully understand the question by putting the candidate in a situation likely to be met with at work and asking the candidate to describe the actions to be taken.

All subjective questions, whatever the layout, generally require a written answer in the candidate’s own words and style demanding not only the recall of facts, but also a demonstration of understanding and the ability to apply knowledge correctly in solving the problem.

(c) Example Questions

Leading Fire-fighters Examination

Example 1

You are a Leading Firefighter attending a serious emergency incident at which a Station Officer is in attendance. This officer nominates you to transmit appropriate messages to Control.

What is the most effective way of ensuring that the messages you send are correct in detail and easily received by Control?

Example 2

As the Leading Firefighter in charge of an appliance during a 'tour of duty' you have noted that a member of the crew, who is normally a very friendly, enthusiastic, hardworking and efficient member of the crew is very quiet. The firefighter does not show any wish to be involved in work and is argumentative with other firefighters.

(a) What are the possible causes of this change in attitude?

and

(b) How would you deal with this situation?

Example 3

The head teacher of a local school has asked the brigade to send an officer to advise 11-year-old students on how to call the emergency services using a public telephone. You have been nominated for this task.

What are the important points that you would wish to stress to the students?

Sub Officers Examination

Example 4

You are the Sub-Officer-in-charge of a watch and a firefighter approaches you with a grievance.

(a) How would you deal with this grievance?

and

(b) If the firefighter has justifiable grounds for complaint and is dissatisfied with your reply, how can the grievance be ultimately progressed to a conclusion?

Example 5

As the officer-in-charge-of a crew you visit a large office complex under Section 1 (1)(d) of the Fire Services Act 1947. There are a number of dry rising fire mains installed. As your crewmembers are relatively inexperienced explain why:

(a) A dry rising fire main is provided;

and

(b) Describe the principal features that will be provided in its construction.

Example 6

You are the Sub-Officer-in-charge of a fire incident at which a person has suffered fatal injuries. Relatives who live nearby have arrived and you realise that there is a possibility of them displaying shock and anxiety.

(a) What physical and/or psychological/behavioural symptoms will enable you to recognise that a person is distressed?

and

(b) How would you resolve such a situation of distressed relatives, in the short term?"

Station Officers Examination

Example 7

You are the Station Officer in charge of a fire at industrial premises (a workplace). All employees safely evacuated the building but after extinguishing the fire you discover a number of locked emergency exit doors.

You will be required to provide a full report of your findings.

What fire precautions should you expect to find that would satisfy the requirements of the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997?

Example 8

As the Station Officer in charge of a fire station you investigate a complaint against a member of a watch the result of which suggests that a serious disciplinary offence has taken place.

You submit your report to brigade headquarters.

Describe:

(a) The investigation process that should now take place.

and

(b) The action to be taken when it is decided that the member should be charged, up to the point of the hearing taking place.

Example 9

You are the Station Officer responding to an emergency call to industrial premises, which are known to use radioactive materials, although the caller has not confirmed that these are involved.

On arrival with the appliances the company's scientific adviser (competent person) who can only advise that the fire is in the part of the site in which the radioactive material is used meets you.

(a) Describe your Initial actions;

and

(b) At a later stage it is confirmed that radioactive material is involved. What additional action is required of you, and why?

and

(c) As reinforcing crews attend, what information should their briefing contain before they are committed to their operational duties?

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