

**FY10 STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FIRE,
RESCUE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES, AND COMMUNITY
RISK REDUCTION MASTER PLAN
PRIORITIES**



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INTRODUCTION

The FY10 Strategic Plan addresses implementation of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service's (MCFRS) highest priorities as recommended in the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* that require continuation (with respect to the FY09 Strategic Plan) during FY10, or initiation or full implementation during FY10. Priorities focus on apparatus, equipment, staffing, and service needs; reduction in response time; station renovations/expansions and new stations; ISO ratings improvement; annual accreditation compliance; performance measurement; enhancements for the Fire Marshal's Office; wellness, safety, and training enhancements; volunteer initiatives; planning initiatives, preventing the 9-1-1 call; and fire-related risk reduction pertaining to the growing senior population.

Some priorities in the FY10 Strategic Plan are carry-over priorities from the FY09 Strategic Plan because they were not completed or not yet initiated due to emergent departmental priorities and issues and/or insufficient resources. Carryover priorities from the previous Strategic Plan include: fourth-person staffing on suppression apparatus; response time improvements; timely apparatus replacement and maintenance; preventing the 9-1-1 call; fire-related risk reduction concerning seniors; departmental accreditation compliance, relocation of Station 18; planning for future fire-rescue stations and resources; and performance measurement.

New priorities in the FY10 Strategic Plan include: enhancements for the Fire Marshal's Office; wellness, safety, and training enhancements; IT infrastructure enhancements; ISO ratings improvement; establishing interim fire-rescue service in the Travilah-Traville area; renovation of Stations 10 and 11, expansion of Station 25; and inclusion of Station 36 (Shady Grove) and Station 37 (East County) construction in the FY11-16 CIP. Complete implementation of these new priorities during FY10 is unlikely as many of these priorities will require additional time to implement. While many could take several years to implement fully, it is important that they be initiated during FY10.

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FY10 PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Fourth-person Staffing – Phase 3

Priority in Brief: Continued implementation of the multi-phase staffing strategy recommended in the *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* is the top priority for FY10. The objective of the staffing strategy is to achieve fourth-person staffing of all frontline engines, aerial units, and rescue squads throughout the County on a 24/7 basis. The next (i.e., third) phase of the fourth-person staffing strategy will address eight additional engines, potentially including Engines 702, 704, 710, 713, 720, 726, 730 and 733.

Priority's Importance: Increasing the minimum level of staffing on suppression apparatus from three to four personnel is of primary importance as it will increase effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of fire fighting operations and allow faster assembling of suppression forces at fire incidents, thus minimizing fire casualties and property loss. Fourth-person staffing of engines also makes possible implementation of the 1 and 1 ALS strategy; thus increasing ALS capacity as well. Priorities 1 and 2 combined, will help in reducing response times county-wide.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (pertaining to adequate apparatus, equipment, personnel, and facilities to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #7 (addressing risk reduction strategies to improve occupational safety).

Explanation of Priority: The third phase of the fourth-person staffing strategy will address eight additional engines, potentially including Engines: 702-Takoma Park, 704-Sandy Spring (Brooke Rd. station), 710-Cabin John (River Rd. station), 713-Damascus, 720-Bethesda (Cedar Lane station), 726-Bethesda (Democracy Blvd. station), 730-Cabin John (Falls Rd. station) and 733-Rockville (Falls Rd. station). Staffing of the fourth position can be achieved by career and/or volunteer personnel but must be maintained on a 24/7 basis. Engines included in Phase 3 having a firefighter-paramedic as the fourth person or a Captain-paramedic as one of the four personnel will have the on-board capability to respond as AFRA's in addition to providing suppression services. Stations 2, 10, 20, 26, and 33 do not presently have medic units, so the AFRA capability onboard the frontline engines at these five stations would establish ALS first-responder service from these locations. Stations 4, 13 and 30 have medic units, so the AFRA capability onboard the frontline engines at these three stations would allow for 1 and 1 ALS staffing between the medic unit and engine. The fourth position assigned to Engines 704 and 730 would also be used – as available - to drive tankers assigned to Stations 4 and 30.

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Priority 2. Response Time Improvement

• Priority 2A. ECC Call-Processing Time Reduction

Priority in Brief: MCFRS must continue steps to reduce the time taken by ECC staff to process emergency calls and to dispatch units.

Priority's Importance: Accelerating ECC's call-taking and dispatch process (i.e., ECC call processing) is essential to reducing response times¹. While improvements in turnout time and travel time are important factors as well, MCFRS leadership agrees that reducing ECC processing time will have the largest impact on reducing response times because ECC processing time exceeds the NFPA Standard #1221 (i.e., 1 minute) by about 1.5–1.8 minutes on average. Priorities 1 (4th-person staffing) and 2 combined, will help MCFRS in reducing response times county-wide.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (adequate apparatus, equipment, personnel, and facilities to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services), Goal #8 (new technologies and innovations that will enhance the effective delivery of emergency services), and Goal #9 (program of evaluation to measure performance and determine how well MCFRS goals and objectives are being met).

Explanation of Priority: Call processing time is the component of response time most targeted for reduction because it offers the best opportunity for significant reductions. Steps are being taken to reduce travel time by adding stations in the up-county which increases the number of response resources in areas where stations are separated by considerable distances and resources are insufficient; resulting in improving travel times. MCFRS safety practices dictate that personnel don protective clothing before boarding apparatus which contributes to overall turnout time (see Priority 2B below). Clearly, call processing time offers the best opportunity for significant, cost-effective reductions in response time.

Accelerating call processing will involve implementing the technological, staffing, and procedural actions identified during the ECC analysis² performed in FY09. Approaches would likely include application of improved technologies (e.g., new CAD) and/or modified operational procedures, plus additional ECC staffing including non-uniformed positions and incentives for attracting and retaining uniformed personnel at ECC.

¹ The MCFRS definition of response time is the elapsed time from MCFRS communications staff answering the 9-1-1 phone call (usually following transfer from the PSAP) to arrival of the first unit on scene. Response time includes ECC call processing (i.e., call-taking and dispatch), turnout time, and travel time, combined.

² A "white paper" was written in FY09 that identified technological, procedural, and staffing problems at the ECC and made recommendations for improvement. A key component of the ECC analysis was a consultant's study identifying new CAD requirements (i.e., the "CAD Road Map").

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• **Priority 2B. Station Turnout Time Reduction**

Priority in Brief: MCFRS must continue actions initiated during FY09 to reduce turnout time (i.e., time taken by personnel to depart their station following dispatch).

Priority's Importance: Improving turnout time is important to reducing response times. The MCFRS average turnout time to all types of incidents (i.e., about 1.25 minutes³) exceeds that referenced in NFPA Standard 1710 (i.e., 1 minute) by about 15 seconds. Reducing turnout time by an average of 20 seconds for EMS incidents would have considerable impact in reducing overall response time to 1 minute.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (adequate apparatus, equipment, personnel, and facilities to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #9 (program of evaluation to measure performance and determine how well MCFRS goals and objectives are being met).

Explanation of Priority: Reduction in turnout time will involve reductions in time taken by firefighter-rescuers to acknowledge the incident being dispatched, walk to apparatus, don gear, and board apparatus. Solutions will likely involve procedural modifications as well as behavioral adjustments. Design of new stations must also address the minimization of turnout time by placing frequently occupied rooms/areas (e.g., kitchen, dormitory) closest to the apparatus room.

Time delays related to safety procedures cannot be alleviated for the purpose of reducing turnout time because injury prevention is of primary importance. Any reduction in turnout time will be minimal to moderate because personnel are instructed to proceed carefully – yet expeditiously - to apparatus to prevent slips, trips, and falls. MCFRS safety practices dictate that personnel don protective clothing before boarding apparatus which contributes to overall turnout time. The best opportunities to minimize turnout time lie in quick alerting of personnel throughout the station (i.e., a technological change involving replacement of the MOSCAD station alerting system) and for personnel to proceed toward apparatus without delay regardless of call type⁴ (i.e., a behavioral change).

³ While the average turnout time for structure fire incidents is ~40 seconds (~0.7 min.), the average for EMS incidents – comprising about 75% of all fire-rescue incidents - is about 1.35 minutes; thus the average for all fire-rescue incidents is about 1.25 minutes.

⁴ Data indicate that turnout times for EMS incidents, particularly BLS incidents, are considerably higher than for fire incidents – especially structure fires.

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Priority 3. Apparatus Management

Priority in Brief: Continued implementation of the Apparatus Management Plan during FY10, with emphasis on apparatus maintenance, apparatus replacement, analysis and planning, training, and procurement and maintenance of fire-rescue equipment/tools.

Priority's Importance: The importance of addressing these priority items from the *Apparatus Management Plan* is paramount to MCFRS having the physical capability to deliver emergency services through efficiently-operating, capable, and dependable apparatus and equipment. Minus these enhancements, the MCFRS fleet will experience breakdowns, and the MCFRS will lack the ability to operate at maximum effectiveness, capacity, and efficiency during emergency incidents.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 pertaining to adequate apparatus, equipment, facilities, and personnel to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services.

Explanation of Priority: During FY10, the following apparatus management actions must be implemented:

- **Central Maintenance Facility (CMF):** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will continue improving the work flow process of the CMF to increase efficiency. This will include the continued development of standards of maintenance for the MCFRS fleet. During FY10, the Apparatus Section and CIP Facilities Section will complete a POR for a permanent County-owned CMF to replace the leased facility and will initiate planning and design with the Department of General Services. While the CMF is expected to service 60% of the fleet when fully functional and staffed, the *Apparatus Management Plan* calls for the establishment of two satellite maintenance shops (i.e., “North-County” and “South-County”) to handle maintenance and repairs for the remaining 40% of the fleet. Until these satellite shops are funded and established in suitable facilities, the Station 8 Shop will function as an interim north-county shop. During FY10, the Apparatus Section should continue searching for suitable sites for the satellite shops and develop PORs for them.
- **Business Plan:** The Apparatus Section will finalize its expanded business plan during FY10 and begin the plan's implementation. The plan will address all elements of asset management, including apparatus and equipment management. The business plan will set forth the work processes required to operate the Section effectively and efficiently and to further implement the provisions of the *Apparatus Management Plan* as well as the Fleet Replacement Plan (see below).
- **Fleet Replacement Plan:** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will begin implementation of the Fleet Replacement Plan developed in FY09. The plan will address asset replacement by vehicle class for all vehicle classes within MCFRS. The plan will incorporate best practices for asset replacement -addressing near and long-term vehicle and select portable assets - including costs, depreciation, residual values,

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funding requirements, alternative financing, and replacement charge-back rates. The plan will project costs and dates by individual asset for a period of 20 years. During FY10, the Apparatus Section will continue acquisition of new apparatus and outfitting them with equipment before they are placed in service. Part of this process is acceptance testing upon delivery from the vendor. During FY10, the Apparatus Section will oversee the completion of the department's fleet of 39 new pumpers by Crimson Fire, Inc.

It is important to note that apparatus replacements are not one-time purchases. Apparatus must be strategically replaced at regular intervals in accordance with the department's apparatus replacement plan. Annual funding for apparatus replacement will be required to implement this plan.

- **Fleet Management Information System (FMIS):** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will continue implementation of FMIS procedures to track fire-rescue fleet activities. MCDOT Division of Fleet Management Services' "FASTER" System⁵ will be expanded to meet MCFRS needs.
- **Countywide Fire-Rescue Fleet Tracking and Defect Reporting System:** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will fully implement a web-based tracking and defect reporting system that – for the first time – will permit staff to rapidly review, prioritize, and amend defects for all apparatus on a real time basis. These defects will be generated from any MCFRS work site by both career and volunteer personnel. Enhanced reporting capabilities, based upon tiered levels of access for various managers and Apparatus Section staff, will enhance real time prioritization and processing of repairs that follow best fleet practices. Use of this system will optimize available fleet resources and minimize the need for redundant vehicle assets by breed.
- **Apparatus and Equipment Testing:** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will continue its ongoing program to conduct acceptance testing of new apparatus and periodic testing of pumps, aerial devices, and ground ladders to ensure they are functioning properly and can be used safely. As part of this program, there will be an ongoing review of new local, State, and NFPA standards. MCFRS inspection requirements will be amended, as needed, based upon new standards identified.
- **Equipment, Tools, and Appliances:** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will continue developing additional contracts for the procurement, distribution, maintenance, repair and testing of portable equipment, tools, and appliances used by MCFRS in the field. As part of an overall plan to position the MCFRS in a "best practices" parts management strategy, the Apparatus Section will explore opportunities to minimize costs while maximizing the availability of fire fighting, EMS, and rescue equipment, tools, and appliances. This will include future opportunities to combine efforts with the MCFRS Logistics Section. A strategic goal to establish secure chain-of-custody inventory, use, and repair/replacement of these

⁵ Under the County's Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) project, a replacement for FASTER is being considered. MCFRS will participate in the selection process expected to take place in FY11-12.

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vital assets will be proposed. Emphasis will be placed upon physical inventory stock and security, fill rates and times, part number identification and coding methods, replenishment, and management operations.

- **Parts Inventory:** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will continue implementing best fleet management practices as they relate to parts inventory management. The purchase of spare parts for new breeds of apparatus (e.g., new fleet of Crimson engines) will continue. This will facilitate quick servicing of apparatus rather than ordering parts as they are needed and delaying repairs until parts arrive.
- **Training:** LFRD mechanics who became County employees during FY09 will continue to participate in an aggressive training program established by the Apparatus Section during FY10. Attainment of the ASE certification and many of the Emergency Vehicle Technician certifications will be applied consistently across the team of MCFRS maintenance technicians, including any new hires.
- **Fuel Management:** During FY10, the Apparatus Section will re-submit a CIP Project⁶ for competition in the FY11-16 CIP cycle for the design, procurement, and implementation of a department-wide fueling system under the central authority of the MCFRS Apparatus Section. Assuming that funding is approved, the Apparatus Section will oversee procurement of the fuel management system components and infrastructure and move toward implementation as soon as funding is secured.
- **Storage of Ready-Reserve Apparatus:** The Apparatus Section will continue to work with the LFRDs during FY10 to convert unequipped standby ready-reserve apparatus with fully equipped ready reserve apparatus. Efforts to allocate space for housing ready-reserve apparatus in each battalion will continue. The strategy will be to establish battalion-based storage of ready reserve apparatus to eventually create a countywide capability necessary for day-to-day capacity and campaign event deployment of additional resources.

Priority 4. Interim Service for Travilah Area

Priority in Brief: During FY10, planning for an interim station at the PSTA will be completed, including the preparation of a POR. Increased service demand and risk within the Travilah, Traville, and Falls Grove areas must be addressed before Travilah Fire Station #32 opens within the projected FY13-14 time frame. Deploying an EMS unit and engine, with guaranteed 24/7 staffing, on the Public Safety Training Academy property on an interim basis is needed until the permanent Travilah Station is built and opened.

Priority's Importance: Considering the growing demand for EMS and suppression services in the up-county, MCFRS' inability to meet Council-approved response time

⁶ A project for the proposed fuel management system had been submitted in FY09 as a FY10 amendment to the FY09-14 CIP; however, funding for the project was not recommended in the County Executive's FY10 amendment to the FY09-14 CIP submitted to the County Council.

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goals in portions of the up-county, and the number of up-county units exceeding or nearing the threshold level of 2500 responses per year, it is extremely important that an EMS unit and engine be deployed within the Travilah/Traville/Fallsgrove area on an interim basis until the permanent Travilah station is built and opened.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (adequate facilities, apparatus, equipment, and personnel to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #12 (establishing and implementing CIP projects on a timely basis).

Explanation of Priority: An EMS unit and engine – to be housed in an interim facility on the PSTA property - will address increased service demand and unmet response time goals within the surrounding Travilah, Traville, and Fallsgrove areas as well as the up-county region as a whole. These resources will also play a part in addressing the issue of existing up-county units that have exceeded the recommended threshold level of 2500 calls per unit per year.

To further illustrate the immediate need for interim service at the PSTA, the area that will become the first-due response area of the future Travilah Fire Station experiences about 3450 incidents per year. About 75% of these incidents are EMS in nature due largely to the presence of several health care facilities and senior housing within the vicinity of Shady Grove Adventist Hospital as well as the National Lutheran Home located about 2 miles south of the hospital. In addition, the incident volume within Station 32's area will grow considerably with the planned expansion of the Life Sciences Center including the Johns Hopkins University "Belward" Campus (on the former Banks Farm). Incident volume within Station 32's area will increase even more when the planned "Crown Village" mixed-use community (on the former Crown Farm) is completed. Station 32 units will also relieve a portion of the heavy call load for units located at Stations 3 and 8 that have exceeded 2500 responses per year.

Priority 5. Station 18 Relocation

Priority in Brief: MCFRS must finalize the POR for Glenmont Station 18 (i.e., relocated to the Georgia-Glenallan site) during FY10 and request inclusion of this project in the County's FY12-17 mid-cycle CIP. If it appears that Station 18 cannot be completed by the time the existing station must be demolished, then plans must be developed for establishing an interim station in the Glenmont area and funding for the interim station must be secured.

Priority's Importance: Station 18 must be relocated due to State Highway Administration (SHA) plans to create a grade separation at the existing Georgia Avenue/Randolph Road intersection that will require the property on which Station 18 now stands. Construction of the grade separation is expected to begin in FY14 (potentially sooner if Federal Stimulus Program monies were to be applied to this project), so the new Glenmont Fire

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Station must become operational beforehand. To meet this deadline, a CIP project for Station 18 must be included in the FY12-17 mid-cycle CIP.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (adequate facilities, apparatus, equipment, and personnel to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #12 (establishing and implementing CIP projects on a timely basis).

Explanation of Priority: The driving force behind this MCFRS priority is the State's grade separation project at Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road. The grade separation project is a high priority of both the County and State, but construction cannot begin until funding is secured and existing Station 18 is razed. Should existing Station 18 not be vacated by the time the State intends to raze it, the grade separation project could be jeopardized (i.e., delayed indefinitely) – a situation the County and MCFRS wish to avoid.

For Station 18 to be razed, the apparatus, equipment, administrative files, supplies, and personnel must be relocated to a new facility – either the new permanent station on the chosen site at Georgia and Glenallan Avenues or an interim facility elsewhere in the Glenmont area. A move directly to the permanent station is preferred; however, the project must first be funded within the FY12-17 mid-cycle CIP and then completed before the existing station is razed. If it appears that Station 18 cannot be completed by the time the existing station must be razed, then plans must be developed during FY10 for establishing an interim station in the Glenmont area and funding for the interim station must be secured.

Priority 6. Shady Grove and East County Stations

Priority in Brief: MCFRS must advocate for inclusion within the FY11-16 CIP of design and construction of a 7-bay multi-purpose fire-rescue station within the Shady Grove area and design and construction of a 4-bay station within the East County along the U.S. Route 29 corridor. The two new stations are needed to address existing and future incident volume which is expected to increase sharply due to planned high-density development within the Shady Grove and East County areas.

Priority's Importance: Securing design and construction funding for the Shady Grove station within the FY11-16 CIP would allow this strategically-important facility to open within the next 4-6 years. The personnel and apparatus to be assigned to this station will serve not only the immediate Shady Grove area with standard fire-rescue services but, due to its central location and access to major north-south and east-west highways, will also serve the entire County with specialized services of a disaster response and homeland security nature. Without this facility, six-minute response time for first-due EMS and fire suppression services cannot be achieved within the Shady Grove-King farm area, and specialty units that serve the entire County would continue to be housed (out of

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necessity) at non-centralized locations, adversely impacting their response times throughout much of the County.

Securing design and construction funding for the “East County” station in the FY11-16 CIP would allow this key facility to open within the next 4-6 years. Absent this station, six-minute response time for first-due EMS and fire suppression services cannot be achieved within much of the growing Calverton area, including the large Riderwood Village community for seniors. If this project receives funding quickly, the possibility exists for the station to be included in the design of the new Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) campus that has been proposed for a WAH-owned site on Plum Orchard Drive.⁷

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (adequate facilities, apparatus, equipment, and personnel to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #12 (establishing and implementing CIP projects on a timely basis).

Explanation of Priority: MCFRS must advocate for inclusion within the FY11-16 CIP of design and construction monies for a 7-bay fire-rescue station within the Shady Grove area, at or in the vicinity of Shady Grove Road and Route 355, and a 4-bay station within the East County in the vicinity of Columbia Pike (U.S. 29) and Tech Road.

The Shady Grove station must have living quarters, office space, and bay space to accommodate firefighter-rescuers staffing primary units, drivers for specialty units, and the following apparatus: suppression apparatus, EMS unit(s), ready-reserve apparatus, and specialty units including several or all of the following: Command Post unit, air unit, decontamination unit(s), ambulance bus, mass casualty support unit, up-county hazmat unit, and foam unit.

MCFRS must also advocate for the inclusion within the FY11-16 CIP of design and construction monies for a 4-bay station within the East County in the vicinity of Columbia Pike (U.S. 29) and Tech Road. The station would serve the growing, high call load area between Burtonsville and White Oak (a.k.a. Calverton area and vicinity). The “East County” station should accommodate up to twenty personnel as well as a frontline engine, one or two frontline EMS units, and reserve and/or ready-reserve apparatus.

Priority 7. Preventing the 9-1-1 Call

Priority in Brief: MCFRS will continue to concentrate community outreach efforts on preventing the 9-1-1 call during FY10 by continuing the “Safety In Our Neighborhood (SION)” Program and focusing the program on at-risk populations – primarily sub-demographic groups (see below) within the overall senior population.

⁷ The specific siting of the East County Fire Station has not been determined. A site evaluation process is required by the County wherein a committee of residents and County personnel will identify and evaluate several sites, including the WAH site.

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Priority's Importance: The primary benefits of preventing the 9-1-1 include the following: 1) reduction in the percentage of County residents injured, thus requiring MCFRS response less frequently; 2) property damage will be reduced due to less incidence of fire; 3) reduction in the number of calls for assistance should result in improved response time [i.e., ECC call processing should be faster due to less call volume, and travel times will be faster because more units will be available in their first-due areas resulting in shorter travel distances]; 4) less opportunity for injury to firefighter-rescuers during response and incident operations; and 5) less wear and tear on apparatus as well as reduced fuel consumption.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #2 (pertaining to community outreach), and Goal #13 (addressing development and implementation of risk reduction programs aimed at specific populations).

Explanation of Priority: Continuing the "Safety in Our Neighborhood (SION)" Program will be a major step in MCFRS' campaign to prevent the 9-1-1 call. The SION Program during FY10 will be based on the following elements:

- Program will target at-risk seniors (i.e., low income, immigrant, and minority segments of the County's senior population)
- Implementing *Senior Citizens Fire Safety Task Force (SCFSTF) Final Report* recommendations will be a major component of the program.
- Program will utilize career and volunteer resources (i.e., LFRD members, Montgomery County Fire Corps volunteers, CERT members) for program delivery
- Fire-rescue personnel will go door to door in neighborhoods with at-risk senior residents and will also attend community events to speak with seniors and to hand out injury prevention/fire prevention literature and free smoke detectors.
- MCFRS will partner with various social service agencies and organizations for the handing out of injury prevention/fire prevention literature to at-risk senior clientele. Partner agencies will also be asked to report observations (e.g., fire hazards, unsafe living conditions, etc.) to MCFRS from their in-home visits, so that MCFRS personnel can visit these residences to provide needed risk reduction services and guidance.

Priority 8. Fire Risk Reduction Concerning Seniors

Priority in Brief: In FY10, MCFRS will continue implementation of the priority recommendations of the Senior Citizen Fire Safety Task Force as presented in the Task Force's final report published in September 2008.

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Priority's Importance: Between CY03 and CY08, 22 senior citizens (i.e., 65 years and above) died in fires in Montgomery County, 51% of the 43 fatalities of all ages during that five-year period. These statistics are especially significant in view of the fact that senior citizens comprised only 10-11% of the county's population during that period. It is of great importance that the County find ways to reduce fire risk involving senior citizens, because the number of senior residents is projected to increase from 104,591 (11.3% of county-wide population) in 2005 to 115,238 (11.7%) by 2010, 134,838 (13.2%) by 2015, and 155,371 (14.6%) by 2020. Absent a significant reduction in fire risk as it relates to seniors, the upward trend of senior fire casualties will continue.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #2 (pertaining to community outreach) and Goal #13 (addressing development and implementation of risk reduction programs aimed at specific populations).

Explanation of Priority: MCFRS, in conjunction with Executive and Legislative branches of County Government, must fund and implement measures to minimize fire risk involving the County's senior population and to reduce the high number of fire-related casualties (i.e., fatalities and injuries) involving senior citizens. Measures for minimizing fire risk to seniors have been identified by the Senior Citizen Fire Safety Task Force (SCFSTF) – a group established in 2006 by the County Executive and County Fire Chief and charged with identifying strategies for minimizing fire risk to senior citizens and reducing the disturbing number of fire fatalities and injuries involving seniors.

In June 2008, the Task Force released its final recommendations addressing the following needs and proposed approaches to meeting those needs⁸:

- Senior Citizen Fire Safety Coordinator (Program Manager I) position within MCFRS to lead and oversee implementation of SCFSTF recommendations
- Creation of a multi-disciplinary senior citizen fire risk prevention team
- Creation of a coalition of industry partners to assist MCFRS in implementing a fire safety public awareness program
- Comprehensive wide-ranging strategies to reduce fire risk and fire casualties among senior citizens
- Needed changes to building and fire codes for new and existing structures that incorporate fire safety features (e.g., sprinkler systems, fire detection and alarm systems, wider exit stairways, etc.) addressing the needs of seniors

⁸ The list of recommendations presented in this Plan is not all-inclusive of the complete list of recommendations produced by the SCFSTF. Plan users are encouraged to view the Task Force report.

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- Enhancing the training of MCFRS staff to improve communication skills with high-risk seniors
- Support of legislation placing criminal liability on those whose demonstrated gross negligence and intentional disregard of fire codes and fire safety practices causes property damage, personal bodily injury, and/or loss of life
- Demographic and community changes that impact the safety of seniors
- Personal and community-based requirements and procedures that seniors and caregivers can practice to increase fire safety

The complete list and description of all SCFSTF recommendations are presented in the Task Force report titled: “Seniors at Risk: Creating a Culture of Fire Safety - The Final Report,” dated September 2008. In FY10, MCFRS must continue coordinating the implementation of these recommendations with governmental and private organizations (e.g., senior citizen fire risk prevention team) identified in the final report. The Senior Citizen Fire Safety Coordinator position, when filled, will oversee implementation of SCFSTF’ recommendations. In addition, the newly established Montgomery County Fire Corps (see Priority 11) should be utilized to assist the Citizen Fire Safety Coordinator with projects (e.g., home safety assessments, educational events, media support) associated with implementation of recommendations.

Priority 9. Needs/Initiatives of the Fire Marshal’s Office

Priority in Brief: During FY10, the Fire Marshal’s Office (FMO) should address a number of initiatives and needs across its three component elements: code enforcement, engineering, and fire/explosive investigations. Emphasis should be given to use of present and emerging technologies and best practices, increasing capacity and efficiency without additional staff, addressing shortfalls highlighted by the accreditation peer assessment team in 2007, and completing inspections of multi-family occupancies throughout the county.

Priority’s Importance: To increase the efficiency of the FMO and to improve its overall effectiveness in meeting its mission, this priority must be addressed during FY10. Many of the initiatives and needs described below are carry-overs from previous years (e.g., inspections of multi-family occupancies, sprinkler retrofitting, addressing accreditation shortfalls), while others are new (e.g., identifying the causes of fire-related injuries, establishing the Engineering Office as a stand-alone Section within FMO, exploring the use of uniformed civilians as sworn fire marshals).

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Goal #13 (addressing development and implementation of risk reduction programs aimed at specific populations) and Goal #3 (adequate equipment, personnel, facilities, and apparatus to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services).

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Explanation of Priority: During FY10, the FMO should focus on the following priorities, presented by Section as well as in terms of FMO as a whole.

Fire Marshal's Office (all sections)

- Implementation of Existing/New Technologies and Innovations: Implement existing off-the-shelf technologies and “industry” innovations as well as new technologies and innovations, as appropriate, to improve the overall efficiency of the FMO. These will include IT technologies as well as innovations and industry best practices derived from other fire-rescue departments. Personnel costs are the greatest draw-down on available funding and opportunity to operate a cost-neutral platform. The FMO must begin to shift cost centers from salaries to operating funds. Implementing practices and technologies that improve service throughout provide the only fiscally viable solution to meeting increased service demand without increasing staff.
- Quality Assurance Program: Implement a quality assurance program within the FMO to ensure the quality of all aspects of code enforcement and investigations. A quality assurance program, as envisioned, has both internal and external aspects. Within the FMO, Captains serve as program managers and are responsible for internal review of process and quality of work performed. Engineers provide external and technical review of service. For example, engineers review licensing to ensure that the appropriate training standards are met by third party fire protection contractors. A manufacturing industry standard is to measure the number of defects per unit produced. This same concept can be applied to each section within the FMO and external service providers. Performance can be measured in terms of failure (negative or false positive findings) per unit of service delivered, ultimately feeding back into training to improve performance.
- Public Schools Program: Expand upon the program initiated in FY09 to establish a partnership between the FMO and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) for the purposes of strengthening code enforcement and fire investigation and creating a true public safety presence (MCFRS and MCP⁹) in public high schools. The FMO needs a greater presence within public schools to ensure the safety of students and faculty regarding fire, beyond that which MCPS achieves on its own. Creating a stronger partnership with MCPS and MCP will ensure that appropriate arson investigations occur and that County fire codes are enforced in all public schools in a standardized and thorough manner.
- Recommendations in CFAI Report: Work toward addressing recommendations in the “Accreditation Report” of the CFAI Peer Assessment Team dated April 27, 2007, pertaining to the Fire Marshal's Office:

⁹ MCPS has a partnership with MCP whereby a police officer - serving as an “Educational Facility Officer” – is deployed to each public high school to address safety from the law enforcement perspective.

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- Strategic Recommendation #1 (paraphrased): That training be conducted [for officer-level personnel] on how to properly value and record loss data, and that a mechanism for quality assurance be developed for this performance measure.
- Strategic Recommendation #1 (paraphrased): That MCFRS update written policies/procedures for origin and cause investigations commensurate with accepted fire investigations standards. Further, that all related policies /procedures be consolidated in a single location for the Fire & Explosive Investigations Section.
- Specific Recommendation 5D (paraphrased): That MCFRS adopt a formal appraisal process for the review of the fire investigations program that would support agency goals as well as additional accreditations such as CALEA.

Code Enforcement Section

- Inspections of Multi-family Occupancies: Complete initial inspections of all mid-rise apartment and garden apartment buildings. Upon completion, all multi-family occupancies – including high-rises, mid-rises, and garden apartments - in the County (except within the City of Gaithersburg¹⁰) will have been inspected by MCFRS, culminating a multi-year effort.
- Battalion-based Inspections: Continue battalion-based approach to code enforcement initiated during FY08-09 by focusing efforts on licensing of group homes and day care facilities and enforcement of fire codes through inspections. In addition, efforts should be taken to improve the interaction between battalion-based inspectors and firefighter-rescuers at the station level to include information sharing regarding hazards and code violations in buildings within each battalion. Inspectors' offices will remain at the FMO in Rockville until office space is found or becomes available at new or existing fire-rescue work sites or at other County-owned/leased facilities throughout the County. Physically locating battalion-based inspectors within the battalions may not be realized for several fiscal years due to space availability and cost considerations.
- Licensing: Implement the 3rd Phase of the licensing initiative to address licensing of contractors and the creation of a “trades board.” The executive regulations adopted in 2006 require all companies and persons engaged in the business of providing fire protection systems services to obtain a license issued by the Fire Marshal. Through licensing, the FMO becomes a colleague of the fire protection company and the customer. The licensure requirement ensures that fire protection companies are fulfilling their code-required obligations and FMO becomes the

¹⁰ The Fire Marshal for the City of Gaithersburg inspects multi-family occupancies within city limits.

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quality assurance vehicle for the customer. The licensure process also provides a mechanism to sanction those fire protection companies that fall short.

- Multi-agency Code Enforcement: Implement the multi-agency code enforcement approach that was derived by the Multi-agency Code Enforcement Work Group. The multi-agency code group explored several issues concerning enforcement by the various departments with code enforcement authority within Montgomery County. Two particular recommendations from the final report issued by this group should be a priority for Fire Code Enforcement (FCE). First, community complaints received by FCE need to be merged into the e-referral system currently used by DHCA and DEP. Second, FCE inspectors need to be cross-trained in basic level requirements of other enforcement departments so that actions can be initiated if they are discovered during the course of normal duties.
- High-rise Sprinkler Retrofitting: Continue the multi-year effort to encourage voluntary sprinkler retrofitting by owners of residential high-rises built before sprinkler systems were required by County Code. The development of financial incentives (e.g., tax breaks, reduced insurance premiums, etc.) must be explored further with members of the Public Safety Committee and the insurance industry to determine what can be offered within the current economic climate as well as future times when the economic situation will improve. The Code Enforcement Section must also continue providing guidance to the County's Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) initiative concerning sprinkler retrofitting of residential occupancies owned by the HOC as well as replacement of fire alarm systems that do not meet current County Code.
- Use of Uniformed Civilians as Sworn FMs: Explore the concept of using uniformed civilians as sworn fire marshals to return more firefighters – currently serving as fire marshals - to field operations. The practice of utilizing uniformed civilians as sworn fire marshals has been used successfully in other fire departments in the U.S. A study should be conducted by the Code Enforcement Section to determine the feasibility of employing the practice here, including advantages and disadvantages.

Fire and Explosive Investigations Section

- Migration to Electronic-based System: FEI should migrate from a paper-based records management system to an electronic-based system. Most of the record keeping in FEI is managed using a paper-based system. This limits or precludes the opportunity to mine data and restricts access to reports and data to the physical location of FEI. Management must explore means to convert the volume of investigative data to a manipulable electronic platform that will develop analytic capacity in FEI.
- Fire Injury Causes: Initiate a comprehensive program to identify the causes of fire-related injuries to both residents and firefighters resulting from fires that have

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occurred within the County. The purpose of this effort is to reduce the number and severity of future injuries by identifying and implementing appropriate preventative measures through education, engineering, and enforcement.

- Institutionalization of Science and Technology: FEI should enhance and standardize the use of science and technology in all fire and explosive investigations. A related need is to standardize the training program for all investigators and bomb technicians.
- Improved Capacity to Investigate Concurrent Incidents: The capacity of FEI to respond effectively to multiple concurrent incidents with existing resources must be improved. FEI personnel have been taxed to the breaking point in the past and multiple severe and fatal fires at the end of 2007 created extreme demands on FEI's capacity to function effectively. The current fiscal environment removes any chance to provide dedicated resources. The only opportunities to improve capacity lie with retooling existing resources in the FMO to bridge shortfalls. Potential paths to explore include continued cross-training of FCE inspectors in origin and cause investigations and utilizing engineer services for on-site technical assistance, forensic evaluation, and hypothesis testing.

Engineering Office

- Establish Engineering Office as Stand-alone Section: Presently, the Engineering Office is comprised of a Senior Fire Protection Engineer, three other engineers, and one engineer intern and the group serves as a support element to the Assistant Chief heading the FMO. Considering the amount and scope of work assigned to the Engineering Office and the addition of staff (i.e., the three engineers) within the past two years, establishing the engineering group as a stand-alone Section within the FMO is warranted. The FMO anticipates taking a prominent role in hazardous materials facility inspections. This expanded function will require additional personnel resources with engineering technology backgrounds to manage fire protection systems issues in these facilities.
- Application of Emerging Technologies: The engineering group serves a quasi-research and development function to investigate emerging technologies that can be applied to improve effectiveness and efficiencies within the enforcement and investigative functions of the FMO.
- Engineering Support Services: The Engineering Office will continue providing engineering support services to the FMO as well as external customers such as DPS, ATFE, FBI, NIST, Maryland State Fire Marshal, and civilian insurers. Engineers were originally envisioned to primarily support the code enforcement function of the FMO, with approximately five percent of their time dedicated to FEI investigative support. The engineer role has matured dramatically such that fire protection systems and code interpretation support is provided daily to DPS, predictive modeling assistance has been provided to NIST, and forensic analysis

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has been provided to Prince William (PWC) and Loudon (LC) Counties in Virginia for fires involving a PWC firefighter line-of-duty death and significant injuries to LC firefighters. The FMO anticipates that demand for engineering support will continue to increase during FY10 in pace with external factors driving engineering expertise requirements.

Priority 10. Enhancements to Wellness, Safety, and Training Programs

Priority in Brief: During FY10, there are several key wellness, safety, and training needs to be addressed as well as maintaining on-going programs. Wellness needs pertain to substance abuse awareness training and continuation of the IPE program. Safety needs include various safety training opportunities for both Safety Officers and field personnel. Training needs and initiatives pertain to on-line training opportunities, additional classes, expanded apparatus needs to support training at the FRTA, command competency training/evaluation, in-service training, and continuation of standard training courses (fire suppression, EMS, rescue, hazmat, etc.).

Priority's Importance: The wellness, safety, and training needs/initiatives included in this priority are vital in maintaining effectively trained personnel who operate safely and whose wellness and fitness needs are met to keep them healthy and fit for their dangerous, challenging, and demanding occupation.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (addressing needs for career and volunteer leadership and workforce development, including adequate training programs), Goal #7 (addressing risk reduction strategies to improve occupational safety), and Goal #3 (pertaining to adequate personnel, apparatus, equipment, and facilities to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services).

Explanation of Priority: The explanation is presented by Section as follows:

Wellness Section: The major wellness need for FY10 is Substance Abuse Awareness Training for career and volunteer personnel that addresses awareness of drug and alcohol abuse. Random drug testing of uniformed personnel, begun in FY09, will continue during FY10. In addition, the Incumbent Performance Evaluation (IPE) program is planned to continue in FY10.

Safety Section: FY10 initiatives and needs of the Safety Section are described below.

- Continuing Education Training: To be provided to MCFRS Safety Officers to maintain certifications, including those meeting NFPA 1521 - Incident Safety Officer and Health & Safety Officer - via Fire Department Safety Officer Association and Professional Board. Continuing education for Safety Officers will also include special operations certifications.

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- Safety Training: To be provided to field personnel by MCFRS Safety Officers based on VFIS, Inc. training programs (e.g., firefighter safety & health, risk management, highway response safety)
- Collision Investigation Training: To be provided to MCFRS Safety Officers by the U.S. DOT Transit Safety Institute (e.g., bus collision investigation course)

Training Section: Based on the number of recruits and LFRD students going through the Fire-Rescue Training Academy (FRTA) - nearly 100 per year - and promotional requirements, the following training courses are needed in FY10:

- Four Class-B License classes. If the FRTA continues at the current reduced rate in offering this class, the department will have 170 career personnel within three years lacking this important course.
- One class per semester for each training discipline listed below (per standard requirements for training):
 - Firefighter I and II
 - Pumps
 - Aerial Operations
 - Technical Rescue
 - Hazmat Operations
 - Emergency Vehicle Operators Course (EVOC)
 - Fire Officer I, II, and III
 - Instructor I and II
- Two EMT-B classes
- Two EMT-I classes
- One EMT-I to EMT-P class
- Command Competencies testing & V-Doc program
- Transition to the combination on-line/FRTA EMT-B refresher course; therefore reducing the FRTA instruction portion of this 24-hour course to only 12 hours. This will save over \$100,000 in overtime costs for instructors annually. Will need 1500 software licenses costing approximately \$52,000 to initiate the on-line component of the course.
- In-Service Training Program. FY10 focus will be on use of compressed-air foam and firefighter “saving our own” and “mayday” training activities

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Priority 11. Volunteer Initiatives

Priority in Brief: MCFRS must continue to strengthen its efforts to recruit and retain volunteer personnel and find ways to utilize volunteers' collective services to the fullest extent. During FY10, as in FY09, 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 possible to meet MCFRS' 4-person staffing strategy; and further implementing the Montgomery County Fire Corps (MCFC) initiative.

Priority's Importance: The volunteer component of the combined MCFRS plays a key role in the department meeting its mission. Recruiting volunteers and then retaining their services for the long-term are vital to maintaining and growing the MCFRS workforce to meet the service demands of an expanding countywide population. Meeting the needs of our volunteer personnel (i.e., firefighter-rescuers, administrative members, Fire Corps volunteers, and CERT members) and maximizing the opportunities for them to serve the community is the prescription for retaining their services for the long-term and utilizing their collective services to the fullest.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (addressing current and projected needs for career and volunteer leadership and workforce development), Goal #5 (recruitment and retention of career and volunteer personnel), and Goal #6 (diversity in the workforce).

Explanation of Priority: During FY10, MCFRS must continue strengthening its efforts to recruit and retain volunteer personnel and maximize the utilization of both uniformed and non-uniformed volunteers. To strengthen recruitment of volunteers, the Volunteer Services Division and CRRS Recruiting Section will continue working closely with the MCVFRA to formulate an improved strategy for recruiting volunteers and to implement that strategy. The MCFC should also be used to assist MCVFRA and DVS in recruiting volunteers (e.g., the "Media Corps" component of MCFC assisting with the advertising campaign for recruitment of volunteers).

The retention of volunteers will be further addressed in FY10 through training enhancements and continuation of the MCFC initiative. With respect to volunteers' training needs, Priority 10 in this Plan describes a number of MCFRS training program enhancements that will assist both volunteer and career personnel with their training needs. Enhancements of particular interest to volunteers will be further expansion of remote training opportunities featuring more on-line classes (i.e., portions that can be offered on-line), outreach training offered at off-site locations (i.e., other than PSTA), battalion-based training, and simulation training. Volunteers will be given ample opportunity to participate in specialized training, special forums, and Command Officer Professional Development and Improvement opportunities.

Another item to be further addressed during FY10 is better utilization of volunteer firefighters to meet MCFRS' 4th-person staffing strategy for engines, aerial units, and

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rescue squads. Presently, Engine 703 is the only unit designated for 4th-person staffing where the fourth position is covered by volunteer personnel during evenings and weekends. As MCFRS implements the seven phases of 4th-person staffing, it must examine other stations where LFRDs can commit to providing qualified personnel at specific times to assist in filling the 4th-position on apparatus that has been designated for 4th-person staffing implementation. In these cases, career staffing of the 4th-position might only need to be a daytime position, for example, rather than a 24-hour shift position. Several LFRDs may have sufficient staffing resources allowing them to make the commitment to filling a 4th-position on a designated unit at specific times.

During FY10, each LFRD's performance in meeting the provisions of their Standby Duty Policy (initiated in FY09) will again be measured jointly by the DVS Division Chief and the MCVFRA President and then reported to the County Fire Chief.

Under the MCFC program launched in FY09, LFRD members (uniformed and non-uniformed) and other interested County residents without ties to LFRDs will continue to be given a wide range of opportunities to volunteer in various community outreach activities. A sampling of potential Fire Corps activities and events that MCFC volunteers might wish to take part in include the following (not an all-inclusive list):

- Safety in Our Neighborhood Program
- National Fire Prevention Week events hosted by the County and LFRDs
- Child safety seat checks/inspections
- Summer camp program – personnel visit County and private camps to teach fire prevention and injury prevention
- Assistance to the Risk Watch Program provided to elementary-aged students
- Partnering with Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts to distribute fire safety and injury prevention materials during the Scouts' annual food collection campaign
- Outreach activities targeted at seniors – e.g., injury prevention education
- Assistance with implementation of the recommendations of the Senior Citizens Fire Safety Task Force (see Priority 8 in this Plan)

During FY10, DVS staff will continue administering the County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program.¹¹ The County's CERT Program is comprised of a training course and a functional CERT team. DVS staff will work during FY10 to continue integrating the assets of the CERT and MCFC programs to accomplish objectives that are common or similar to both programs while maintaining the autonomy of each program.

¹¹ The County's CERT Program trains interested residents in basic emergency management skills and limited emergency response skills that enable them to prepare their families/households for emergency events (e.g., winter storm, tornado) and provide limited emergency response assistance (e.g., preliminary damage assessment, provision of first aid, evacuation support to MCP and MCFRS, etc.) within their neighborhoods following emergency events.

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Priority #12. Information Technology Infrastructure Enhancements

Priority in Brief: MCFRS has many major IT infrastructure needs that require prompt attention beginning in FY10. IT system/equipment enhancements and/or replacements are needed in the following functional areas: communications (e.g., portable radios, station alerting, paging), call processing and dispatch (CAD), and data management (e.g., EPCR, Accounts Receivable Module, CDMA).

Priority's Importance: The IT infrastructure enhancements listed below 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. For example, CAD enhancements and a new station alerting system will help in reducing response times¹² countywide.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (pertaining to adequate equipment, apparatus, personnel, and facilities to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #8 (addressing organizational commitment to develop, implement, and evaluate new technologies and innovations).

Explanation of Priority:

Enhancements to IT infrastructure will involve the following initiatives:

- Electronic Patient Care Reporting (EPCR) – will replace current paper-based Maryland Ambulance Incident System “bubble” form with electronic EMS data capture to meet State (i.e., MIEMSS) reporting requirements. [Montgomery County is one of only two Maryland counties – out of 24 counties- without an EPCR system.]
- Continued enhancements to CAD that will increase operational effectiveness. Enhancements will include a new interface to support EPCR.
- Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) rollout supporting MDCs - Replacing current radio-based modems on all frontline MCFRS vehicles to provide 90% uptime and reliability
- Scan Line processing - Enhancing the Firehouse Account Receivable Module with Scan Line processing for fire code inspection revenue collection via banks.
- Station alerting via Fiber Net - Replacing MOSCAD station alerting system with a network-based “smart” station system

¹² 9-1-1 call processing, dispatch, and station alerting are included in the MCFRS definition of “response time.” Reductions in these time elements will be aided greatly by IT enhancements.

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- CAD paging - Pursuing technology that will eliminate alpha pagers, thus eliminating alpha pager costs. Paging will instead be provided via cell phones.
- Replacement of older 800mhz 300r portable radios - through grant funding, some older 3000 series portables will be replaced with 500 series radios

Priority 13. Annual Accreditation Compliance

Priority in Brief: MCFRS was awarded accreditation in August 2007 by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE's), Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). To remain accredited, fire departments must complete and submit to CFAI an annual compliance report 45 days before the anniversary of accreditation award. MCFRS' second report; therefore, is due early in FY10 although much of the preparation must be completed during FY09.

Priority's Importance: The second annual compliance report is due to CFAI on July 15, 2009. To maintain accreditation, the MCFRS report must be approved by the CFAI Board of Directors. Maintaining departmental accreditation will improve service delivery and increase effectiveness and efficiency throughout MCFRS.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #9 establishing an organization-wide program of evaluation to determine how well MCFRS goals and objectives are being met and to also measure the department's performance and progress.

Explanation of Priority: The annual compliance report (ACR) must include the following:

- Explanation of any major environmental changes that have occurred within MCFRS since the previous year's ACR
- Explanation of any changes in compliance with federal, State and/or local government legal requirements/standards since award of accreditation
- Explanation of any changes in compliance with adopted community and/or departmental standards since award of accreditation
- Explanation of any changes in compliance with the 77 core competencies identified by CFAI in the 7th edition of the "Fire and Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)."
- Status of MCFRS efforts in addressing the ten "strategic" and fifteen "specific" recommendations provided by the CFAI Peer Assessment Team that performed the peer assessment in April 2007

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Documentation must accompany the ACR validating each statement of compliance or progress made toward compliance concerning the above requirements. Acceptable documentation consists of plans, reports, SOPs, policies, memorandums, overviews, meeting minutes, copies of presentations, etc.

Whereas the ACR is drafted during FY09, the report will be finalized, approved (by the Fire Chief), and submitted to CFAI in the first month of FY10. An annual ACR will be submitted in July of each of the next two fiscal years: FY10 and FY11. Every fifth year, an accredited agency must go through the full accreditation process again to become re-accredited in accordance with CFAI requirements; thus MCFRS will attempt to earn re-accreditation during FY12.

Priority 14. Performance Measurement

Priority in Brief: MCFRS must continue the development of the Department's performance measures in accordance with the County's performance measurement program begun in FY08. MCFRS will also participate in the CountyStat program¹³ initiated by the County Executive in FY08 and the benchmarking of performance indicators with comparable counties initiated by the CAO in FY09.

Priority's Importance: Performance measurement is a key component of a "responsible and accountable County Government" referenced in the County Executive's mission statement for County Government. Performance measurement is of similar importance to the Fire Chief for his entire department

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #9 establishing a program of evaluation to measure performance and determine how well MCFRS goals and objectives are being met.

Explanation of Priority: This priority will involve continued development and fine-tuning of departmental headline measures included in the Fire Chief's performance plan as well as development and fine-tuning of division-level and section-level performance measures that support the headline measures. Emergent performance measurement requirements set forth by the CountyStat program will influence the development and modification of MCFRS performance measures during FY10. Performance indicators developed in FY09 for the purpose of benchmarking with other comparable counties in the U.S. will also assist MCFRS in improving performance during FY10 where indicated.

¹³ CountyStat is an accountability and assessment process intended to improve performance and reinforce the County Government's focus on results

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Priority 15. Phases 6-8, Station Location and Resource Allocation Study

Priority in Brief: In FY10, the Planning Section should complete Phase 8 (initiated in FY09) of the Station Location and Resource Allocation Study and initiate Phases 6 and 7 as follow:.

- 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

Priority's Importance: Completing Phases 6, 7, and 8 is of great importance, enabling fire-rescue needs of these study areas to be identified and documented. The ensuing reports will also recommend needs for new or relocated facilities, apparatus, and equipment; the need for additional staffing; and the siting and deployment of future facilities and resources. These studies and associated reports will serve to justify MCFRS requests for new CIP projects and resources, as well.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #11 pertaining to comprehensive planning to identify future resource and programmatic needs of the MCFRS and its external customers.

Explanation of Priority: By completing Phases 6, 7, and 8, remaining portions of the County requiring new station facilities and/or additional major resources will have been studied, and the multi-phase study will be complete. The purpose of the overall Station Location and Resource Allocation Study is to identify present and future service needs of MCFRS' customers and to recommend the optimal siting of new and/or relocated stations as well as the deployment of needed resources to meet anticipated service needs. The results of Phases 6, 7, and 8 will be used to justify anticipated requests for additional fire-rescue stations, personnel, apparatus, and equipment in future CIP and Operating budgets.

Priority 16. Renovation/Replacement of Stations 11 and 30

Priority in Brief: Planning and design of Stations 11 and 30 must begin in FY10 in accordance with the approved FY09-14 CIP.

Priority's Importance: Stations 11 and 30 are two of the most obsolete and undersized fire stations in Montgomery County and long overdue for renovation. Phase 2 of the "Station Location and Resource Allocation Study" completed in 2001 recommended renovation of both stations and justified the need to do so expeditiously. In addition to the need for expanding the existing buildings, both stations have aged HVAC and life safety systems and both lack newly required decontamination areas, separate gear storage rooms, and dedicated IT closets. Both station projects have been deferred for several CIP cycles.

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MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (adequate facilities, apparatus, equipment, and personnel to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #12 (establishing and implementing CIP projects on a timely basis).

Explanation of Priority: For reasons of functionality, efficiency, safety, and cost-effectiveness, Stations 11 and 30 must be renovated or replaced within the next 4-5 years. The long-required renovations will address issues of insufficient space, safety concerns, antiquated systems, and lack of newly required facilities.

Priority 17. Station 25 Expansion

Priority in Brief: Expansion of Station 25 is needed to support the EMS flex unit and the new special operations capability at the station which already houses two EMS units, an engine, and aerial unit. The expansion will make possible the placement of additional apparatus and equipment inside the station associated with hazmat response; water/ice rescue; high-angle rope rescue; and collapse, confined space, and trench rescue. The expansion should also include a training room. Planning and design must begin in FY10 in accordance with the approved FY09-14 CIP.

Priority's Importance: Presently, Ambulance 725-Bravo ("flex" unit operating 0800-2000 hours, 7 days/week) and special operations vehicles (i.e., hazmat support vehicle, rescue boat, collapse rescue reconnaissance vehicle, decontamination equipment, and mass causality supplies) must be parked/stored outdoors due to lack of bay space inside the apparatus room. Special operations equipment must be stored in several small sheds in the rear parking area due to lack of storage space inside the station. An expansion of the station would allow for indoor parking of Ambulance 725-Bravo and the special operations vehicles as well as indoor storage of special operations equipment.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this priority will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (adequate facilities, apparatus, equipment, and personnel to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and Goal #12 (establishing and implementing CIP projects on a timely basis).

Explanation of Priority: The expansion of Station 25 is needed to support the special operations capability at the station plus the EMS flex unit. The improvement of special operations response to the east side of the county is critical, providing personnel and equipment that can stabilize/mitigate incidents of a technical nature before special teams arrive.

Existing apparatus housed inside Station 25 includes two EMS units (M725, A725), an engine (E725), ladder truck (T725), and a battalion chief vehicle (Battalion 704). Station 25 must be expanded to accommodate the third EMS unit (i.e., Ambulance 725-Bravo, an EMS flex unit established in FY07) and vehicles, equipment, and personnel associated with the special operations capability initiated at Station 25 in FY07. Presently, A725-

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Bravo and special operations vehicles (i.e., hazmat support vehicle, rescue boat, collapse rescue reconnaissance vehicle, decontamination equipment, and mass casualty supplies) must be stored outdoors due to lack of bay space inside the apparatus room. Special operations equipment must be stored in several sheds in the rear parking area due to lack of storage space inside the station. This equipment must be pulled outside these temporary structures for critical daily operational checks to be performed.

An expansion of the station would allow for indoor parking of A725-Bravo and special operations vehicles as well as indoor storage of special operations equipment. Moving these vehicles and equipment indoors will allow for quicker special operations response, increased protection of apparatus and equipment from the elements and vandals, more efficient storage and inventorying of equipment, and easier access to apparatus and on-board equipment for the purpose of training, maintenance, and daily equipment checks. The MCFRS Special Operations Section is considering the consolidation of special operations equipment located at Station 25 into a single vehicle¹⁴ (e.g., tractor-trailer), with the exception of the rescue boat. The expanded bay area at Station 25 would, therefore, need to accommodate a vehicle of this size and weight.

Priority #18. ISO Rating Improvement for Rural Area of County

Priority in Brief: 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 rating issued by the Insurance Services Office (ISO)¹⁵. The County has a split rating: ISO-4 within the urban area (defined by ISO as the area served by fire hydrants and within 5 miles of a fire station) and ISO-9 within the rural area (defined by ISO as the area lacking fire hydrants but within 5 miles of a fire station). This priority focuses on improving the ISO-9 portion of the split rating.

Priority's Importance: Implementation of this priority will improve fire suppression service delivery within areas lacking hydrants and should result in reduced property damage caused by fire. The reduction in fire damage should lead to reduced property insurance premiums for many rural property owners within Montgomery County, as well. Improved rural water supply capabilities combined with reduced fire damage should aid the MCFRS considerably in its efforts to achieve a lower ISO rating for portions of the county lacking hydrants.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (pertaining to adequate equipment, apparatus, personnel, and facilities to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services) and

¹⁴ A similar consolidation of special operations equipment into a single vehicle is being considered for the special operations capability at Station 31 as well.

¹⁵ MCFRS must receive a successful evaluation by ISO to achieve an improved rating.

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Goal #12 (addressing the process of establishing and implementing CIP projects on a timely basis).

Explanation of Priority: The effort to achieve an improved ISO rating requires a major commitment from MCFRS to meet criteria established by ISO. Improving water supply within areas lacking hydrants is one of many significant steps to be taken in achieving an improved rating. MCFRS should begin addressing this priority during FY10 by implementing the following actions:

- Appointment of a MCFRS Water Supply Officer (WSO)¹⁶ who will be responsible for overseeing and coordinating the department's water supply function to include identifying water supply deficiencies; determining appropriate resource, policy, and procedural needs to address deficiencies and developing a plan for addressing those needs; making recommendations to the Operations and CRRS Division Chiefs, and overseeing the implementation of water supply enhancements approved by the Fire Chief. The WSO's first priority will be improvement of rural water supply capabilities.
- Development of a plan addressing strategically-located and reliable sources of water for supporting rural fire suppression, including:
 - Cisterns - strategic siting, installation, and use of cisterns, including strategic locations, performance specifications, installation, fire department access, long-term maintenance, agreements with property owners, etc.
 - Certified drafting sites (i.e., ponds, streams) – addressing year-round reliability of water sources, fire department access, installation of dry hydrants, long-term maintenance, agreements with property owners, etc.
- Deployment of new countywide fleet of pumpers, each equipped with a compressed-air foam system and two 4-inch diameter, 1,000-ft supply lines.

Note: Additional water supply initiatives will be addressed in future MCFRS fiscal year strategic plans.

¹⁶ The Water Supply Officer will be a career Battalion Chief assuming this role as a collateral duty.