

# Los Angeles City Fire Department Preliminary Summary Report

## BLUE SHEET



### Injuries/Commercial Structure Fire

**May 16, 2020  
Boyd Incident  
CA-LFD-001073**

This report is intended as a safety/training tool, aids in preventing future occurrences and informs interested parties. This Informational Summary Report is prepared and distributed within 72 hours following the initiation of a Serious Incident Review Team to investigate a serious incident. Information contained herein is subject to revision as further investigation is conducted and additional information is developed.

## SUMMARY

On Saturday, May 16, 2020 at approximately 1838 hours, twelve (12) firefighters of the Los Angeles City Fire Department (LFD) were injured when a catastrophic fire event occurred at a one-story commercial structure fire, located at 327 East Boyd Street in the Skid Row area of downtown Los Angeles. The injuries occurred when the firefighters were engulfed by a large fireball, some as they were descending the aerial ladder and others while retreating from interior firefighting operations. All told, eleven (11) members sustained burn injuries, and one member suffered a lower extremity injury. Significant damage occurred to the apparatus, tools and equipment.

## NARRATIVE

On Saturday, May 16, 2020 at approximately 1827 hours, resources responded to a structure fire in Fire Station 9's first-in district at 327 E. Boyd St. The first arriving company reported a one-story commercial occupancy with moderate smoke showing from the Alpha side. The building was approximately 25' x 110' and was closed at the time of the alarm. Companies engaged in forcible entry, initiated fire attack and provided vertical ventilation in the offensive mode.

The first arriving Battalion Chief transitioned command with the Truck Captain and continued with offensive operations. The roof team spotted the aerial ladder, ascended to the roof of the involved occupancy and traversed the roof to conduct ventilation operations towards the rear of the building. The roof team reported fire showing from the ventilation hole and communicated with fire attack to direct the hose stream to the rear and toward the ceiling of the Charlie side. Fire attack communicated delayed entry and floor to ceiling product. Additional resources were ordered by the Incident Commander (IC), categorizing the incident as a "Major Emergency."

Approximately ten (10) minutes after the time of alarm, changes in smoke conditions occurred and began to engulf the firefighters on the Alpha side. It was at this time, firefighters on scene described hearing a "freight train" or "jet-like" sound. These sudden changes in fire behavior resulted in fire companies initiating a rapid retreat—both off the roof and out of the building. Immediately after firefighters began effecting their retreat, a ball of fire blowtorched across the street on the front (Alpha) side and out of the Charlie side. The roof team descended the aerial ladder, and fire attack retreated from the interior; however, both were caught in a wall of fire.

An “Emergency Traffic” was communicated with no further information. Moments later a “Mayday” was communicated by a member of the Battalion Command Team assigned to Division Alpha. The Emergency Tones and a “Mayday” were initiated by the IC. Additionally, Company Accountability Reports (CAR) together with Personal Accountability Reports (PAR) were requested by the IC multiple times. An additional “Mayday” was communicated by the Engine Company assigned to fire attack.

A Medical Group was established to triage and transport a total of eleven (11) firefighters to the closest Medical Trauma/Burn Center using multiple Paramedic Rescues. Remaining resources continued to fight the fire and a knockdown was determined at 2008 hours.

### CONDITIONS

Weather conditions consisted of a temperature of approximately 75 degrees with a wind out of the West at 6 mph.

### INJURIES/DAMAGES

A total of 12 firefighters were injured. Injuries ranged from partial thickness to full thickness burns to arms, hands, legs, back, buttocks, and ears. Some firefighters experienced respiratory involvement, and one member suffered a lower extremity injury. Significant damage to the Aerial Ladder and Apparatus was noted. Multiple tools were either unrecoverable or significantly damaged.

### SAFETY ISSUES FOR REVIEW

- Maintain radio discipline and clear the channel when a “Mayday” is in progress
- Utilize the divisional tactical channel when checking in above the original assignment
- Review “Mayday” procedures
- Review the fourteen (14) structural “watch-outs”
- Review fire ground survival in Training Bulletin 90

### REFERENCE MATERIAL (click on the following links)

- [Departmental Bulletin 15-11, Risk Management Policy and Firefighter Emergency/Mayday Procedures](#)
- [Volume 1, 2/3-20.30 Reporting to Base or Staging](#)

Commercial Structure Fire

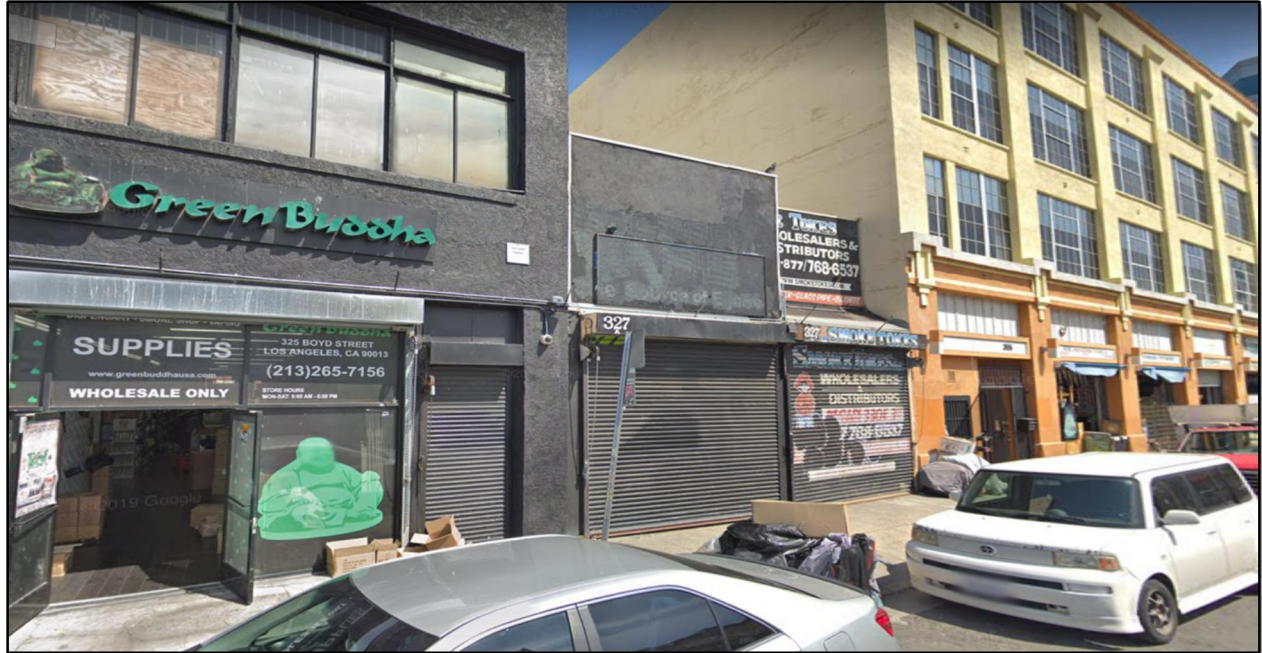
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- [Book 30, Incident Command Structure - Divisions/Groups, Basic Operational Approach](#)
- [Departmental Bulletin 16-05, Emergency Operations – Efficiency and Safety](#)
- [Training Bulletin 76, Company Operations](#)
- [Training Bulletin 90, Fire Burns – Structural Collapse and Fire Ground Survival](#)
- [Training Bulletin 106, LCES and “Watch Outs” for Structure Fires – Interior Firefighting “watch outs”](#)

(See photos)



Street view from Google Maps



Aerial image of 327 E. Boyd St. (indicated by arrow)



Aerial drone imagery of apparatus placement



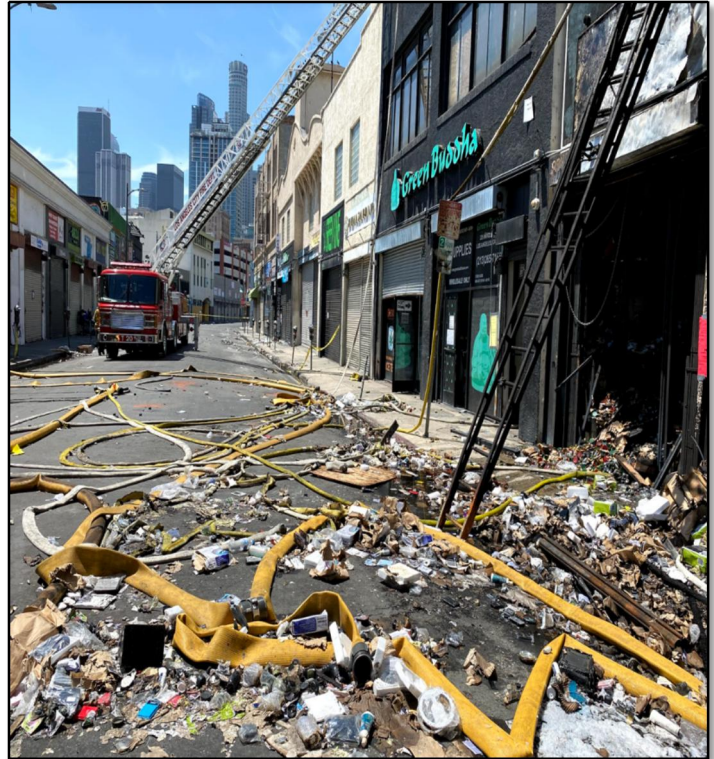
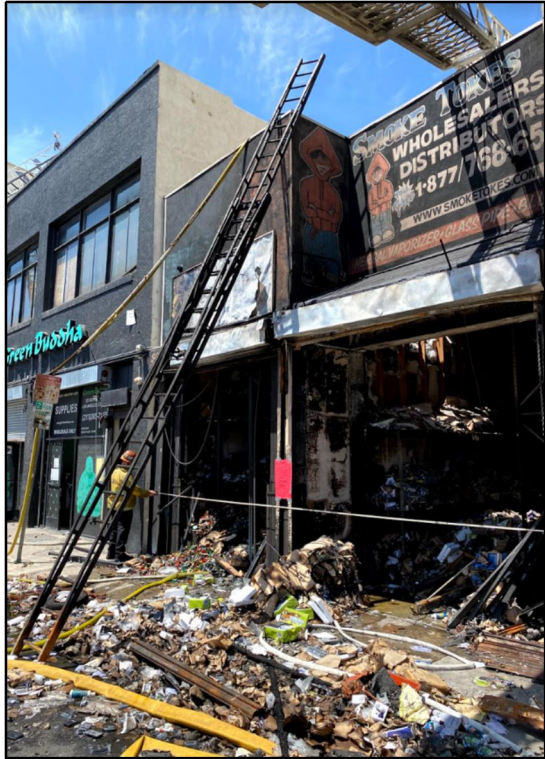
Aerial drone imagery from West (Bravo) perspective



Aerial drone imagery from North (Charlie) perspective



Aerial drone imagery from East (Delta) perspective



Perspective of roof from Bravo exposure looking back towards the Alpha side