



BUILDING BETTER FIREFIGHTERS

THE 5 MINUTE TRUCK CLINIC™

BY BRYAN T SMITH

THE FLAT HEAD AXE

In our last issue we became more familiar with the halligan bar. This week we will discuss the 2nd part of the dynamic duo the flat head axe.



Although not designed specifically for forcible entry this chopping, cutting and striking tool has become synonymous with forcible entry. It is used as the driving force behind the halligan bar when performing conventional forcible entry. It is available in a 6lbs. and a 8lbs. Weight. When used for forcible entry the 8lbs. Model (commonly known as the Force axe.) is a more efficient striking tool.

It has a broader surface for striking the halligan bar and the extra weight allows you to swing the axe less but drive the halligan quicker.



The firefighter swinging the axe during a forcible entry operation has a very important job which requires them to be focused on the task at hand! If your mind is wandering and you are not paying attention you can miss the halligan, striking and injuring your partner. You want to strike the halligan with enough force to

drive the tool in between the door and jamb, but not with one swing! The halligan is not a baseball and the axe is not a bat! Use short powerful strokes to ensure you are making solid contact with the halligan. When striking the halligan in zero visibility you wont be able to see it you will have to sound the adz by lightly tapping it before striking it at full force.

Striking Commands

The firefighter holding the halligan gives the commands **HIT** Strike the tool once do not strike the tool again until you are told to **HIT DRIVE** Strike the tool repeatedly until told to **STOP STOP** enough said!

STRIKING THE HALLIGAN

Strike the Halligan bar perpendicular to the Adz



The member striking the Halligan may have to stand, kneel or crouch to obtain the best striking position.



You should be familiar with the proper techniques for striking the halligan bar as well as the proper terminology so you know when to strike the halligan

THE FORCIBLE ENTRY IRONS

When the Halligan bar and flat head axe are married together they are known by the universal term the irons and are used to perform conventional forcible entry. These two tools are intended to be carried together in a very specific manner by one firefighter. They are not however intended to be used by one firefighter. Conventional forcible entry is a two person operation which requires skill and regular training to be mastered.



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