PSCR FIRE In-depth Interview

Interview Questions

Context and Beliefs of Work

1. If you were describing your job to someone who knew nothing about being a fire first responder, how would you describe it?

Communication and Technology

2. How would you describe the current state or condition of communication equipment in your field, and specifically in your own work situation?

3. How (if at all) have things changed in terms communication since you became a fire first responder?
   a. What do you think about these changes?

4. If you think about the incidents you've responded to over the last few months, or even in the past year, is there information that could have helped "paint a better picture" of the incident, or that would have helped you to respond better?
   a. What kind of information would be the most helpful, either for typical or for more complicated calls?
   b. How could information have been delivered more effectively?

5. Have there been times when you [or someone you know] have been overwhelmed by too much going on during a call?
   a. What, if anything, could have helped in these situations?

6. What, if anything, do you think causes communication problems in your work?

7. What kinds of technology do you use to do your job as a fire first responder?
   a. What do you think about the technology?

8. Besides your radio and a computer, if you use one, what other kinds of technology do you think would be the most useful when responding to calls.
   a. Why do you think these would be useful?
   b. Are there things you would change or improve for the things you listed?

9. In a perfect world, where technology could do whatever you wanted, describe your wish list, or describe what you would like technology to be able to do for you in your job.

10. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your job, related to communication or technology, that you think is important for us to know?

[Choose 1 of the 3 Fire scenarios and read the vignette to the interviewee]

Scenario-based Questions

1. Based on this scenario, walk me through what you would do and what information you need and when.

    a.   What were your primary tasks during this incident?
    b.   What about secondary tasks?
    c.   Let's discuss the incident information during various stages of incident response [a. Prior to incident response; b. En route; c. On scene]
- What incident information would be available to you? How important/critical would the incident information be?
- How would the information be delivered to you (e.g., radio, printout, photos, videos, on MDT)?
- Would you want to change the information delivery method delivered (e.g. from printout to electronic, from voice to visual so it can be retrieved later)?

    d.   Would there be incident information that, if available, could help "paint a better picture" of the incidents? If yes, elaborate and describe how you would like the data delivered to you.

Then we would introduce one of the complex factors and ask:

2. [for each complex factor added] Imagine <this> happens. What would you do and what information would you need to handle <this> and when?

Fire Scenario 1 – Apartment Fire

Vignette:

On a Friday evening around 17:30, the emergency communications center receives a call for fire on the stovetop on the 4th floor of a garden style apartment building. ECC dispatches 3 engine companies, 1 squad, 1 aerial, and the battalion chief. First engine company arrives to find smoke coming from the eaves of the apartment building. Closest hydrant is 200 feet away with an unknown GPM rating. There is limited space for the aerial and pumper near the affected apartment.

Complex Factors:
- The wind is 35MPH and flowing through affected apartment window that was left open
- A disabled person lives in the next apartment over from the affected apartment
- Dark black smoke is banked down to the floor when the front door is opened
- The working fire assignment is dispatched after initial report of smoke showing, bringing an additional 2 engines and aerial to the scene

Fire Scenario 2 – High Rise Building Fire

Vignette:

On a Monday around 10:30 in the morning, a fire on the 5th floor of an 8 story office building is called into the Emergency Communications Center. ECC dispatches 5 engine companies, 1 squad, 2 aerials, 1 BLS transport, 1 ALS chase vehicle, and a battalion chief. The first arriving engine advises they had smoke and fire showing on the 5th floor. There are exposures on the bravo and delta side of the building.

Complex Factors:
- The building is near a major college and the smoke is pushing heavy towards dorms and classrooms
- The fire has spread to the 6th and 7th floor before any water is put on it
- The standpipe system is working properly and there isn't adequate flow
- There is a partial collapse 35 mins into the incident

Fire Scenario 3 – Rural House Fire

Vignette:

On a Monday morning at 04:30, the emergency communications center dispatches Engine 72, Engine 122, and Rescue Engine 74 (Special Service) for the light smoke conditions in a single-family residence. Engine 72 arrives on the scene and gives an initial report of a single family, two story cape cod, side alpha with nothing evident. Engine 122 arrives and advises they will pick on Engine 72's supply line at the end of the driveway. Engine 72 then makes entry into the house.

Complex Factors:
- When Engine 72 makes entry, they find heavy smoke conditions
- Rescue Engine 74 is advised that there is possibly a person trapped in the upstairs bedroom
- The nearest water supply is over 5 miles away