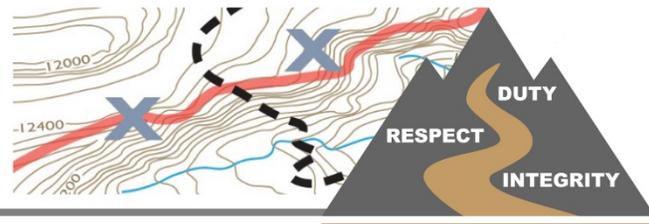


# Tactical Decision Games



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

## DIRECT VS. INDIRECT ATTACK/JOHNSON FIRE

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### INITIAL FACILITATOR INFORMATION—NOT TO BE SHARED WITH STUDENTS

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#### Target Audience

Incident Commander Type 4, Single Resource Boss

#### Training Objective

Given the following scenario, the players should decide on direct or indirect attack strategy. This can be used as a drill to discuss Watch Out Situations #9, #10, and #11. Players should verbally communicate their decisions to the appropriate individual.

#### Resources Referenced

- **Engine Boss (Player Role)**
- 2 Type 4 Engines (E-1, E-2)
- 1 Type 6 Engine (E-3)
- Incident Commander Type 4 (Captain from E-1 in chase vehicle)
- 1 2,000-gallon water tender

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### SCENARIO INFORMATION TO BE SHARED WITH STUDENTS

#### Facilitator Briefing to Student(s)

You are the Engine Boss of Engine-1, a Type 4 BLM engine with a crew of 5. It is 1130 on August 1<sup>st</sup> and you arrive on the Johnson fire in southern Idaho, along with Engine 2, a Type 4 engine with a crew of 3, and Engine 3, a Type 6 engine, also with a crew of 3. You put your Engine 1 under the supervision of your assistant and you have assumed the role of IC from your own chase vehicle.

The Johnson fire is currently 50 acres burning in grass and sage brush in rolling hills and ravines. It is currently 78 degrees with an RH of 19% and there is a light westerly wind. Your tactic as relayed to the engines in your briefing is for Engine 2 to take the southern flank, while Engine 1 and Engine 3 will work in tandem on the north flank. Your strategy is to pinch the head, from west to east, by flanking the fire from inside the black, using a rolling attack. Engine 1 on the northern flank has less than a half of a tank of water. However, you have a 2000 gallon water tender en route, but 30 to 45 minutes out. Engine 3 on the north flank has a broken foam unit.

Engine 2 is progressing well along the southern flank with a wet line, but does not have enough water to hook the head and work down the north flank. You are out ahead of Engine 1 and Engine 3 on the north flank and come to the head of small drainage. The drainage has fairly large boulders along the bottom and sides, but may be drivable. The north flank of the fire is now in this drainage, but has not yet crossed it. Flame lengths are less than 12". To your left and along the north side of the drainage, is a gentle ridge with light fuels and easy access toward the head of the fire. However, this gentle ridge will increase the perimeter of the fire by several chains. Finally, you see a ranch house with stock animals in a corral, about .5 a mile ahead of fire at the end of the gentle ridge

Take 3 minutes to assess the situation, develop a course of action, and prepare any communication contacts that you think are necessary.

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## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FACILITATOR ONLY**

### **Facilitator “Murphy’s Law” Suggestions**

The “Murphy’s Law” suggestions listed below can be added as “What ifs” at any time during the scenario to raise the stress level of the leader. You can also use one of your own.

- None needed if this TDGS is used as a seminar type.

### **Facilitator’s Notes**

The focus of this TDGS should be an analysis of direct attack versus indirect attack from the Single Resource Boss level. Be careful not to lead the role player(s) toward one attack over the other. The key here is that some quick analysis is done with the information given, leading toward an intuitive decision.

Labeling or marking the engines on the sand table will aid in the reading of the facilitator briefing.

In order to guide toward a single decision point, this TDGS is designed to be a “seminar” type. This TDGS ends once the players make their decision, either direct or indirect. As a seminar, each individual role player may make a different decision to be discussed in the AAR. However, a group discussion and consensus is just as viable and is likely to better represent “real life.”

The facilitator has the option of running this TDGS as a simulation type by assigning role players beyond the single point-in-time decision point. If so, the facilitator will need to develop Murphy's Law interruptions and decision points, such as the factors to consider described below.

The facilitator should be familiar with the advantages and disadvantages of direct and indirect attack in the IRPG.

The facilitator should look for the following factors as part of the decision making process by the role players. The players ought to recognize that a direct attack puts the fire fighters and equipment into a drainage where they may encounter difficult fire behavior. The drainage (and direct attack) may also present challenges to maneuvering the engines, however the lesser perimeter may be doable with the water available. The indirect attack is likely to bring the fire perimeter closer to the ranch house and corral. As well, the players should recognize that they may not have an adequate supply of water to continue the indirect wet line in a timely manner. Encourage and recognize the effort in considering other factors not presented here.

## After Action Review

Conduct your AAR at the sand table. The AAR should focus on the training objective, the resources and checklists used during the thought process; on the ability to identify the risks and benefits on direct and indirect attacks; and on the ability to explain the decision.

Use the AAR format found in the Incident Response Pocket Guide to facilitate the AAR. There are four basic questions in the AAR.

1. What was planned?
2. What actually happened?
3. Why did it happen?
4. What can we do next time?

Additional question:

- How does the choice of direct or indirect attack impact or effect the plan to pinch the head of the fire?

TDGS shouldn't have a single solution, keep the focus of the AAR on what was done and why.

