The Roof Report

By Captain Donald Fletcher, Jr., Prince George’s County Fire Department

Unlike the other 5 sides to the box, there’s only one person who can view and give an assessment of roof conditions…
The person who’s physically on the roof!

You are the eyes and ears to command for one of the most critical reports on the fire ground. The unique portion of this role is that depending on your staffing and tactics, it’s often times not an officer providing the report. This task routinely falls onto the plate of the Truck driver, OVM or roof firefighter. Your report to Command needs to be descriptive and hit all the listed items, but should also be short and sweet as to not take up precious air time. Go to a commercial occupancy in your first due, ladder the roof, and practice a “CLAPT” report or these 5 items:

- **Construction of roof material** (Wood, metal deck, rubber membrane etc.)
- **Look for and give locations of dead loads.** Announce the quadrant, and what it is (HVAC, generator, etc.)
- **Already existing sky lights, scuttles, dumb waiter doors and other natural points of ventilation**
- **Parapet** - The height / location of the parapet i.e.. whether its fully encompassing (360°) or only located on side alpha.
- **Truss direction.** Whether they’re “A-C” or “B-D”. (This will give command an idea if the extension is traveling within the structure or to the B1/D1 exposures).

“Truck 1 to Command. It’s a rubber membraned roof with a fully encompassing 8’ parapet. Trusses are running from alpha to charlie and there’s a HVAC unit over the charlie quadrant”