

PS COMMITTEE #3
September 17, 2009

MEMORANDUM

September 15, 2009

TO: Public Safety Committee
FROM: Minna K. Davidson, Legislative Analyst *MKD*
SUBJECT: MCFRS FY10 Strategic Plan

For this worksession, the Fire Chief will present an overview of the MCFRS FY10 Strategic Plan. A briefing outline is attached on © 1-18. A copy of the plan is available online at: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cs/templ.asp?url=/content/council/packet/index.asp>.

Background

When the Council reviewed the 2005 *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*, the plan included many recommendations but did not clearly prioritize them. The Public Safety Committee worked with MCFRS to more clearly reflect the priorities in the plan. To specify and highlight the most important priorities, MCFRS produced a Strategic Plan for the Implementation of Master Plan priorities.

The initial Strategic Plan included an implementation plan for the then 12 highest priorities in the Master Plan. The Strategic Plan recognized that full implementation of some priorities would take several years, but it focused on implementation and funding needs for priorities that had to be completed in the FY06-07 time frame. To provide a sense of the funding needs involved, the Strategic Plan included a table of estimated implementation costs (© 19). The initial Strategic Plan was included as Section 7 of the Master Plan, and was approved by the Council as part of the Master Plan.

The Strategic Plan was to be updated each year to reflect any changes in MCFRS priorities and implementation needs. The updated Strategic Plans were intended to form the basis for annual budget requests.

The FY10 Strategic Plan reflects MCFRS' current most urgent priorities. Although ideally it should have preceded the FY10 budget, it generally reflects the priorities underlying the budget. The Fire Chief is working to adjust the timing of future updates to coordinate better with budget development.

The FY10 Strategic Plan builds on recommendations from the FY09 Plan. (The Committee did not review the FY09 Plan because, due to a change in MCFRS leadership, the Plan was not issued until late in the fiscal year.) To show how MCFRS priorities have changed over time, the table below summarizes the priorities from the FY10, FY09, and original Plans.

Priority Item	FY10 Plan	FY09 Plan	Original Plan
Four-person Staffing	1	1	9
Response Time Improvement	2	3	
Apparatus Management	3	2	2
Interim Service for Travilah Area	4	15	
Glenmont Station 18 Relocation	5		12
Shady Grove and East Co. Stations	6		5 Shady Grove
Preventing the 9-1-1 Call	7	7	
Fire Risk Reduction Concerning Seniors	8	8	
Needs/Initiatives of the Fire Marshal's Office	9	14 High rise retrofit	
Enhancements to Wellness, Safety, and Training	10	10	4
Volunteer Initiatives	11	9	
Information Technology Infrastructure Enhancements	12		
Annual Accreditation Compliance	13	5	11
Performance Measurement	14	6	
Phases 6-8, Station Location and Resource Allocation Study	15	13 Phases 4 & 8	3 Phases 3-7
Renovation/Replacement of Stations 11 and 30	16		
Station 25 Expansion	17		
ISO Rating Improvement for Rural Area of County	18		11
Electronic Patient Care Reporting		4	
Facility Maintenance		11	
Ongoing CIP projects		12	1
Warehouse			6
New EMS units/service			7
Implementation of Aerial Unit and Rescue Squad Studies			8
Implementation of 2000 Water Supply Recommendations			10

Points for Committee Consideration

1. The Executive has recently transmitted to the Council several amendments to the Master Plan. The Council will have to act on the amendments, and a Committee worksession to review them will be scheduled for later this fall. Among other things, the amendments include adjustments to MCFRS response time goals.
2. The item “Response Time Improvements” did not appear in the original Strategic Plan, but is a very high priority in the FY09 and FY10 Plans. The Committee may want to ask what has caused this item to emerge as a priority. When the Committee reviews the Master Plan amendments, the Committee will want to understand how the adjustments in the Response Time Goals relate to the issues raised in the Strategic Plan.
3. A sub-priority of the FY10 Strategic Plan “Response Time Improvement” priority is “ECC Call-Processing Time Reduction”. The Committee has previously discussed this issue with MCFRS staff, and it will be covered in more detail in the next joint PS/MFP Committee review of the Public Safety Communications System on October 1.
4. By law, the Council must approve any MCFRS Master Plan or amendments. Although the original Strategic Plan was approved as part of the 2005 Master Plan, and one might infer that any updates must also be approved by the Council, MCFRS has treated subsequent updates as internal documents that do not require Council approval. The Committee may want to consider how Strategic Plan updates would be most useful to the Council, and whether Council approval should be required. If the Committee feels that clarification of this issue is needed as a matter of policy, it could be addressed when the Council reviews the Executive’s Master Plan amendments later this fall.
5. The original Strategic Plan included estimated costs for implementation of Plan priorities (see © 19). Later updates of the Plan have not included estimated costs. The Committee may want to discuss whether this information is helpful, and whether it is feasible for MCFRS to include it in future Plan updates.

MCFRS OVERVIEW OF FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2009



FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 1. FOUR-PERSON STAFFING – PHASE 3

- **Objective of staffing strategy is to achieve 24/7 fourth-person staffing of all frontline heavy apparatus (engines, aerial units, and rescue squads) throughout the County**
- **Phase 3 includes 8 additional engines:**
 - Takoma Park Engine 702
 - Sandy Spring Engine 704
 - Cabin John Engines 710 and 730
 - Damascus Engine 713
 - Bethesda Engines 720 and 726
 - Rockville Engine 733
- **Fourth person also makes possible implementation of the 1 and 1 ALS model; thus increasing ALS capacity**
- **The fourth person on the unit increases effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of critical fire fighting operations and allows faster assembling of suppression forces at fire incidents, thus minimizing fire casualties and property loss**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 2. RESPONSE TIME IMPROVEMENT

- **MCFRS must continue steps to reduce:**
 - time to process emergency calls and dispatch units
 - turnout time (i.e., time taken by personnel to depart their station following dispatch)
- **Acceleration of call processing will involve implementation of improved technology, staffing, and operational procedure changes**
- **Turnout time improvements will involve replacement of station alerting systems, procedural modifications, behavioral adjustments, and design changes for new stations**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 3. APPARATUS MANAGEMENT

Continued implementation of the Apparatus Management Plan:

- **Improve work flow process of Central Maintenance Facility to increase efficiency**
- **Finalize expanded business plan**
- **Implement Fleet Replacement Plan**
- **Continue implementation of FMIS procedures to track fleet activities**
- **Implement web-based tracking and defect reporting system**
- **Conduct acceptance testing of new apparatus and periodic testing of pumps and ladders**
- **Develop additional contracts for procurement, distribution, maintenance, repair, and testing of portable equipment, tools, and appliances**
- **Implement fleet management “best practices” relating to parts inventory management**
- **Continue training program for mechanics**
- **Continue planning for a department-wide and county-wide fueling system**
- **Work with LFRDs to fully equip reserve apparatus as ready reserve units**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 4. INTERIM SERVICE FOR TRAVILAH AREA

- **Planning and site selection for an interim station on or near the PSTA, including the preparation of a POR**
- **An interim station on or near the PSTA property will address increased service demand and unmet response time goals within the surrounding area:**
 - **4200 incidents during FY09**
 - **Nearly all responses to these incidents exceeded 6-minute goal for first due unit**
 - **Numerous health care and senior-living facilities in the area = high EMS call load**
 - **Increased ALS capacity to address increased ALS call load and ALS response time**
- **Interim service will be provided by a “1 and 1” ALS Unit and ALS Engine**
- **These resources will help in addressing existing up-county units that have exceeded the threshold level of 2500 calls per unit per year (FS3 and FS8 units)**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 5. GLENMONT STATION 18 RELOCATION

- **Continued planning for new Fire Station 18 (FS18) including finalization of POR**
- **It is anticipated that new FS18 will be co-located with the new parking garage at Georgia and Glenallan**
- **Discussions are ongoing with WMATA for land purchase for new FS18**
- **Planning for interim FS18 if new FS18 cannot be completed by late FY13 when the SHA will demolish existing FS18 for Georgia/Randolph intersection project**
 - **Preferred site is former Saddlebrook E.S.**
 - **Trailers (living quarters) and tent (apparatus garage) would be situated on site**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 6. SHADY GROVE AND EAST COUNTY STATIONS

- **Advocate for CIP funding for design and construction of Shady Grove Station 36 and East County Station 37**
- **Finalize PORs for both stations**
- **Stations needed to address existing and future incident volume, expected to increase sharply due to planned high-density development within Shady Grove and East County areas**
- **Phases 3 and 5 of Station Location and Resource Allocation Study determined and justified the need for Stations 36 and 37**
- **Stations 36 and 37 will improve response times to Shady Grove and Calverton areas and relieve high call volume for resources at Stations 3, 8, 12 and 15**
- **ALS units at Stations 36 and 37 will increase ALS capacity and improve ALS response time**
- **Site evaluation process for FS37 will begin Fall 2009; later in FY10 for FS36**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITIES 7 AND 8. PREVENTING THE 9-1-1 CALL AND FIRE RISK REDUCTION CONCERNING SENIORS

- Continued concentration on community outreach to prevent the 9-1-1 call:
 - Continuation of “Safety In Our Neighborhood” Program
 - Focus on at-risk populations – primarily seniors, immigrants and children
- Implementation of “*Senior Citizens Fire Safety Task Force Final Report*” recommendations
- Both career and volunteer resources (LFRD members, Fire Corps volunteers, CERT members) involved in program delivery
- Personnel going door to door in neighborhoods with at-risk senior residents and attending community events to speak with seniors and hand out injury/fire prevention literature and free smoke detectors to those in need
- MCFRS partnering with social service agencies for distribution of injury/fire prevention literature to their senior clientele. Partner agencies also being asked to report fire hazards and unsafe living conditions to MCFRS observed during in-home visits for follow-up preventative actions by MCFRS. 8

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 9. NEEDS/INITIATIVES OF THE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

- **The FM's Office should address initiatives and needs of its Code Enforcement, Engineering, and Fire/Explosive Investigations Sections, with emphasis on:**
 - use of present and emerging technologies and “best practices”
 - increasing capacity and efficiency without additional staff
 - addressing shortfalls highlighted by accreditation peer assessment process in 2007
 - completing inspections of multi-family occupancies throughout the County

- **Other Needs and Initiatives:**
 - Quality Assurance Program
 - Public Schools Program
 - Battalion-based inspections
 - Licensing of fire protection contractors
 - Residential high-rise sprinkler retrofitting
 - Use of uniformed civilians as sworn FMs
 - Migration to electronic-based system
 - Program to identify the causes of fire-related injuries
 - Improved capacity to investigate concurrent incidents
 - Engineering support services

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 10. ENHANCEMENTS TO WELLNESS, SAFETY, AND TRAINING

- **Wellness Needs and Initiatives:**
 - Substance Abuse Awareness Training for career and volunteer personnel
 - Incumbent Performance Evaluation program for career personnel

- **Safety Needs and Initiatives:**
 - Continuing Education Training
 - Safety Training
 - Collision/Injury Investigation Training

- **Training Needs and Initiatives:**
 - On-line training
 - Additional classes
 - In-service training
 - Command competency training/evaluation
 - Expanded apparatus needs to support training

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 11. VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES

- **MCFRS must continue to strengthen its efforts to recruit and retain volunteer personnel and find ways to utilize volunteers' collective services to the fullest**

- **Emphasis will be placed on:**
 - **recruiting volunteer firefighter-rescuers**
 - **meeting volunteers' training needs**
 - **enforcing the volunteer standby policy**
 - **utilizing volunteer firefighters to the greatest extent to meet 4-person staffing strategy**
 - **continued implementation of Montgomery County Fire Corps initiative and Community Emergency Response Team Program (CERT)**

- **Implementation of volunteer initiatives is a joint effort between Division of Volunteer Services, MCVFRA, and CRRS Recruiting Section**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 12. IT INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS

- **MCFRS IT infrastructure needs requiring prompt attention:**
 - **Electronic Patient Care Reporting (EPCR)**
 - **Continued enhancements to CAD including new interface to support EPCR**
 - **Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) rollout supporting MDCs**
 - **Enhancing the Firehouse Account Receivable Module with Scan Line processing for fire code inspection revenue collection via banks**
 - **Station alerting via Fiber Net**
 - **CAD paging - eliminate alpha pagers and achieve paging via cell phones**
 - **Replacement of older 800mhz 300r portable radios using grant monies**
- **IT infrastructure enhancements will replace or improve current IT systems that are inefficient and/or obsolete**
- **IT replacements and/or enhancements will lead to improved operational effectiveness and efficiency which will, in turn, lead to improved performance**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 13. ANNUAL ACCREDITATION COMPLIANCE

- **MCFRS has ongoing requirements to maintain its accreditation awarded in 2007**
- **Annual accreditation compliance report (ACR) is due each year in July [Status: CY2009 report submitted; awaiting feedback from CFAl]**
- **ACR includes information on departmental changes, compliance with 77 core competencies, and progress made in addressing CFAl-issued “strategic” and “specific” recommendations for improvement**
- **ACRs will be submitted in 2010 and 2011**
- **Every fifth year, an accredited agency must repeat the accreditation process to become re-accredited in accordance with CFAl requirements. MCFRS will attempt to earn re-accreditation status in 2012.**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 14. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

- **Continue development and refinement of MCFRS headline performance measures and provide quarterly updates on performance to CAO**
- **Prepare annual performance plan of the Fire Chief and provide performance results to CAO**
- **Participate in “CountyStat” Program headed by CAO**
- **Participate in benchmarking of performance indicators and sharing of best practices with comparable counties as part of CountyStat Program**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 15. PHASES 6-8, STATION LOCATION AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION STUDY

- **Complete Phase 8 (initiated in FY09) of the Station Location and Resource Allocation Study and initiate Phases 6 and 7 as follows:**
 - Phase 6 - Western Montgomery County, west of Stations 9, 22, 30, 31, 33, and 35
 - Phase 7 – Norbeck Road Corridor – Gude Drive to Route 650
 - Phase 8 – White Flint/North Bethesda Area
- **The results of Phases 6-8 will be used to justify anticipated requests for additional fire-rescue stations, personnel, apparatus, and equipment in future CIP and Operating budgets**
- **By completing Phases 6-8, the eight-phase study will have been completed. [Note: The Phase 4 Study of Northeast County was completed in FY09 and the accompanying report will be completed by 3rd Quarter of FY10.]**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 16. RENOVATION/REPLACEMENT OF STATIONS 11 AND 30

- **Planning and design of Glen Echo Station 11 and Cabin John Station 30 must begin in FY10 in accordance with the approved FY09-14 CIP**
- **For reasons of functionality, efficiency, safety, and cost-effectiveness, Stations 11 and 30 must be renovated or replaced within the next 5 years**
- **Phase 2 of the “Station Location and Resource Allocation Study,” completed in 2001, recommended expeditious renovation of both stations**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 17. STATION 25 EXPANSION

- **Planning and design for the expansion of Kensington Station 25 must begin in FY10 in accordance with the approved FY09-14 CIP**
- **Expansion of FS25 is needed to support the EMS flex unit and special operations capabilities established within recent years at the station**
- **Presently, vehicles and equipment associated with these additional capabilities are parked outdoors or stored in sheds**
- **FS25 already housed two EMS units, an engine, and aerial unit at the time when the flex unit and special operations vehicles were deployed**
- **The expansion will create sufficient space in the apparatus room for the EMS flex unit as well as vehicles and equipment associated with special operations**
- **The expansion will also include a training room**

FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

PRIORITY 18. PFPC RATING IMPROVEMENT FOR RURAL AREAS

- **MCFRS must plan and implement additional measures to enhance rural water supply capabilities with the intent of improving (i.e., reducing) the County's Public Fire Protection Classification (PFPC) rating issued by the Insurance Services Office (ISO)**
- **Montgomery County has a split rating:**
 - **PFPC-4 within urban area (the area served by hydrants and ≤5 miles of a fire station)**
 - **PFPC-9 within rural area (the area lacking hydrants and ≤5 miles of a fire station)**
- **FY10 priority focuses on improving PFPC-9 portion of rating which should result in reduced insurance premiums for property owners over time:**
 - **Appointment of a MCFRS Water Supply Officer who will be responsible for overseeing and coordinating the effort**
 - **Development of a plan addressing strategically-located, reliable sources of water for supporting rural fire suppression – cisterns, reliable bodies of water with good access**
 - **Deployment of new countywide fleet of Crimson pumpers, each equipped with compressed-air foam system and two 4-inch diameter, 1000-ft supply lines**

**Figure 7.1. ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COSTS OF HIGHEST PRIORITY MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS
(FY06-07)**

Priority	Capital Costs	Personnel Costs	Leasing Costs	Vehicles/equip.	Other Costs	Total
1-On-going CIP Projects (4 upcounty stations)	\$30.1 million	TBD	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$30.1 million
2-Apparatus Management Plan (initial phases)	\$300-500,000	\$1.43 million**	\$4.36 million**	N/A	\$245,000	\$6.3-6.5 million
3-Station Location Study - Phases 3-7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0***
4-Wellness/Safety Enhancements	N/A	780000**	N/A	15500**	310000**	\$1.1 million**
5-Shady Grove Station	\$15-35 million	TBD	N/A	TBD	N/A	\$15-35 million
6-Central Warehouse	N/A	\$342,000**	\$600,000/yr	260000**	TBD	\$1.2 million**
7-Additional EMS Units & CRUs	N/A	\$7.56 million**	TBD	\$1.95 million**	\$16,000	\$9.53 million**
8-Implementation of FRC-approved Studies	TBD	\$14.0 million	TBD	\$2.0 million	\$18,620/yr	\$16.02 million
9-Four-person Staffing - Phase 1 (FY07)	N/A	\$3.9 million	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$3.9 million
10-Water Supply & Foam Enhancements	TBD	TBD	TBD	\$7.4 million	TBD	\$7.4 million
11-Accreditation, and ISO Rating Improvement	TBD	500,000	N/A	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$750,000
12-Station 18 Relocation	\$8-10 million*	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1.6 million*	\$9.5-11.5 M
13-Battalion-based Resources	N/A	7.2 million	N/A	85000**	N/A	7.3 M****
SUB-TOTALS & GRAND TOTAL	\$53.4-75.6 M	\$35.7 million	\$4.96 million	\$11.8 million	\$2.4 million	\$109-131 M

M = million TBD = to be determined N/A = not applicable CRU = Community Resource Unit ISO = Insurance Services Office

* State will fund an undetermined amount

** First-year costs

*** No new costs. Existing personnel will perform work.

**** Costs of community resource units (CRUs) are included in Priority 7