

**LINE OF DUTY
DEATH REPORT
REPORT SLIDES**



F2024-06

Career firefighter dies and another injured while performing rapid intervention team tasks at vacant warehouse fire – Texas



Summary

- On November 6, 2024, a 42-year-old career firefighter died, and a 38-year-old firefighter was injured while performing rapid intervention team (RIT) tasks at a vacant warehouse fire.
- The two firefighters were assigned to the RIT team on their arrival at the scene.
- At approximately 22:50 hours, the office of emergency communications (OEC) received the first call reporting a three-story warehouse on fire with an approximate location.



Delta side of structure post-collapse.
(Courtesy of the fire department)



Summary

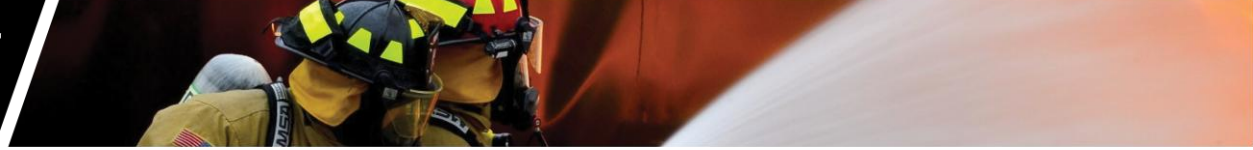
- Several additional calls reporting a warehouse on fire were received which gave a more specific address.
- The OEC dispatched the first alarm assignment for a warehouse fire at approximately 22:52 hours which included District Chief 20 (DC20), District Chief 8 (DC08), Engine 18 (E18), Engine 20 (E20), Engine 40 (E40), Engine 23 (E23), Tower 18 (T18), Ladder 20 (L20), and Safety Officer 30 (SF30).
- At approximately 22:57 hours, E18 updated responding units of a working fire.
- E18 arrived on-scene at approximately 22:58 hours to a “large warehouse fire showing from the roof, heavy fire” and assigned their side of the building as the Alpha side of the structure.
- E20 approached from the cross street and pulled past the fire building leaving room for L20.



Summary

- DC20 arrived and positioned across the street from the Alpha/Delta corner in a parking lot and established himself as the incident commander (IC).
- He reported “heavy fire from a one-story warehouse.”
- E18 declared a defensive fire.
- The OEC broadcasted an emergency tone and rebroadcasted the defensive fire message across the channel.
- At approximately 23:00 hours, L20A provided updated observations to IC, “Command, TIC (thermal imaging camera) reading through open doors is about 1,000 degrees at the roof, heavy smoke, fire, and some of the roof is starting to collapse.”

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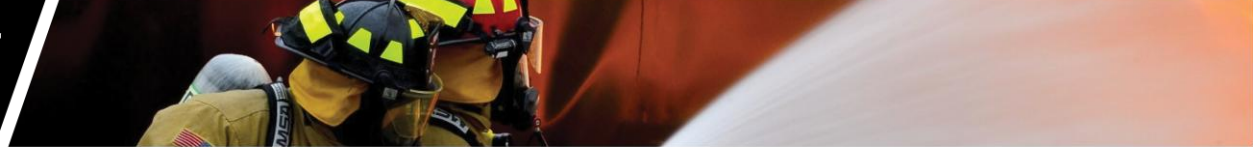


Arrival conditions of L20 at the Alpha/Delta corner.
(Courtesy of the fire department)

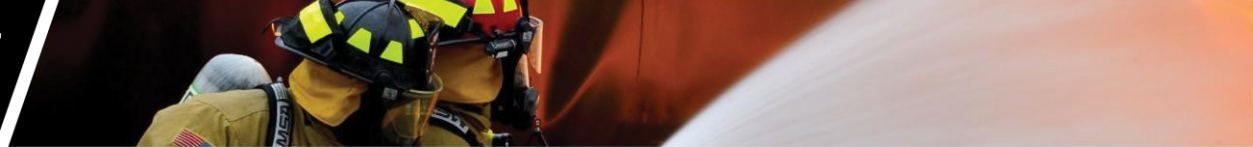


Summary

- IC acknowledged the report and requested both aerial devices be set up for elevated master stream operations.
- IC then updated all units that accountability was in place.
- E40 arrived and was assigned water supply for L20.
- E23 arrived and IC assigned them as rapid intervention team (RIT).
- At approximately 23:02 hours, L20A provided a conditions, actions, needs (CAN) report stating, "Collapse of the roof, heavy fire, exposure on the Charlie/Delta side going to have to get inside, already starting to smoke up. Trying to get water on it now. L20 in position to hit it with the pipe, no further needs."



View of the structure from the Alpha/Delta corner post collapse and during overhaul operations. *(Courtesy of the fire department)*



Summary

- IC acknowledged the update and stated over the channel, “District 20 to all companies, do not go interior.”
- E23B (deceased firefighter) and E23C (injured firefighter) gathered the RIT equipment from the IC post and staged it on the Alpha/Delta corner of the fire building.
- IC broadcasted over the channel, “Command to all companies on Delta division, let’s stay clear of that wall, it looks like it is going to collapse outwards.”



Summary

- E23's crew, as part of their RIT duties, went to the Delta side man door and began attempting to force the burglar bars and doors open to "soften" the structure.
- At approximately 23:05 hours, IC requested a second alarm be dispatched.
- As this was called, E20 updated IC there was a collapse on the Delta side.



Detail of Delta side wall showing the brick veneer over block wall, slots for previous canopy roof tie ins, roof surface covering. (Courtesy of the fire department)



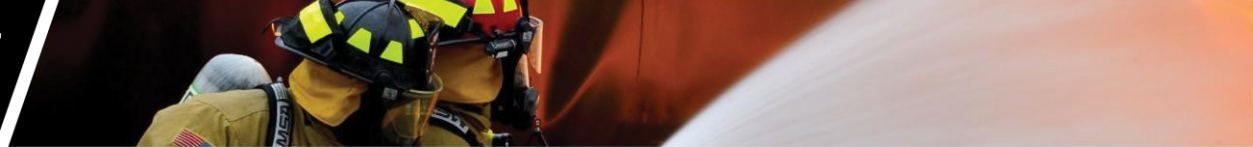
Summary

- Less than a minute later, E23A declared a Mayday.
- IC acknowledged the Mayday.
- OEC also notified IC of the Mayday and inquired if IC would like the third alarm assignment.
- IC requested the third alarm.
- L20 updated IC that one person had been removed, and IC requested a count on how many personnel were missing.
- L20 responded possibly one more and they were going to attempt a PAR.



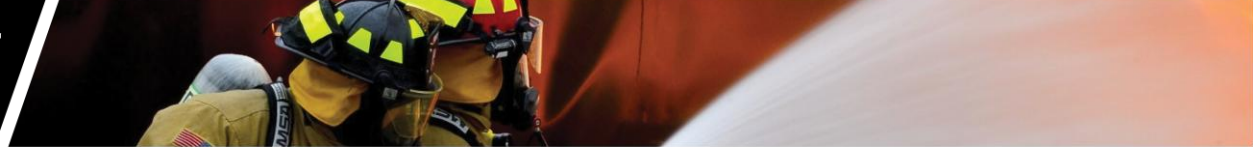
Summary

- A moment later L20 updated IC there were two firefighters missing, they were actively working to get to them and requested operations go to a different radio channel.
- At approximately 23:09 hours, R42 arrived and were assigned to the Delta side collapse for extrication of the trapped firefighters.
- IC updated OEC that the second firefighter is being extricated.
- At approximately 23:13 hours, L20 updated IC that all victims were out, and personnel were clearing the collapse zone.
- IC requested all personnel evacuate the area of the Delta side and that OEC cancel the third alarm.



Summary

- L20 exited the collapse zone with the second firefighter, and they needed advanced life support (ALS) to meet them at the front of L20.
- OEC notified IC that L20A was showing an alarm and asked for confirmation that all personnel were accounted for.
- IC confirmed all personnel were accounted for and requested all personnel stay away from the building and out of the collapse zone.
- E23C (injured firefighter) was transported to the hospital by ambulance 23.
- E23B (deceased firefighter) was transported to the hospital by medic 18 and was later pronounced deceased at the hospital.



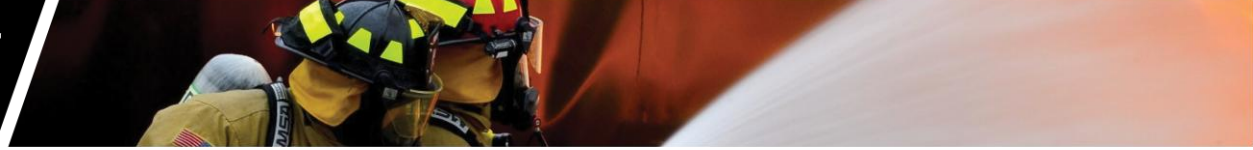
Contributing Factors

- Pre-incident planning
- Standard operating procedures/guidelines (SOPs/SOGs)
- Strategy and tactics
- Risk versus benefit analysis
- Safety officer presence
- Change of occupancy
- Vacant/dangerous building inspections



Recommendations

- Fire service organizations should develop pre-incident plans for structures within their first due response area, specifically dangerous or vacant structures.
- Fire service organizations should develop and maintain SOPs/SOGs.
- Fire service organizations should ensure ICs match their tactical strategy with the incident at hand.
- Fire service organizations should train all personnel to employ risk management principles when operating on the incident scene.
- Fire service organizations should strategically deploy safety officers.



Recommendations

- Governing municipalities (federal, state, regional/county, and local) should complete change of occupancy inspections per applicable fire and life safety codes.
- Governing municipalities (federal, state, regional/county, and local) should communicate across departmental boundaries.

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