

**FY2018 STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FIRE,
RESCUE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES AND COMMUNITY
RISK REDUCTION MASTER PLAN
PRIORITIES**



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INTRODUCTION

The FY2018 Strategic Plan addresses implementation of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service's highest priorities that require initiation, continuation (with respect to carryover initiatives from the FY17 Strategic Plan), and/or completion during FY18. These priorities are related to departmental goals updated during the March 23, 2017 Planning Meeting as well as recommendations and initiatives found in Section 6 of the *2016-2022 Fire, Rescue, EMS, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*.

FY18 priorities address the major categories of operations, volunteer and community services, human resources, support services, fiscal management, and planning and accreditation. The order in which the categories have been presented is not indicative of their level of importance to the department nor is the order of the individual initiatives within each category. All categories and initiatives are considered of equal importance and will be pursued concurrently. While many of these initiatives could require several years to implement fully, their initiation or continuation during FY18 is crucial for the department to continue meeting its mission, goals and objectives in its continuous efforts to achieve organizational improvement and excellence.

The FY18 operating budget impacts the scope of MCFRS' FY18 initiatives. The Approved FY18 Operating Budget for the department is \$214,862,420; a decrease of \$1,077,130 or about 0.5% compared with the FY17 Approved Operating Budget of \$215,939,550 million. The FY18 MCFRS Operating Budget, nonetheless, includes limited enhancements to services and programs. The most significant budgeted enhancements impacting the FY18 Strategic Plan include the following:

- Improvement of ALS, BLS and fire suppression services and associated response time by:
 - Transitioning of current career staffing for Medic 725 to a paramedic chase unit platform with staffing of one person (i.e., paramedic) and conversion of the former medic unit to a BLS transport unit.
 - Increasing daytime staffing at Station 40 to reduce failures-to-respond (FTRs) and improve response time.
- Hiring of approximately 80 firefighter-rescuer recruits for Recruit Classes 42 and 43.
- Upgrading of Takoma Park Engine 702 to Paramedic Engine 702

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OPERATIONS

A. EMS EXPANSION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, MCFRS will continue implementation of four-person staffing to increase the number of paramedic engines, and paramedic chase unit deployment will be expanded. The Non-Emergency Intervention and Community Care Coordination Program will also be expanded in FY18. If funding becomes available during the fiscal year, EMS quality improvement will be enhanced by staffing three additional EMS Duty Officer positions.

Initiative's Importance: With approximately three-quarters of the County's fire-rescue incidents of an EMS nature and the percentage expected to increase as the County population grows and ages, it is imperative that the most effective and efficient EMS deployment model be utilized by MCFRS. A primary element of this model includes paramedic engines and paramedic chase units. EMS quality improvement via greater supervision (i.e., additional EMS Duty Officers) is another important element as it leads to improved EMS services for our customers.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #1 (maintaining operational readiness), Goal #3 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services), and Goal #7 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs). [See full list of goals in Appendix A]

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Operations Division will focus on the following EMS-related initiatives:

- **Conversion of Remaining 3-person Engines to 4-person Paramedic Engines**

During FY18, MCFRS will upgrade one 3-person engine to 4-person paramedic engine using budgeted funds. This will be achieved by adding a firefighter-paramedic to Engine 702. The remainder of the 4-person staffing initiative is largely dependent upon MCFRS being awarded federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and

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Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants in FY18 and beyond to fund the hiring of additional firefighters. In its 2017 SAFER application, MCFRS is seeking a grant for \$1.2 million to fund 10 firefighter positions for their initial two years of employment in accordance with grant provisions. If awarded to MCFRS, the 2017 SAFER Grant would allow for the upgrading of the last remaining 3-person engine (i.e., Engine 720) to four personnel (including one firefighter-paramedic) around the clock plus the upgrading of one 3-person aerial unit (unit to be determined) to four personnel, including a firefighter-paramedic.

While the addition of a fourth person (i.e., firefighter-paramedic) to 3-person suppression units will expand ALS capabilities, it will also increase suppression capabilities. Four-person staffing of engines and aerial units, in accordance with NFPA 1710, increases effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of firefighting operations and allows faster assembling of the effective response force (ERF) at fire-full assignment and fire-adaptive incidents.

- **Expand Paramedic Chase Unit Service**

MCFRS will expand implementation of paramedic chase unit (PCU) deployment in the County during FY18 by placing a PCU in service at Station 25 (Aspen Hill /Leisure World station). This deployment separates the paramedic from the ambulance; thus, allowing the paramedic to operate more efficiently such that, for low acuity patients, the paramedic is not needed during patient transport and will remain in service within the community.

To support this change, the paramedic from the medic unit (Medic 725) will move to the PCU (ALS 725) which then converts the medic unit to a BLS (basic) ambulance. The PCU will be operated by one paramedic and can respond along with a basic ambulance for high acuity patients. This PCU deployment will keep two transport units staffed at Station 25 and increases the availability of the paramedic.

- **Expand MCNIC3 Program**

The Montgomery County Non-Emergency Intervention and Community Care Coordination (MCNIC3) program, initiated during FY17 in partnership with the Washington Adventist Hospital and Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), will be expanded in FY18 if funding becomes available during the fiscal year. The program goes beyond the traditional EMS model of emergency response and transportation to an emergency department, seeking to address the unmet needs of EMS super users.¹ Research shows that patients who often utilize 911 services have unmet medical or social service needs. MCNIC3 seeks to identify these needs, link the patient to more appropriate and beneficial resources for care (including HHS, the patient's primary care provider and/or allied

¹ MCFRS defines a "super user" of its EMS system as a patient having ≥ 4 calls for service per month. These patients typically have chronic medical conditions, substance dependency, and/or behavioral health issues.

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health care professionals) and avoid the need for emergency care and transportation. As a result, the program reduces the overall demand upon EMS resources (i.e., reduced EMS call load) and reduces overcrowding of hospital rooms/beds.

In FY17, the MCNIC3 Program had been funded by overtime and was staffed once or twice per week from 0700 to 1700 hours by a MCFRS paramedic paired with a WAH nurse, utilizing a MCFRS passenger vehicle - not an ambulance. Moving ahead, the expanded program will involve partnerships with additional hospitals (i.e., Shady Grove Adventist and Suburban Hospitals - initially) and be offered additional days per week – eventually Monday through Friday. The pairing of a career or volunteer paramedic with a nurse will continue. Absent funding for FTEs, overtime would still be required to cover costs of career staffing, as applicable, of the paramedic position.

- **EMS Quality Improvement**

To enhance ALS and BLS performance and quality improvement, MCFRS will expand the number of EMS Duty Officers from two to five during FY18 should funding become available during the fiscal year. Five EMS Duty Officers would allow for the deployment of one per battalion; thus, resulting in a more manageable span of control of one EMS Duty Officer per seven stations (on average) instead of the present ratio of one EMS Duty Officer per 18 stations. Deployment of five EMS Duty Officers would also greatly improve EMS Duty Officer response time to incidents occurring throughout five battalions across our 500-square mile County, with the goal of all cardiac arrest and ALS2 events to be attended by an EMS Duty Officer.

B. ALLEVIATE FIELD STAFFING DEFICIENCIES

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Operations Division will continue efforts to address staffing deficiencies, including a staffing coefficient of less than the desired 5.0 FTE per uniformed 24-hour position and insufficient daytime staffing of primary apparatus at certain stations where cross-staffing of suppression apparatus occurs (e.g., Station 40).

Initiative's Importance: It is important to achieve a staffing coefficient of 5.0 FTE per uniformed position to ensure that each position is staffed without having to use overtime and, at times, forced holdovers to cover periods when firefighters are unable to report for duty (e.g., leave, training, recertifications). Provision of minimum staffing of primary apparatus is important to reduce failures-to-respond and to improve response time.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #1 (maintaining operational readiness), Goal #3 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services), and Goal #7 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs).

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Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Operations Division will address the following initiatives pertaining to staffing deficiencies:

- **Address Staffing Deficiencies: Work Toward Coefficient of 5.0 FTEs per 24-hour Position:** As most positions assigned to fire and rescue stations are not staffed at the desired coefficient of 5.0 fulltime equivalents (FTEs) per 24-hour position, efforts will continue during FY18 to address this significant deficiency. For example, most Master Firefighter positions are staffed with only 3.0 FTEs per position and most Firefighter positions are staffed with only 4.5 FTEs per position. Under this situation, when a firefighter is on leave or otherwise unable to report for duty for their assigned shift, a replacement must be hired on overtime and may necessitate a forced holdover. During FY18, this deficiency will receive a small measure of rectification when Engine 702 will receive a fourth person (see item A above) and that position will be staffed at the 5.0 FTE level.
- **Station 40 Staffing:** During FY18, there will be a continuation of increased staffing at Station 40. As in FY17, overtime will be used again during FY18 to staff two daytime firefighter positions and one daytime Lieutenant position. This will bring the daytime (0700-1700 hours) staffing to nine personnel, with four on Paramedic Engine 740, three on Truck 740 and two on Ambulance 740. The increased staffing will ensure daytime response of Station 40's engine, truck and ambulance; thus, nearly eliminating daytime FTRs at Station 40 and improving response time.

C. COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Division of Operations will work on several initiatives pertaining to installation/implementation of the Public Safety System Modernization system and enhancements to the Emergency Communications Center.

Initiative's Importance: Completing the installation and implementation of the PSSM system will allow for improved operational effectiveness concerning dispatch, station alerting, and radio communications. ECC consolidation, ACE accreditation, and improvements in call processing time will lead to greater efficiencies, improved operational effectiveness and faster total response time.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #7 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs) and Goal #11 (growing our infrastructure, including communications and IT systems).

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Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Division of Operations will address several initiatives involving MCFRS emergency communications as follows:

- **Public Safety System Modernization (PSSM):**
 - **Computer-aided Dispatch (CAD):** System upgrades are anticipated during FY18, including software v4.2 and potentially others.
 - **Fire Station Alerting (FSA):** With the installation of the FSA system having been completed during FY17 and the 1-year warranty period in effect, FSA-related initiatives for FY18 are centered around fine-tuning the system and making desired upgrades. Specific initiatives include the following:
 - Closing out the initial FSA contract tasks/deliverables with the vendor following punch list items having been adequately addressed.
 - New task orders added to the existing FSA contract that will allow for enhancements such as system expansion, additional hardware, and software improvements over the next 10 years.
 - A potential upgrade of the system to provide the capability for text-to-speech (TTS) over the radio, similar to that which occurs in-station. [If approved, this upgrade may not occur until after FY18.]
 - **Radio System:** Installation of the P25 Radio System will begin during FY18, including the following:
 - Building and staging of the system by Motorola.
 - System staging acceptance by the County.
 - Construction of 11 new tower sites (system will have total of 22 tower sites plus the PSCC).
 - Radio programming of the system by the County.
- **Emergency Communications Center (ECC):**
 - **ECC Consolidation:** During the next 3-5 years, 27 MCFRS positions will transfer to County Police (MCP), including 911 operators and 911 office staff. Training for 12-15 new civilian call-takers/dispatchers will begin in FY18.
 - **Call Processing Time:** The Communications Section will continue efforts to improve call processing/dispatch time. As ECC personnel become better

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familiarized with the new CAD system, call processing/dispatch time may start to decrease during FY18.

- **ACE Accreditation:** Efforts will continue toward achieving the accreditation requirements of the Accreditation Center for Excellence (ACE) of the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch. Required quality assurance (QA) of data will be the focus during FY18. Achieving ACE accreditation should result in improved performance and efficiency in call processing and dispatch. Another benefit of ACE accreditation is that it is a pre-requisite for establishing and using the desired Emergency Communications Nurse Service at the ECC.

D. “FIRST WATCH” INITIATIVE

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Division of Operations will continue working with the vendor in customization of the First Watch™ software toward eventual integration of the application into daily operations.

Initiative’s Importance: Integration of the First Watch™ application into daily operations will be invaluable to the department as it will provide a real-time snapshot of resource deployment and performance metrics that can be used in real-time analyses, decision-making, briefings and reports.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #11 (growing our infrastructure, including communications and IT systems) and Goal #16 (organizational commitment to develop and implement new technologies and innovations).

Explanation of Initiative: The Division of Operations acquired the First Watch™ software application during FY17, funded through a Maryland ERS grant. The software provides a real-time snapshot of resource deployment and performance metrics that can be used in real-time analyses, decision-making, briefings, reports, accreditation operational performance monitoring, and other uses. Data analyzed by First Watch to date has been pulled from EMedS and will also be pulled eventually from the new CAD system. Through FY17, MCFRS has primarily used First Watch to identify EMS “super users” and to examine EMS transport unit cycle times. It is anticipated that First Watch will be used in the future by MCFRS for these purposes plus many others such as examining ALS performance and determining real-time resource deployment and apparatus transfers during multiple alarm and/or concurrent incidents.

During FY18, the Division of Operations will work with the vendor to customize the development of First Watch to meet MCFRS needs and to integrate the application with the County’s new CAD system. As Prince Georges County Fire & Rescue has been

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developing, customizing and using First Watch for about two years, MCFRS will seek their guidance while developing and customizing our own application.

VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

A. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM DELIVERY

Initiative in Brief: The Division of Volunteer and Community Services (DVCS) will concentrate community outreach efforts during FY18 on continuing the Division's community outreach delivery model initiated during FY17 and implementing the new mobile app for use during home safety visits.

Initiative's Importance: Having an effective community outreach program is of great benefit to MCFRS and our customers as it promotes fire safety, injury prevention, protection of property, and overall risk reduction.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #2 (minimizing deaths and injuries involving our customers), Goal #9 (maintaining strong partnerships with the citizenry to better serve them), and Goal #16 (organizational commitment to develop and implement new technologies and innovations).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Community Outreach Section, with assistance from the overall department, will work to continue and, where feasible, expand and enhance the current community outreach delivery model by:

- Expansion of the appointment-based Home Safety Visit program.
- Implementation/use of the new app (a.k.a., "Mobile Community Risk Reduction" or "Mobile CRR") that will allow tracking/recording of addresses visited during home safety visits (via GPS and mapping), actions taken (e.g., installation of smoke alarms and/or batteries), and specific placement of smoke alarms within a residence. Using this data, reports and GIS maps will be generated for analysis and documentation purposes.
- Implementation of the community-based strategy that directly connects fire-rescue personnel at the station level with community organizations, schools, homeowner associations, civic associations and other community-based partners within each station's first-due area.

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- Implementation of the “Every Call/Every Home” protocol designed to check, when practicable, customers’ smoke alarms when fire-rescue units are on-scene during incidents and to document same.

B. CERT “GO TEAM”

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Division of Volunteer and Community Services will render the CERT “Go-Team” operational and will publicize the team’s availability and capabilities within the County’s public safety arena.

Initiative’s Importance: The CERT “Go-Team” can assist MCFRS, Division of Operations; Montgomery County Police (MCP); and Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) during the response and recovery phases of emergency events with support tasks such as evacuation of residents, search for missing persons, damage assessment, etc. With the CERT Go-Team providing this type of assistance, personnel from these public safety departments can be deployed to other priority tasks or redeployed to concurrent incidents.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #6 (maximizing the utilization of our volunteer and career resources to achieve our mission).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the CERT Program Manager and the program’s volunteer leadership will focus on rendering the CERT Go-Team fully functional and ready for quick deployment. The NIMS-compliant Go-Team will have the policies, procedures and resources in place for notification, activation and response of team members. By the Fall of 2017, a new policy will be implemented that will provide for the rostering of a CERT Duty Officer, Deputy Duty Officer, and team dispatcher. Notification (dispatch) will occur via text and email. The policy will call for a 90-minute mobilization of the Go-Team on the scene of an emergency event. The team will be fully trained and equipped (with “Go-Bags”) for their mission.

The CERT Go-Team will have the capabilities to provide the following types of assistance to their public safety partners (i.e., MCFRS - Operations, MCP, OEMHS):

- Tending to the well-being of evacuees at large-scale incidents (e.g., high-rise fire)
- Providing initial, short-term sheltering of evacuees before mass care organizations are mobilized to operate shelters for long-term operations.
- Conducting grid searches for missing persons.
- Conducting “windshield surveys” following major events impacting large areas (e.g., Derecho wind storm, tornado, flash flood, earthquake).
- Other assistance, as appropriate, in line with Go-Team capabilities.

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During FY18Q1, the CERT Program Manager and volunteer leadership will provide a COPDI session at the PSTA for familiarization of command officers of the Go-Team's capabilities and how to request the team's assistance.

C. HEAVY APPARATUS DRIVERS' TRAINING

Initiative in Brief: A heavy apparatus drivers' training program for volunteer personnel will be developed and offered during FY18.

Initiative's Importance: Many LFRDs have a shortage of qualified drivers for heavy apparatus. This training program would help increase the number of heavy apparatus drivers across all of the local [volunteer] fire and rescue departments (LFRDs).

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #6 (maximizing the utilization of our volunteer and career resources to achieve our mission) and Goal #14 (addressing training needs of our personnel).

Explanation of Initiative: As the LFRDs, collectively, have a shortage of qualified heavy apparatus drivers, a training program to address this specific need will be developed and offered during FY18. This training would be provided at locations other than the PSTA that are suitable for heavy apparatus training and accessible to the participating LFRDs. If approved, the program would utilize volunteer instructors and would offer training for volunteer drivers of all breeds of heavy apparatus, including engines, engine-tankers, brush engines, aerial units, rescue squads and tankers. The program would be a consolidated approach among all interested LFRDs and would require coordination between the Volunteer & Community Services Division and the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association. If approved, the training program would be developed during FY18Q1-Q2 and would likely be offered beginning in FY18Q3.

Before enrolling in this training program, students would need to complete the Emergency Vehicle Operators Class (EVOC) taught at the PSTA. Upon successfully completing the heavy apparatus driver training program for volunteers, students will have a Class-B License issued by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration and will be proficient at operating heavy fire-rescue apparatus of the type deployed at fire-rescue stations in the County.

D. FILLING OF DVCS POSITIONS

Initiative in Brief: If funding becomes available during FY18, several vacant and newly created positions would be filled within the Division of Volunteer and Community Services (DVCS).

Initiative's Importance: The DVCS needs to fill several positions to effectively meet its mission. The Division has had a vacant Planning Manager position for nearly 10 years.

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Additionally, the Division's Program Manager I position for managing the child safety seat program became vacant during FY17 and needs to be filled. There also exists the need for growing the number of community outreach educators to better meet the risk reduction, injury prevention and fire safety needs of County residents numbering over 1 million.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #6 (maximizing the utilization of our volunteer and career resources to achieve our mission).

Explanation of Initiative: Should funding become available during FY18, the DVCS would fill several vacant and newly created positions, including the following:

- Planning Manager (vacant position) – to address all planning needs of the DVCS.
- Program Manager I (vacant position) – to manage and coordinate the Division's Child Safety Seat and the Safe Kids programs.
- Program Manager II (new position) - to manage/coordinate the Division's Community Education program, including Safety in Our Neighborhood, home safety visits, community education web site, and social media.
- "Safety Specialists" (new part-time or temporary positions; job class and grade to be determined) – to assist with home safety visits, Safe Kids events, and other DVCS activities/events as needed.

HUMAN RESOURCES

A. TRAINING INITIATIVES

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the MCFRS Training Section will complete the buildout of training facilities at the new Fire-Rescue Training Academy (FRTA), conduct two recruit classes, and conduct 3-4 paramedic classes.

Initiative's Importance: Completing the buildout of training facilities will allow for additional specialized training at the new FRTA for firefighter-rescuers and command officers. By conducting two recruit classes, new firefighter-rescuer graduates will be deployed to stations; thus, addressing departmental attrition and the continued implementation of 4-person staffing of suppression units. The paramedic classes will also help to address attrition and the need for paramedics aboard ALS first-responder apparatus as well as placing more paramedic chase units in service.

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MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal # 14 addressing training needs of career and volunteer personnel.

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Training Section will place high priority on the following initiatives:

- **Buildout of Training Facilities:** Buildout of the remaining training facilities at the new Fire-Rescue Training Academy (opened in November 2016) will be addressed during FY18. The following facilities will be included:
 - Command Center – scale-model props for five different table-top exercises
 - Safety and Survival Maze for firefighters
 - METRO train cars (retired METRO Rail System cars) placed on tracks
 - Paramedic practical training room featuring an actual ambulance box
 - Work shop for use by the FRTA logistics staff.
- **Recruit Classes 42 and 43:** FRTA instructors will conduct Recruit Classes 42 and 43 during FY18 involving approximately 80 recruits split in half between the two classes. RC42 will begin in October 2017 and RC43 in December 2017. RC42 will be completed in February 2018 and RC43 in April 2018.
- **Paramedic Classes:** FRTA instructors will conduct 3-4 paramedic classes during FY18. There will be 2-3 shiftwork offerings, depending upon the level of interest, with the first class starting in September 2017, the second in October and, if applicable, the third class in November. These daytime classes are primarily targeted at career personnel; however, volunteer personnel may participate as well. There will be one night-time paramedic class targeted at volunteers; however, career personnel may also participate. The night-time class will begin during the Fall of 2017, date to be determined.

B. SAFETY INITIATIVES

Initiative in Brief: Safety-related initiatives for FY18 include conducting risk/safety assessment inspections of all MCFRS work sites insured by VFIS for MCFRS, increasing the number of Safety Officers, restoring the Battalion Chief position to oversee the Safety Office, and creating/hiring a “Claims Manager.”

Initiative’s Importance: It is important that these initiatives be addressed to increase the level of safety for all MCFRS personnel while performing their duties. Having a Claims Manager will ensure that insurance claims are handled expeditiously and will free up the

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Assistant Chief of the Health & Wellness Section to spend more time on other priority duties.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #12 to provide for and enhance the wellness, safety, training and developmental needs of our personnel.

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the safety-related initiatives described below will be addressed if funding becomes available during the fiscal year.

- **Risk Assessments:** The Health & Wellness Section will oversee and facilitate risk/safety assessment inspections performed by Volunteer Firemen's Insurance Service, Inc. (VFIS) for all work sites insured by VFIS directly for MCFRS. That includes all fire stations and most other fire-rescue work sites except for the Public Safety Headquarters, Public Safety Training Academy, Public Safety Communications Center, and Public Safety Logistics which are County facilities insured under other insurance policies directly for the County.
- **Safety Officers:** If funding becomes available, MCFRS will increase the number of Safety Officer positions during FY18 so that the existing Safety Officer will no longer have the overwhelming responsibility of covering the entire 500-square mile County alone. The ultimate goal, as recommended in the 2016-2022 *Fire, Rescue, EMS and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan*, is to deploy one Safety Officer per battalion to adequately distribute the work load. With the existing five battalions, four additional shift positions would need to be created and filled at the Captain level.
- **Battalion Chief for Safety Office:** If funding becomes available during FY18, MCFRS will restore the Battalion Chief position within the Safety Office. The responsibilities of this Battalion Chief include:
 - Day-to-day supervision and management of the on-duty safety officers.
 - Management and oversight of injured personnel, collisions, root-cause trend analysis of injuries and collisions, and training and education for the prevention of injuries and vehicle collisions.
 - Relief for the shift Safety Captains by filling in for them during their assigned Kelly days.

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- Administrative oversight for the Safety Section's role in the following:
 - NFPA 1403 - Acquired Structures [live firefighting standard]
 - Apparatus safety and driver training certification
 - Injury/collision reporting
 - Incident Safety Officer
 - PPE and logistics
 - SCBA Office
 - Significant injury and near-miss reports
 - Work site safety and facility inspections.

- **Claims Manager:** If funding becomes available, the Health & Wellness Section will create and fill a civilian Program Manager position (class and grade to be determined) to serve as the department's insurance claims manager. This individual would work jointly for both the Human Resources Division and the Fiscal Management Division. This individual will handle claims for injuries, apparatus/vehicle collisions, and all losses involving property and equipment. The specific duties, although not finalized, would likely include the following:
 - Maintain the insurance claim files so they are secure and accessible.
 - Review insurance claims files to check their status, and ensure that payments have been completed and are correct.
 - Follow up on all issues related to insurance claims and direct same to pertinent parties when necessary for resolution.
 - Complete daily correspondence between the Claims Manager and claimants, company officials, and, occasionally, doctors and lawyers. Correspondence would address such items as ensuring that payment was made, resolution of issues, and obtaining necessary information so that claims can be processed quickly.
 - Complete reports detailing current issues with a claim's payment or stating the resolution of a claim.
 - Analyze data and reports to identify trends.
 - Provide verbal updates to the Section Manager and insurance company personnel regarding issues involving claims.

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C. HEALTH AND WELLNESS INITIATIVES

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Health & Wellness Section will focus on three initiatives, including cardiac and cancer awareness/prevention, resiliency to traumatic stress, and planning for the physical relocation of the Fire-Rescue Occupational Medical Section (FROMS).

Initiative's Importance: The health and wellness of MCFRS personnel is of paramount importance to the department as it assures that personnel are fit for duty; increases their resiliency to disease, injury, and mental health issues; minimizes preventable deaths; and minimizes time away from work as well as the number of insurance claims.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #12 to provide for and enhance the wellness, safety, training and developmental needs of our personnel.

Explanation of Initiative: The Health & Wellness Section will focus on the following initiatives during FY18:

- **Cardiac and Cancer Awareness/Prevention:** To enhance cardiovascular disease awareness/prevention as well as cancer awareness/prevention, FROMS will:
 - Provide a personal cardiac risk calculation for each firefighter-rescuer annually. This will be in addition to the enhanced bloodwork currently provided by FROMS plus the voluntary Calcium Scoring CT Scan that some firefighter-rescuers over 40 years of age receive and pay for on their own using a prescription provided by FROMS.
 - Remove cost barriers associated with Calcium Scoring CT Scans by lowering the cost per scan per firefighter-rescuer from about \$100 to around \$60.
 - Provide cardiovascular and cancer awareness information to firefighter-rescuers via a new pamphlet titled “FireFit IQ for Tactical Athletes: MCFRS Fitness 2017.” The awareness pamphlet also addresses behavioral health, communicable disease and hazmat exposure, sleep disorders and sleep apnea, nutrition, fitness, and overall health and wellness.
 - Finalize a cardiac risk awareness/prevention poster (i.e., “Your Heart. Your Health. Your Life.”) that will then be reproduced and posted at all MCFRS work sites during FY18. A related flyer will be prepared and mailed to each firefighter-rescuer, sent directly to their place of residence.
- **Resiliency to Traumatic Stress:** A behavioral health outreach program developed during FY17 addressing resiliency to traumatic stress will be provided to all MCFRS work sites during FY18. The program will be delivered by Dr.

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Beasley and the MCFRS CISM Team beginning in FY18Q1. The program, titled “Firefighter Resiliency and Traumatic Stress: Tool Boxes for Building Resiliency,” will encompass the following:

- Introduction:
 - Defining/building resiliency
 - Non-resilient thinking/behavior
 - Neurobiology and neuropsychology of traumatic stress
 - Being resilient: mind/body approach
 - Resiliency as an accurate, realistic threat assessment and threat response.
- Tool Boxes:
 - Problem solving approach
 - Personal confidence
 - Cognitive factors
 - Autonomic nervous system training.
- **Planning for FROMS Relocation:** During FY18, the Health & Wellness Section will continue planning for the relocation of the FROMS office to the former District Court building in Rockville located on East Montgomery Avenue at North Washington Street. This move will be part of a larger relocation of many County offices from 255 Rockville Pike to the former District Court, including Occupational Medical Services (OMS) and other County departments/offices. The project to renovate the former District Court will be overseen by the County’s Department of General Services (DGS).

During FY18, FROMS will actively participate in the relocation planning process by identifying its specific spatial/layout requirements to DGS and advocating for the floor, wing and specific suite location most advantageous to the FROMS mission and needs, such as the need for adjacency with County OMS to allow for shared amenities (e.g., a client waiting area). DGS will finalize the Program of Requirements (POR) during FY18 with input, in part, from FROMS personnel. Renovation completion and actual move of County offices, including FROMS, is anticipated for 2020.

D. PERSONNEL & LABOR RELATIONS INITIATIVES

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Division of Human Resources will complete the hiring process for approximately 80 firefighter-rescuer recruits for Recruit Classes 42 and 43, initiate the hiring process for Recruit Class 44, and work with the MCFRS IT Section to create an automated, consolidated casefile system.

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Initiative's Importance: It is important that MCFRS hire approximately 80 firefighter-rescuer applicants (total) for Recruit Classes 42/43 and to initiate the hiring process for Recruit Class 44 to address departmental attrition and to continue implementation of 4-person staffing of suppression units. The new casefile application is important as it will serve as a consolidated storage and tracking system for various types of labor relations and internal affairs records.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #13 (recruiting and retaining personnel) and Goal #16 (organizational commitment to develop and implement new technologies and innovations).

Explanation of Initiative: The Division of Human Resources will focus on the following key initiatives during FY18:

- **Recruit Classes 42 and 43:** The Division will complete the hiring process for a total of approximately 80 firefighter-rescuer recruits for enrollment in Recruit Classes 42 and 43 to be taught at the PSTA, with one class having 37 students and the other 38. During FY17Q4, Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) mentoring and oral interviews of candidates were completed. During FY18Q1, the Division will complete background investigations and medical examinations of the candidate recruits. Employment offers will be made to those applicants having moved successfully through the entire hiring process. The hiring process must be completed during FY18Q1 so that the newly hired employees can begin their recruit classes during FY18Q2. RC42 will begin in October 2017 and conclude in February 2018. RC43 will begin and end about 10 weeks after RC42 time frame.
- **Recruit Class 44:** During FY18Q2, the Division will administer the entry level exam for prospective candidates for Recruit Class 44. If funded, the class would be convened in FY19. Depending upon the start date, some pre-employment activities such as CPAT mentoring, candidate interviews, background investigations and medical examinations may be initiated during the latter half of FY18; otherwise, these activities would not occur until the first half of FY19.
- **New Casefile System:** The Division will work collaboratively with the MCFRS Information Technology (IT) Section to create an automated casefile application for MCFRS. The program will be written by the IT Section Manager based upon requirements provided by the Human Resources Division and Office of Internal Affairs. The consolidated application will serve as a storage and tracking system for EEO complaints, disciplinary actions, labor grievances, and internal affairs

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investigative records. Upon completion of the application (target date: FY18Q4), the Human Resources Division will be the system's custodian/manager.

SUPPORT SERVICES

A. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Initiative in Brief: This initiative addresses planning for a new fire station in Montgomery Village, major expansion/renovation of Station 25, and system upgrades/replacements for several existing stations.

Initiative's Importance: Timely construction of facilities ensures that emergency services provided by MCFRS meet the needs of our customers. Timely renovations and replacement of aged building systems and installation of facility upgrades ensure continued usability of fire stations, ensure the safety and comfort of occupants, and extend the life of the facilities.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this recommendation will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services) and Goal #11 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure, including facilities).

Explanation of Initiative: This initiative includes renovation/expansion of Station 25; site evaluation for new Station 39; and system replacements or repairs at existing stations as described below.

- **Facility Renovations/Expansions**

With the design phase completed during FY17 for renovation and expansion of Station 25, this CIP project will move into the construction phase during FY18. During the first half of FY18, the Department of General Services (DGS) will manage the process of selecting a general contractor (GC) and bringing that GC under contract. Construction is anticipated to begin in the second half of FY18 and to conclude in FY19. As this is a DGS-managed CIP project, MCFRS will only be providing guidance to DGS and the general contractor during construction.

The project will encompass extensive renovation and expansion of the living/working quarters, plus the addition of two apparatus bays and other space between the existing bays and new bays to be used for gear storage and decontamination. There will be a mezzanine level above this new space for HVAC equipment. The project will be accomplished in two phases; thus, allowing the Station 25 to remain operational throughout construction aided by two large trailers placed behind the station that will be occupied during Phase 2.

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- **New Fire Station**

With the Program of Requirements (POR) for Montgomery Village Station #39 completed during FY17, the site evaluation process for this station will be initiated and potentially completed during FY18. Section Managers of both the Facilities Maintenance Section and Planning & Accreditation Section, plus a Division of Operations representative, will represent MCFRS on the site evaluation committee to be led by the Department of General Services. Site suitability criteria published in the 2016-2022 *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* will be explained to committee members by the MCFRS representatives and then used by the committee in identifying and evaluating candidate sites for Station 39.

- **Station Upgrades and System Replacements**

During FY18, “Level of Effort” CIP projects (i.e., facility upgrades and system replacements) listed below are planned/funded for implementation. These are DGS-managed projects; however, MCFRS will have ongoing coordination, guidance and oversight responsibilities in support of DGS.

- Life Safety Systems Replacement: Stations 1, 7, 14
- HVAC System Replacement: Stations 15*, 24
- Generator Replacement: Stations 1, 40
- Roof Replacement or Repair: Stations 7, 13
- Female Facilities: Station 8 (to be determined)
- Parking/Access Ways Resurfacing: Stations 6, 10, 11

*FS15 HVAC replacement was started during FY17 and will be completed during FY18.

B. FLEET OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT INITIATIVES

Initiative in Brief: Increase staffing for Fleet Operations and Fleet Support within the Logistics Section to ensure that apparatus and equipment acquisition and maintenance services can be met on a timely basis. Additionally, achieve progress in establishing contracts for service and parts.

Initiative’s Importance: To keep pace with the high demand for fleet and equipment acquisition and maintenance services, five positions need to be created and filled in the Logistics Section. To avoid the need for direct pays to vendors for services and parts, additional contracts will be established with vendors.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #1 (maintaining operational readiness), Goal #3 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective emergency services), and Goal #11 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure).

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Explanation of Initiative: If funding becomes available during FY18, MCFRS will create and fill up to five positions within Fleet Operations and Fleet Support as follows:

- Two Emergency Vehicle Technician positions
- Admin Specialist III position to serve as an “Operations Trainer”
- Supply Technician II position for small tools
- Administrative Specialist III position for general support.

Also during FY18, Fleet Operations and Fleet Support, with assistance from the MCFRS Procurement Section Manager, will work on identifying new contract opportunities and developing new contracts with parts and services vendors.

C. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS

Initiative in Brief: MCFRS has several information technology (IT) needs requiring attention during FY18, including completing the migration of the Telestaff database engine to “MS SQLServer,” completing development of the Online Analytical Processing (OLAP) application, implementing the fire station network security enhancement, and developing the Staff Management System.

Initiative’s Importance: IT equipment, systems and applications must be periodically updated or replaced and new/additional ones implemented to ensure that MCFRS has appropriate IT tools in place to meet its needs and to improve its operational and administrative efficiency.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #11 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure, including information technology systems) and Goal #16 (evaluating, developing and implementing new technologies).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the following IT initiatives will be addressed by the MCFRS IT Section:

- Telestaff Database Engine Migration: Complete the migration of the Telestaff database engine from SQLAnywhere to MS SQLServer. This migration will facilitate better integration with the current MCFRS data warehouse and future MCFRS Staff Management System (see below).
- Staff Management System (SMS): Work will continue by the MCFRS IT Section to establish the SMS – a system that will bring together under a single database engine many of the department’s stand-alone staff management databases to allow for easier retrieval of staff-related data. Components of the SMS will include:

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- Telestaff™
- Database system* developed/managed by A/C Reid that tracks and facilitates the assignment and transfer of career personnel to stations and other worksites.
- System* developed by the IT Training Manager to track computer-based training courses completed by MCFRS personnel.
- Casefile system* (access to be limited to select management personnel).
- Logistics database that tracks, by each MCFRS employee or volunteer, the PPE, clothing, and SCBA issued to them as well as SCBA fit-testing data.

Before these stand-alone databases can be brought together within the SMS, several of them (denoted above by an asterisk*) need to be developed or, in the case of existing databases, re-engineered. The anticipated completion date of the SMS is the latter half of FY19.

- Fire Station Network Security Enhancement: This enhancement, if found to be feasible by DTS, would allow MCFRS to move around those computing devices on an approved list from work site to work site without the existing network port locking problem. The current port locking mechanism only allows one specific computing device per network port.
- Online Analytical Processing System (OLAP): Work will continue to develop the OLAP system. OLAP will enable the department to analyze multidimensional data interactively from multiple perspectives.

FISCAL MANAGEMENT

A. REASSESS RESPONSIBILITIES OF POSITIONS

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the duties and responsibilities of the Fiscal Management Division's staff positions will be reassessed to determine whether a more appropriate distribution of the Division's duties and responsibilities can be achieved.

Initiative's Importance: With limited staff in the Fiscal Management Division, it is important that the distribution of duties and responsibilities among staff is appropriate to maximize efficiency and that each staff member has a backup role to create redundancy within the Division during times of employees' absence.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #6 (maximizing the utilization of resources to achieve our mission) and Goal #7 (deploying and leveraging resources to best serve customers' needs while maximizing effectiveness, efficiency and fiscal responsibility).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Fiscal Management Division Chief will reassess the duties and responsibilities of the Division's staff positions to determine

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whether a more appropriate distribution of the Division's duties and responsibilities can be achieved. As there is a need for creating redundancy of duties and responsibilities within the Division, the Division Chief will examine the addition of a backup role to many of the positions such that employees have the capability to perform both their regular duties and a specific colleague's duties during times when that colleague is on extended leave or when a position has been vacated. This will ensure that all vital duties and priorities of the Division are achieved on a timely basis even when employees are absent. By having backup duties, employees will broaden their knowledge/skill set which will increase their usefulness to the Division and may help employees with future promotions or lateral moves within the department.

B. RECLASSIFY GRANTS POSITION AND FILL VACANCY

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, an attempt will be made to have the Grants Administrator position reclassified as a Program Manager II (Grade 25). The position will then be filled as expeditiously as possible.

Initiative's Importance: Reclassifying the Grants Administrator position is important to match the grade level to the complexity level of the duties and responsibilities. Filling the vacancy as quickly as possible is important to ensure that grants' management and submission of grant applications are handled effectively and efficiently by a dedicated and qualified individual.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal # 7 (deploying and leveraging resources to best serve customers' needs while maximizing effectiveness, efficiency and fiscal responsibility).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Fiscal Management Division Chief will need to fill the vacant Grants Administrator (i.e., Administrative Specialist III, Grade 23) position that was vacated in November 2016. Beforehand, the Division Chief will attempt to have the position reclassified through the Office of Human Resources (OHR) as a Program Manager II (Grade 25) position in accordance with the actual complexity level of the duties and responsibilities of the MCFRS Grants Administrator as well as the knowledge/skill set needed to perform the job effectively. Once the reclassification determination has been made by OHR, the position (either a Program Manager II or the existing Administrative Specialist III) will be filled during FY18 following the County's selection/hiring process. The individual hired to fill this vacant position will also be given collateral budgeting duties (in accordance with item A above) to back up the Budget Specialist III position.

C. EMS-TRANSPORT FEE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the EMS Billing Office will prepare a written compliance document concerning the County's EMS-T program being compliant with

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Medicare regulations. The EMS Billing Office will also develop a system to replicate the EMS-T billing data in the vendor's record management system to have as an in-house backup.

Initiative's Importance: Remaining compliant with Medicare regulations and replicating the EMS-T billing vendor's record management system are important to the continued success of the County's EMS-T reimbursement program.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal # 7 (deploying and leveraging resources to best serve customers' needs while maximizing effectiveness, efficiency and fiscal responsibility) and Goal #8 (ensuring transparency of our business operations and open lines of communication with our customers).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, a written compliance program document concerning the County's EMS-T billing program will be prepared. Additionally, a system will be developed to replicate the EMS-T billing data in the vendor's record management system. Both initiatives are described below.

- **Written Compliance Program:**

During FY18, the EMS Billing Office will prepare a written compliance program document for the County's EMS-T program as it relates to federal Medicare regulations. Having this compliance document would meet a best practice established under Medicare. Approximately 60% of the County's EMS-T reimbursements are paid by Medicare and Medicare HMO. The document to be prepared must include a business associates agreement with the vendor (i.e., McKesson – MED3000) and must address Medicare Compliance Program elements, including the following:

1. Standards, Policies, and Procedures
2. Compliance Program Administration
3. Screening and Evaluation of Employees, Physicians, Vendors and other Agents
4. Communication, Education, and Training on Compliance Issues
5. Monitoring, Auditing and Internal Reporting Systems
6. Discipline for Non-Compliance
7. Investigations and Remedial Measures.

- **Data Replication for Vendor's Billing System:**

During FY18, the EMS-T Billing Section, with the assistance of the IT Section, will develop a system to replicate the EMS-T billing data stored in the vendor's record management system. The MCFRS system will essentially create a backup, or exact copy, of the vendor's database of Montgomery County's EMS-T billing records.

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D. CONTRACTS INITIATIVE

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Division of Fiscal Management will assist Fleet Support, Fleet Maintenance, and the Facilities Maintenance Section in identifying new contract opportunities and developing new contracts.

Initiative's Importance: Having new/additional contracts in place will avoid the need for direct pays to vendors.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal # 7 (deploying and leveraging resources to best serve customers' needs while maximizing effectiveness, efficiency and fiscal responsibility).

Explanation of Initiative: The Division of Fiscal Management, Procurement Section, will assist Fleet Support, Fleet Maintenance, and the Facilities Maintenance Section in identifying new contract opportunities and developing new/additional contracts in accordance with County procurement regulations, policies and procedures. New contracts will ensure timely acquisition and payment of goods and services provided to MCFRS by vendors.

PLANNING AND ACCREDITATION

A. PLANNING INITIATIVES

1. FY2019 Strategic Plan

Initiative in Brief: Preparation and approval of the MCFRS FY2019 Strategic Plan by June 30, 2018 so that it may be implemented beginning July 1, 2018.

Initiative's Importance: MCFRS prepares an annual strategic plan addressing the implementation of *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* priorities as well as any emergent priorities not addressed in the master plan. The annual strategic plan establishes the department's course of action for the upcoming fiscal year concerning major initiatives. In addition, the Commission on Fire Accreditation International requires that a comprehensive, up-to-date strategic plan or master plan be in place for an accredited fire department to maintain its accreditation status.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the department in achieving departmental Goal #4 to perform strategic planning.

Explanation of Initiative: The MCFRS FY2019 Strategic Plan will be prepared by the Planning & Accreditation Section to replace the FY2018 Strategic Plan which will sunset

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on June 30, 2018. The FY19 Strategic Plan will include the highest priorities from the 2016-2022 *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* as identified by the Fire Chief, plus any emergent priorities arising during the final months of FY18 that require attention during FY19. Carryover initiatives from the FY18 Strategic Plan may be included in the FY19 plan at the direction of the Fire Chief. The annual strategic plan requires the approval of the Fire Chief but does not require the approval of the County Council as occurs regarding the Master Plan.

2. Site Evaluation for Station 39

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, the Planning & Accreditation Section will take the Fire-Rescue Service's lead role² in working collaboratively with the Department of General Services (DGS) to initiate and complete the site evaluation process for new Fire Station 39 in Montgomery Village.

Initiative's Importance: The addition of a fire station in Montgomery Village (Station 39), as recommended in the *Phase 4 Report of the Station Location and Resource Allocation Study*, is a high priority. Having Station #39's resources in place will result in significantly faster response times throughout the Village and will reduce the call load of surrounding stations (collectively) by approximately 1900 calls annually, mostly concerning Station 8.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #3 (ensuring sufficient resources to deliver effective and efficient emergency services), Goal #7 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs), and Goal #11 (maintaining and growing our infrastructure).

Explanation of Initiative: Following completion of the Program of Requirements (POR) for Station 39 by DGS (with MCFRS input), the site evaluation process will be initiated and potentially completed during FY18. Section Managers of both the Planning & Accreditation Section and Facilities Maintenance Section, plus a Division of Operations representative, will represent MCFRS on the site evaluation committee led by DGS. Site suitability criteria published in the 2016-2022 *Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan* will be presented and explained to committee members by the MCFRS representatives and then used by the committee in identifying and evaluating candidate sites for Station 39.

3. Mass Transit Design Input and Coordination

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, MCFRS will participate in planning work groups led by State and County transportation agencies that are coordinating planning and design of major mass transit projects in Montgomery County. Projects include the Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway, and Bus Rapid Transit system.

² Assisted by representatives of the MCFRS Facilities Maintenance Section and Division of Operations

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Initiative's Importance: It is important that MCFRS provide technical input for the design of mass transit systems in the County to ensure that fire-rescue needs and concerns are adequately addressed in the design. This will ensure that MCFRS resources can better serve system users when emergency events occur and have access to the road-based systems (i.e., CCT and BRT) for bypassing congested traffic to achieve faster response times.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the department in achieving departmental Goal #4 (performing strategic planning) and Goal #10 (sustaining strategic partnerships with County, regional, State and federal agencies).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the Planning & Accreditation Section, with assistance from the Division of Operations, will participate in planning/coordination work groups led by State and County transportation agencies (i.e., Maryland Mass Transit Administration and County Department of Transportation) that are coordinating planning and design of major mass transit projects in Montgomery County. Projects include the Purple Line (light-rail system that will run between Bethesda and New Carrollton³), Corridor Cities Transitway (bus rapid transit system that will run from Shady Grove to Clarksburg), and Bus Rapid Transit system (ten BRT routes within high-density areas of southern, eastern and central Montgomery County).

Concerning all three mass transit projects, MCFRS representatives have been and will continue advocating for adequate fire department vehicular access throughout these transit systems, including trail access where hiker-biker trails will parallel the roadways or tracks (e.g., Capital Crescent Trail along portions of the Purple Line). MCFRS representatives will participate in planning/coordination meetings and will review and comment on draft engineering design plans. As the Purple Line and CCT are overseen by the State's Mass Transit Administration (MTA), fire protection and life safety requirements, as well as fire and life safety code compliance, fall under the jurisdiction of the State Fire Marshal, with input provided by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS), Fire Prevention and Code Compliance Division. MTA's engineering and other technical consultants include fire protection and safety consultants who are responsible for ensuring that fire protection and life safety code requirements (e.g., State-adopted National Fire Protection Association standards) are adequately addressed within engineering design plans for these mass transit projects.

4. ISO Rating Improvement

Initiative in Brief: MCFRS will continue coordination with the Insurance Services Office (ISO) during FY18 to re-evaluate the County's fire protection capabilities and achieve the best possible Public Protection Classification (i.e., rating) for Montgomery County based upon these capabilities.

³ The Purple Line segment within Montgomery County will run between Bethesda and Langley Park.

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Initiative's Importance: Achieving an improved Public Protection Classification (PPC) for the County could have the effect of lowering insurance premiums for some property owners and indicates to MCFRS customers and elected officials that the County's fire protection capabilities are excellent and improving. Having a low, countywide PPC is also of great sense-of-pride to the MCFRS.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #7 (deploying and leveraging resources to meet our customers' needs), Goal #10 (sustaining strategic partnerships with private sector organizations and governmental agencies), and Goal #17 (measuring performance and striving for continual improvement).

Explanation of Initiative: ISO had re-evaluated Montgomery County during 2016 and issued (in February 2017) a new PPC of "Class 2" (previously "Class 3") for the urban (hydranted) area and "Class 4" (previously "Class 6") for the rural (non-hydranted area). The department will continue its efforts during FY18 and beyond to improve this split rating. A PPC of "1" is the best possible rating issued by ISO, and MCFRS will work toward eventually achieving this Class 1 rating in both its hydranted and non-hydranted areas. Through CY2016, only 178 municipalities and counties nationwide had achieved the coveted Class 1 rating.

As Montgomery County is only 4.25 points short of achieving a Class 1 rating in the urban/hydranted area, the MCFRS will focus during FY18 on improving capabilities and associated scoring in the categories of "Credit for Company Personnel" and "Credit for Training." These are two categories where our scores indicated notable deficiencies; although mediocre record-keeping concerning these categories is evidently the predominant factor versus our actual service delivery capabilities.

As Montgomery County remains nearly 30 points short of achieving a Class 1 rating in the rural/non-hydranted area, considerably more work lies ahead in raising the County's PPC incrementally from a Class 4 to a Class 1. If MCFRS were to be successful in improving its scoring for company personnel and training (as described above with respect to the urban area PPC), then those higher scores would, for the most part, help to improve the score for the rural area PPC as well. Additionally, other deficiencies would need to be addressed as explained in ISO's report to the County Executive.

B. ACCREDITATION INITIATIVES

1. Annual Accreditation Compliance Reporting

Initiative in Brief: With accreditation status having been awarded in August 2013 to MCFRS for the second time⁴ by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International

⁴ The initial award of agency accreditation for MCFRS occurred in CY2007.

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(CFAI), the department will proceed with follow-up actions and reporting requirements (i.e., Annual Compliance Report) to remain in compliance during FY18.

Initiative's Importance: It is the expectation of the County Executive, Chief Administrative Officer and the Fire Chief that MCFRS remain an accredited fire department⁵.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will assist the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #17 to evaluate progress, measure performance, and strive for continual improvement.

Explanation of Initiative: In July 2017, the annual compliance report (ACR) will be completed and submitted to CFAI, along with annual fees, to meet annual reporting and fee requirements to maintain accreditation status. Most of the work in preparing the CY2017 ACR will have been completed during FY17Q4, so only the finalization of the report, including any required edits requested by the Fire Chief and then obtaining the Fire Chief's approval and signature, will need to be completed within the first two weeks of July 2017. The ACR is due to CFAI by July 15.

Note: Due to the reaccreditation process that will be occurring during FY18, there is no requirement from CFAI to prepare and submit an ACR for CY2018. If accreditation status is awarded to MCFRS during CY2018, the next required ACR will be prepared during FY19 and submitted to CFAI by July 15, 2019.

2. Accreditation Documents

Initiative in Brief: During FY18, MCFRS must complete a self-assessment of the department, utilizing the model presented in the CPSE/CFAI's *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, 9th edition, and complete an updated version of the department's Self-Assessment Manual (SAM). In addition, the department must complete a renewed community risk analysis and an updated version of the Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover document based upon that new analysis.

Initiative's Importance: In preparation for the department's 2018 accreditation assessment by CFAI, MCFRS must complete several required documents, including an updated Self-Assessment Manual based upon a current self-assessment of the entire department, an updated Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover document based upon a new community risk analysis, and a master plan (finalized and approved in June 2016).

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #4 (performing strategic planning) and Goal#17 (evaluating progress, measuring performance, and striving for continual improvement).

⁵ Accredited by the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

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Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, the MCFRS Accreditation Manager will lead the department through the process of completing an updated MCFRS Self-Assessment Manual (SAM) and an updated Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover (CRA-SOC) document.

The updated SAM will be based upon performance criteria presented in the *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, 9th edition. By December 31, 2017, the FESSAM's ten self-assessment categories⁶ will be finalized by the designated category managers.

The manager of each category will prepare or coordinate the completion of a required narrative for each performance indicator within the category that includes: a description of what is being done to meet the performance indicator, an appraisal of how well the intent of the indicator is being met, a plan describing what will be done to achieve improvement and/or to overcome challenges/gaps identified in the appraisal, and a list of departmental references supporting the narrative included in the description, appraisal and plan. Each category manager has one or more subject matter experts (SMEs) to assist in preparing the narratives; although the manager may need to prepare some or most of the narratives while serving the dual role as a SME. Periodically during the development of each category's documentation, the manager of each category will report progress to the Accreditation Manager. The SAM must be finalized, approved by the Fire Chief, and uploaded to the CFAI shared drive during FY18Q3.

The updated MCFRS Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover (CRA-SOC) document will be based upon the CPSE/CFAI technical guide titled *MCFRS Community Risk Assessment: Standards of Cover*, 6th edition. This guide will continue assisting MCFRS in performing a new community risk assessment for Montgomery County upon which departmental standards of response coverage will be re-examined and updated as needed. A small team of SMEs from within the department, led by the Accreditation Manager, will perform the renewed community risk assessment, re-examine the department's standards of cover, and prepare the updated CRA-SOC document. The CRA-SOC document will be completed by December 31, 2017. The document must be finalized, approved by the Fire Chief, and uploaded to the CFAI shared drive during FY18Q3.

3. Program Appraisal

Initiative in Brief: To enhance the department's assessment capabilities, MCFRS will finalize the development of a uniform program appraisal process for all Category 5

⁶ CFAI Self-Assessment Categories include: 1 - Governance and Administration, 2 - Assessment and Planning, 3 - Goals and Objectives, 4 - Financial Resources, 5 - Programs, 6 - Physical Resources, 7 - Human Resources, 8 - Training and Competency, 9 - Essential Resources, and 10 - External Systems Relationships.

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programs and will continue development of additional headline performance measures to be reported at regular intervals to the CountyStat Office.

Initiative's Importance: MCFRS assessment capabilities should be improved to meet accreditation requirements, to assist the department in self-assessment for continuous improvement, and to better track and report performance to the Chief Administrative Officer through the CountyStat Office.

MCFRS Goal(s) Achieved: Implementation of this initiative will help the MCFRS in achieving departmental Goal #17 (to evaluate progress, measure performance, and strive for continual improvement).

Explanation of Initiative: During FY18, MCFRS will continue development and implementation of a uniform appraisal process for departmental programs addressed in "Category 5 – Programs" in the CPSE/CFAI *Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM)*, 9th edition. The process will, to the greatest extent possible, be based upon standardized criteria and uniform record-keeping practices and reporting format. Performing a periodic appraisal (at least annually) of each Category 5 program is a requirement of the CFAI accreditation process. Section Managers from the Division of Operations and Division of Volunteer and Community Services will be responsible for completing an appraisal for each Category 5 program managed by their Section using the standardized criteria and reporting template. That template will be jointly developed by the Planning & Accreditation Section Manager and Operations Division Chief and then approved by the Fire Chief. Upon development of the appraisal template, each Section Manager will then be responsible for performing an appraisal of each program they manage at least annually and reporting the results to their Division Chief for submission to the Fire Chief.

Also related to programmatic assessment, MCFRS will develop additional headline performance measures during FY18 addressing key programs for which headline measures have not yet been developed or for which only a limited number of measures have been developed to date (e.g., community outreach). It is important to develop, use and periodically update additional performance measures so that performance can eventually be reported for all MCFRS programs for review by the Division Chiefs, Fire Chief, CountyStat Manager, CAO, elected officials and the public. While positive performance will illustrate successful service delivery and effective and efficient use of resources, poor performance can point to needed resources that could lead to improved performance or could point to the need for improved effort, procedures, methods, management practices, and/or efficiencies that could improve performance over time.

FY2018 MCFRS STRATEGIC PLAN

APPENDIX A

MCFRS GOALS⁷

OVERARCHING DEPARTMENTAL GOAL

To comprehensively plan for the future needs of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service and its customers by addressing all aspects of MCFRS capabilities to deliver effective and efficient emergency and non-emergency services as well as capabilities to address the functional, developmental, wellness, and safety needs of the organization.

DEPARTMENTAL GOALS

1. To maintain our operational readiness at all times for an all-hazards mission and response capability, including emergency medical services, fire suppression, technical rescue, water/ice rescue, aviation fire-rescue, hazardous material, and explosive device emergency services.
2. To minimize the number of deaths and number/severity of injuries to our customers through a comprehensive, all-hazards, risk reduction strategy implemented through our community outreach program.
3. To ensure that sufficient numbers of personnel, apparatus, equipment, and facilities are in place to effectively and efficiently deliver emergency services and achieve our adopted standards of response coverage.
4. To set a desirable and attainable course for the future through strategic planning and with the establishment and periodic updating of “SMART⁸” goals and objectives.
5. To reassess and refine our vision, mission, and guiding principles periodically.
6. To maximize the utilization of our career and volunteer resources to achieve our mission.
7. To deploy and leverage our resources to best serve our customers’ needs while maximizing our effectiveness, efficiency and fiscal responsibility.

⁷ Department-wide goals as updated/modified during the 3/23/17 Annual Planning Meeting

⁸ SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-dependent

FY2018 MCFRS STRATEGIC PLAN

8. To ensure the transparency of our business operations and that open lines of communication are maintained with our customers.
9. To create and maintain strong partnerships with the citizenry, businesses, organizations and institutions within Montgomery County so that we may improve our responsiveness to their needs/concerns and leverage their collective capabilities to assist us in our community risk reduction, injury prevention and property protection efforts.
10. To seek and sustain tactical and strategic partnerships with other County, municipal, regional, State and federal agencies and private sector organizations to enhance our capabilities to prevent, respond to, and mitigate emergency incidents locally and regionally in keeping our homeland safe.
11. To maintain and grow our infrastructure, including facilities, apparatus, equipment, communications systems, and information technology systems to support our mission.
12. To provide for and enhance the wellness, safety, training, and development of our personnel, including implementation of risk reduction strategies to improve occupational safety and to improve the health and wellness of MCFRS personnel.
13. To ensure that MCFRS continuously recruits the career and volunteer personnel required to effectively deliver our services and programs and undertakes the steps needed to retain these individuals for long-term service to the community.
14. To address the current and projected training needs for career and volunteer leadership and workforce development. This includes classes provided at the Public Safety Training Academy, online training, in-service training, station drills, and classes provided by the Maryland Fire-Rescue Institute.
15. To ensure MCFRS embraces diversity, that our membership is reflective of the community served, and that our environment is open and accepting to all members of the community.
16. To establish an organizational commitment to evaluate, develop, and implement new technologies and innovations on a continuous basis that will enhance the effective delivery of services and performance of business processes.
17. To evaluate our progress, measure our performance, and strive for continual improvement through accreditation, performance measurement, dashboard monitoring, and program appraisal.