

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

BULLETIN No. 93

May 2016 (Revised)

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING FOR TECHNICIAN EXAM

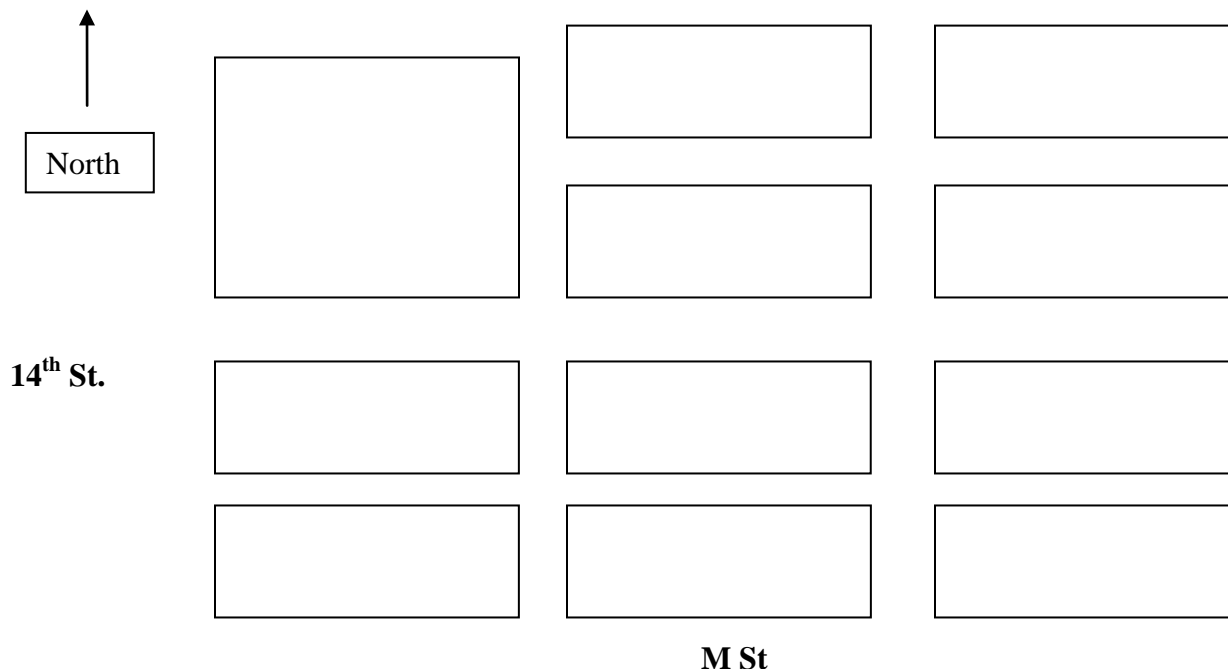
(Engine, Truck and Rescue Squad Companies)

Section I – Knowledge of Box Alarm District Exam

The following guidelines were established by the Training Academy to assist in the preparation and administration of the written competitive examination to be used in determining members; “knowledge of box alarm district” as part of their application for the position of technician. In addition, responsible officers should utilize the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Local 36, Article 21 (Selection of Technicians) to be guided in the process.

The Captain and Lieutenants of the unit concerned, acting jointly, shall in all matters of administration of this examination:

1. Ensure objectivity of the questions and answers.
2. Exercise every precaution to keep the questions in strictest confidence until the scheduled time of the examination.
3. Maintain integrity of the testing procedure to provide equal opportunity and fairness to all candidates.
4. Use material in the examination which is based upon the unit’s box alarm district information book and which is available to all applicants for the vacant position.
5. Prepare an examination to consist of 40 total questions that test a member’s knowledge of the box alarm district. The examination must consist of at least three and not more than 10 items from each of the following categories (for a total of 40):
 - a. Routes to fire alarm box locations, listing right and left turns as written in Company information book (aka. Running Routes);
 - b. Locate by street boundaries: short streets, places, courts, alleys, etc. (aka. Short Streets);
 - c. Intersecting streets and block numbers to the right and left along a given street, avenue, drive, terrace, etc. (aka. Stick Maps or Splits);
 - d. Locate by street boundaries: buildings presenting unusual hazards or occupancies. (aka. Major Buildings); and
 - e. On a map, which provides only the information necessary for the applicant to orient himself, locate such numbers of items desired concerning a specific square or block as street boundaries, block numbers, hydrants, etc. (aka. Maps).

Map Example:

6. Provide a neatly prepared question sheet for each applicant.
7. Schedule and conduct a single examination at one day and time for all applicants at the respective unit's quarters.
8. Ensure all tests are scored in quarters on the day of the examination.
9. Score the examination on the basis of 100 points, each correct item having a point value of 2.5. A score of 70 is considered passing. The examination score shall be translated into points for the purpose of computing the relative rating by multiplying the scores by the percentage established in Article 21 of the *Local 36 Collective Bargaining Agreement*.
10. Provide each applicant the opportunity to review his/her test paper and provide a copy of the correct answers to all questions on the day of the examination.
11. Preserve all examination papers until the selection process has been completed and a member is assigned as technician to fill the vacancy.
12. Contact the Training Academy (Driving Instructor) to schedule a test date and obtain study material for the Academy portion of the testing. The Academy portion should be scheduled within 30 calendar days, absent of any extenuating circumstances.

Posting the Vacancy Announcement

Responsible officers shall reference the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Local 36 for complete rules regarding the selection of technicians. Officers should also reference Bulletin 90 and the Technician Examination Scoring Guidelines for more detailed information. For the remainder of this Bulletin, the term Captain shall mean Company Commanders or those acting in the position of Company Commander.

In general, a technician position is considered vacant whenever it is anticipated that the incumbent will not be performing the duties of a technician for a period of thirty (30) or more days, exclusive of annual leave, including but not limited to the following circumstances: promotion, transfer/assignment, resignation, retirement, extended detail, and sick leave anticipated to exceed thirty (30) days.

In general, the selection of technicians shall be completed not later than sixty (60) days after the position becomes vacant.

The Captain shall, as soon as the need is determined, but not later than ten (10) days after the position actually becomes vacant, post on the station bulletin board anticipated technician vacancies.

The announcement shall contain the following:

1. The position(s) to be filled,
2. The eligibility requirement to take the examination,
3. The deadline to submit the Form 140-A (minimum 14 days),
4. The date, time and location of the knowledge of box alarm district exam (maximum 30 days),
5. Request for notification of any dates the member is unavailable for the next 60 days,
6. Reference to Bulletin 90, this Bulletin and the CBA with Local 36.

Once the announcement is posted, the Captain must provide a minimum of 14 calendar days for members to submit their Form 140-A. All eligible members must submit this form to state whether they will be participating in the knowledge of box alarm district exam. Upon initial submission of the Form 140-A, the member will note any anticipated dates that they will be absent for the following 60 day period. Members who submit the form stating that they do not wish to be considered for the position, or members who fail to submit the form within the time period given, will not be allowed to take the written examination.

Not less than one week prior to the exam, the Captain will notify the appropriate Battalion Fire Chief that the company will be out-of-service for the examination. The Captain will also request that any company members working on that day remain assigned to the company and be unavailable for details.

To ensure that the time frames of the CBA are adhered to, the maximum prior notification of the exam should be no more than 30 days.

Section II - Training Academy Examination

Upon completion of the district examination, the Captain of the company will contact the Training Academy to schedule the Academy portion of the exam (ie. written exam, driving test, practical exam). The Captain will be required to report to the TA in person to obtain the information packets and study material that each member who passed the knowledge of box alarm district exam will receive. The Captain will then distribute the information to each member concerned, and obtain a signed Form 1 for the information.

Captains will ensure that members are notified of the testing date at the Training Academy as soon as possible. The Captain will make every effort to ensure that all members will be available to attend the Academy testing.

Two weeks prior to the scheduled Academy exam, the Captain will submit the steps of operation for the apparatus to be used to the TA. These steps of operation can come from the Pump Manual or Ladder Manual, and must be provided to all members who will be testing. For members testing for Rescue Squad Technician, a skills list and steps of operation will be provided in the same manner.

For Engine Companies, no later than one week prior to the exam, the drafting capability of the engine shall be determined. Any issues should immediately be reported to the Fleet Maintenance Division and the Training Academy.

All members shall be allowed at least one practice test run on the driving course prior to the date of the Academy portion. It will be the responsibility of all platoon commanders of the company concerned to ensure that the member is afforded the practice opportunity prior to the exam. This may involve changing members' details or ambulance rotations to ensure that each member has a practice opportunity. Members may practice the course as many times as is practicable, but must be allowed one time at a minimum. The platoon commander will contact the Training Academy for approval to use the driving course, and will obtain approval from the responsible Battalion Fire Chief for out-of-service training.

Not less than one week prior to the Academy portion, the Captain will notify the appropriate Battalion Fire Chief that the company will be out-of-service for the examination at the TA. The Captain will also request that any members working on that day remain assigned to the company and not be available for details.

Academy Written Exam

The first step of the examination process at the Training Academy will be the written exam. The exam will consist of 30 questions, in which a member must score 70 percent or better to pass and continue in the process. The exam will be administered by the Academy and will be observed by the Captain of the company. The Academy will provide a list of study materials and reference books (when applicable) when the Captain schedules the examination.

Practical Examination

The practical examination has two parts and begins with the inspection of the apparatus. This inspection will be based on the daily inspection/DAPPR program. The member must obtain a score of 70 percent or better to pass and continue the process.

The second part of the practical exam is the operational portion. This portion may be administered as the final step in the testing process. In this portion of testing, the member will demonstrate the proper operation and knowledge of various vehicle components (ie. pump, aerial ladder, hydraulic tools, etc.). The member must obtain a score of 70 percent or better to pass and continue in the process.

All portions of this testing will be observed by the Captain of the company.

Driving Examination

Members will be tested on their driving and maneuvering of the apparatus. This exam will occur on the driver's training course and on an over the road course when applicable. Members should refer to Bulletin 90 for a detailed description of the driver's training course. The driving portion is pass or fail, and will be administered by the Driver's Training Officer and observed by the Captain.

Use of Reserve Apparatus

Every effort will be made to have the company's assigned apparatus utilized for the examination.

If a company is using a reserve apparatus that is the same make/model as their regularly assigned apparatus, then the Captain will ensure all members are familiar with the apparatus. The Captain will ensure that the apparatus is capable of performing the necessary exam tasks, and will notify the Training Academy that a reserve will be used.

If the company has been using a reserve prior to the exam, and will continue to use the same reserve for an extended period of time (ie. over six months) after the exam, then that reserve will be treated as the company's regular apparatus, regardless of make/model.

If a company's regular apparatus goes out-of-service during the 30 day period prior to the Academy portion, then the Captain will attempt to obtain a reserve of the same make/model. Members will be provided with ample time to familiarize themselves with the apparatus prior to the exam.

If the company cannot obtain a reserve of the same make and/or model of their regular apparatus and another similar apparatus exists in-service in the Department, the Captain of the company will contact the Captain of the company who has the regular apparatus and obtain permission to use that apparatus for practice and/or the exam. This may involve units switching out or being placed out-of-service. Units will only switch-out or be placed out-of-service with the approval of the Deputy Fire Chief of Operations, through the chain of command.

If a reserve apparatus is used for the exam, the members participating will have to sign a letter of understanding acknowledging the use of the reserve apparatus and that they have had sufficient time to familiarize themselves with that apparatus.

Section III - Selection of Technician

Once the Academy portion is completed, the Captain will receive the Form 140-C from the Academy listing the member(s) scores. The Captain will then complete the Form 140-D, tallying all points for the process. The Captain will notify all members of their final scores and allow them the opportunity to review the calculations for the final rankings. The calculations for seniority and prior service are located in the CBA.

The member with the most points will then be required to report to the Police and Fire Clinic to have the Form 140-B (eye exam) executed. The member should print this form and bring it with them to the PFC. The exam will be done either by scheduling an appointment at the PFC or by attending Sick Call, with the permission of the Medical Services Officer. The member will submit the completed Form 140-B to the Captain.

Once the Captain has all necessary paperwork (Forms 140-A, 140-B, 140-C and 140-D), he/she will execute the Form 140-E noting the candidate who is selected for Technician. The Captain will submit all 140 series forms and the Form 140-E to his/her Deputy Fire Chief along with a Special Report listing all details of the position to be filled (ie. what caused the position to be vacant, who last held the position, amount of time vacancy has existed, dates of district and academy exam, final recommendation).

The Captain may request that the selected technician be “detailed” to the vacancy prior to an official promotion. This detail will be for the purpose of crew continuity only, and the member concerned will not receive any back-pay or be entitled to any rights as a technician until the promotion is published via Personnel Action.

Model Timeline

- Determination that position will be vacant for more than 30 days.
- Within 10 days – Captain posts announcement for district exam.
- At least 14 days from announcement – Form 140-A’s due.
- Within 30 days from announcement – knowledge of box alarm district exam.
- Immediately after exam – contact TA, obtain study material, schedule exam.
- Within 30 days of district exam – complete Academy testing.
- Once receive Form 140-C – send member(s) for eye exam (Form 140-B).
- Once receive all paperwork – submit all documents, 140-E, and Special Report to DFC.

Description of Forms

Form	Name	Use
140A	Application for Position of Technician	Submitted by ALL eligible members to state whether they will or will not take the exam.
140B	Eye Examination Certification Request	Taken to PFC by member who passes all phases of testing.
140C	Technician Exam at TA	Used by TA to document scores for exams. Given to Capt. after completion of testing at TA.
140D	Unit Technician Rating Form	Used to calculate total points, seniority and service credits for final rankings.
140E	Technician Selection	Submitted to DFC to notify of selection of technician.