

## **Points to Note for Candidates of Fire Service Installation Contractor Class 3 Practical Test**

This synopsis highlights previous candidates' common weaknesses in the Fire Service Installation Contractor Class 3 Practical Test (Test) and these could help them better prepare themselves for the Test:

(1) Inadequate Understanding of BS 5306 Part 3

Candidates often misunderstood and could not correctly follow the procedures set out in BS 5306 "British Standard for fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises - Part 3: Code of practice for the inspection and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers" for carrying out maintenance of fire extinguishers.

(2) Failure in Identifying Different Types of Fire Extinguisher

Candidates often could not identify different types of fire extinguishers and their features during the Test.

(3) Inadequate Knowledge on Use of Hand Tools for Carrying Out the Test

Candidates were often unable to use correct hand tools and use them in a proper way during the Test. For example, candidates may not know how to assemble or dismantle components of fire extinguishers with a belt wrench.

(4) Inadequate Knowledge on Operation of Equipment Used for Testing Fire Extinguishers

Candidates were often unable to correctly operate the equipment used for testing fire extinguishers, e.g. manual hydraulic pumps, during the Test. Candidates are advised to practise and gain more hands-on experience in operating these instruments before attending the Test.

(5) Poor Time Management

Candidates were required to complete 4 different tasks within 40 minutes during the Test but they often failed to complete all these tasks within the timeframe due to poor time management.

(6) Failure in Observing Safety Precautions whilst Conducting the Test

At times, candidates failed to take relevant safety precautions whilst performing hydraulic test during the Test.

(7) Failure in Identifying Relevant Information on the Fire Extinguisher

Candidates were unable to identify the required information on the provided fire extinguishers and consequently filled in both FS 251 and the Maintenance Label incorrectly and performed the tasks with wrong information.

(8) Failure in Correctly Filling in both FS 251 and Maintenance Label

Candidates were unable to correctly fill in both FS 251 and Maintenance Label because they were not familiar with the relevant requirements. For example, candidates failed to conclude the maintenance result from their inspection findings.

(9) Failure in Demonstrating the Proper Procedures in Carrying Out Inspection and Maintenance of Fire Extinguishers

Candidates were able to recite the required steps for inspection and maintenance but failed to physically demonstrate individual steps during the Test. For example, a candidate may mention about checking the pressure from the pressure gauge but without reading the pressure from the pressure gauge and determining whether the pressure is normal or not. At times, candidates might act in a way showing to have followed the steps but they did not actually perform the tasks.

(10) Failure in Explaining Clearly the Procedures Being Undertaken in their Demonstration

Candidates were too focused on completing individual steps of the inspection but failed to explain the purpose of individual steps at the same time.

(11) Failure in Describing the Actual Conditions of the Tested Fire Extinguishers

Candidates were able to follow the required steps for inspection and maintenance but failed to mention the actual conditions of the tested fire extinguishers to demonstrate that they had duly completed the tasks with correct observations.

(12) Failure in Carrying Out Hydraulic Test with Appropriate Parameters

Candidates were unable to carry out the hydraulic test with correct testing pressure and duration according to manufacturers' recommendation and/or NFPA 10 "Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers".

(13) Inadequate Knowledge on the Precautions and Maintenance Procedures of Fire Extinguishers

During the question and answer session on how to carry out maintenance of fire extinguishers, candidates were unable to explain the procedures and points to note as stipulated in the "Notes on Fire Extinguishers, Fire Blankets and Sand Buckets (Suitability and Maintenance)" according to the requirements of the "Codes of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installations and Equipment and Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Installations and Equipment".

(14) Failure in Checking Loss of Content

Candidates were unable to determine whether the loss of content in the fire extinguisher was within acceptable limits by means of proper weight check or volume measurement. Some candidates even forgot to conduct checking on the loss of content.

(15) Improper Air Venting during Hydraulic Tests

During hydraulic tests, candidates failed to use proper techniques in completely venting the air inside the cylinder or the system to prevent dangerous failure of the pressurized cylinder.

Hong Kong Fire Services Department  
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