

Effective Fire Service Training – S.M.A.R.T #60-01

SCBA Confidence Course – Basic ROAM

S – Statement of Intent / Objectives

The intent of this drill is: To provide an SCBA Confidence course that introduces basic Air Management skills along with a variety of situations firefighters may encounter while operating in an IDLH environment. In order to meet this intent participants will demonstrate the ability to:

- Demonstrate the basic skills of Air Management including reading the gauge and effectively communicating air level
- Move safely through a zero-visibility environment, using a tool of their choice, while breathing air from their SCBA
- Negotiate the Mask Confidence Course before their low-air warning bell rings
- Check their SCBA air pressure at intervals - ROAM
- Successfully negotiate hazards designed into the prop.

M – Material(s)

- Complete SCBA with a full cylinder per member
- Prop designed with a variety of hazards that may include.
 - Missing stair tread, burned out sections
 - Sloping grade
 - Exposed floor joists
 - Entanglement hazards
 - Overhead obstructions
 - Diminished clearance
- 1 Halligan tool, 1 Service Axe, 1 4 ft. pike pole, 1 Flathead Axe, 1 roll of orange plastic construction netting, etc

A – Actions

- Explain how members should operate in a decreased visibility environment without flashlights.
- Explain how members should use the tool that they pick out at the beginning of the course to sound the floor ahead of them for holes and other obstructions.
- Explain how to negotiate each of the specific hazards designed into the prop.
- Instruct the members that they must practice air management and check their SCBA air pressure periodically on their own. If they do not, the instructor will prompt the member to check their air pressure.
- Demonstrate checking the air pressure. Physically show how to check the SCBA air pressure.
- Demonstrate department standard method of communicating amount of air remaining.
- Instruct member that the prop is designed as a through prop not an out and back prop. They should be able to negotiate the entire prop before their low-pressure bell rings.
- Team enters the prop and proceeds through obstacles periodically checking their air supply. Instructor should prompt them the check air if they are not doing it on their own.
- Instructor monitors team closely for safety and decision making regarding obstructions. Instructor can offer assistance when necessary to get team through an obstruction. Review of techniques for type of obstruction should follow.

R – Review / Recording

The Instructor will record overall work time in the prop and the member's SCBA air reading upon entering and exiting the prop.
Instructor must monitor the team for safety at all times.

T – Talking Points at Debriefing

After all of the members have gone through the course, begin the debriefing.

The debriefing should include;

- ◆ Time in the prop for each member.
- ◆ Any difficulty in reading pressure gauges in the prop.
- ◆ Difficulties negotiating hazards and the effect on air consumption
- ◆ If they successfully got through the prop before their low-pressure bell rings how much more work could they do?
- ◆ If their bell was ringing before they exited the prop, what factors do they think affected their ability to finish with air?
- ◆ Cylinder pressure reading upon exiting.
- ◆ Talk about problems and difficulties that you noticed as the members went through the course. In particular review techniques for specific hazards that the team had difficulty with. Demonstrate technique and have team practice in that section of prop if time permits.

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SUPPORTING MATERIAL

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DRILL SCENARIO

This course is designed to give the firefighter the confidence to successfully deal with certain situations firefighters may encounter at any structure fire. These situations can include: a zero-visibility environment, holes in the floor, missing stair treads, overhead obstructions, sloping grades, and diminished clearance maneuvers. Many departments have access to a basic SCBA confidence course and this drill provides the ability to begin introduction of basic air management skills through a standardized process. The intent of this training is to provide all students with the basic skills necessary to perform air management. These skills include being able to read the pressure gauge quickly and effectively, communicating the amount of air remaining in the cylinder, and recognizing the general effect that work rates have on breathing rates. The participating member should be able to finish the Mask Confidence Course before their SCBA low-air warning bell begins to ring. This is not a search and rescue prop. Once the course is designed and built instructors should be sent through the entire training process in a “train the trainer” format to familiarize and standardize delivery. In addition, having the instructors go through the course will ensure that it is possible to complete the course with the air supply of the standard department SCBA before the low-pressure bell rings. It is recommended that you try to achieve a 90% completion rate among a representative sample of instructors. This will ensure that most students should be able to complete the course within their air supply. Some students will not complete the course before their low-pressure bell rings. These students should consider whether they are in a mayday situation and this should be covered during the Talking points/debrief section of the SMART drill.

Upon completion of this drill the participant shall demonstrate the ability to:

- Don and operate their SCBA & PPE and pass a “Buddy Check”
- Check their SCBA air pressure at regular intervals or as prompted by the instructor – Basic Air Management
- Communicate air remaining to team leader effectively
- Crawl through a zero-visibility environment, using a tool of their choice, while breathing air from their SCBA
- Successfully negotiate hazards that are designed into the prop before their low-air warning bell rings

ACTIONS

This course is designed to give the firefighter the confidence to successfully deal with certain situations firefighters may encounter in any fire building.

Safety is the first priority; we want all members to make their way through the course safely, but in a timely manner. The course will be constructed in such a manner that each member should complete the course before their SCBA low-air warning bell begins to ring.

The following are skills that need to be demonstrated by the instructor and learned by the members during the training provided;

- Explain that the goal of the Mask Confidence Course is to safely and successfully crawl through the course, negotiating obstacles with enough air to complete the course before their SCBA low-air warning bell begins to ring.
- Explain and demonstrate how to check the air pressure gauge and how to communicate the remaining air per department standard. (If you don't have one, develop one. Options include pressure i.e. 3200 lbs, volume i.e. ½ dependent on equipment)
- Explain that they must check their SCBA air pressure periodically on their own. If they do not, the instructor will prompt the member to check their air pressure.
- Explain how members should operate in decreased visibility environment without flashlights for training purposes.
- Explain and demonstrate how members should use the tool that they pick out at the beginning of the course to sound the floor ahead of them for holes and other obstructions.
- Explain and demonstrate how to negotiate by using their tool to hook onto the top of the sloping grade and feel the floor below it with their foot. Reverse technique for upward sloping grade.
- Explain and demonstrate how to negotiate floor joists and missing stair treads by going down stairs feet first on the belly.
- Explain and demonstrate how to deal with entanglement hazards by “swimming” and cutting.
- Explain and demonstrate how members should deal with a diminished clearance.
- Explain and demonstrate how to deal with overhead obstructions by rolling on their backs, keeping their SCBA bottle in the space between the wall and the floor and swimming motion to keep the overhead obstructions from entangling them.
- Explain and demonstrate how to deal with a drop-off or ledge by sounding with their tool before proceeding over.

T – Talking Points at Debriefing

When conducting a decision-making debrief it is imperative that the instructor take a positive and open approach to asking questions. The focus should be on getting the students to bring forward the learning points whenever possible. The instructor should ask open ended questions and attempt to guide the students to the necessary learning points. Particular attention should be paid to any situations in which the students had significant difficulty or success while proceeding through the prop. Students should be doing about 75% of the talking during any decision-making debrief.